



USAID | AFGHANISTAN

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Afghan women and girls have seen significant gains with the support of USAID, working in conjunction with the Afghan government and other international donors:

- About 760,000 women and children receive health treatment monthly.
- Women have received over 100,000 microfinance loans worth \$85.7 million.
- One governor, three cabinet members, 150 judicial positions, 27 percent of seats in Parliament, and 21 percent of seats won in the 2014 Provincial Council Elections are held by women.

Photo credit: USAID/Afghanistan

Gender

The women of Afghanistan continue to face enormous challenges. The United Nation's Gender Inequality Index ranks Afghanistan 169th among 187 countries as women continue to struggle for parity in healthcare, economic opportunity and political empowerment. Despite these obstacles, critical progress is still being made each year through the collaboration of USAID, the Afghan government, other donors, Afghan and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and courageous Afghan women across the country.

Thirteen years ago, virtually no girls attended school. Women died every day from preventable pregnancy complications and were restricted from contributing to the economy. Today, millions of girls are enrolled in schools and thousands of women are attending universities. Maternal mortality rates have declined more than threefold largely due to increased access to basic and prenatal healthcare, especially among rural populations. Women have more opportunities to receive job training and apply for loans to start or expand businesses. Much work remains to be done, and USAID is committed to building upon these critical gains.

OUR WORK

USAID plays a lead role in implementing the U.S. government's strategy for assistance to women in Afghanistan in the areas of health, education, economic development, women's rights, and political empowerment. In 2014, USAID launched Promote, a major women's empowerment program to advance opportunities for thousands of young Afghan women to help them become leaders in the political, private, and civil society sectors.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

USAID provides women with job training and placement services, access to credit and financial products designed specifically for women. Since 2011, USAID has facilitated \$1.86 million in private-sector loans to 575 businesswomen and supported 22 business and entrepreneurship workshops for 1,200 businesswomen from all 34 provinces. Since 2012, more than 3,500 women have participated in job training programs aimed at mid-career/semi-professional employees and job

seekers. These women are being equipped with technical and business management skills in response to private sector labor market needs. As a result, more than 2,000 women have been placed in jobs or promoted with salary increases. USAID also trains women in agricultural best practices, provides marketing services, and finances loans, and facilitates access to specialized lines of credit in support of women in agribusiness.

HEALTH AND EDUCATION

Afghan women and girls today have unprecedented access to education and healthcare services and are also directly contributing to the health of their fellow citizens. Today, more than 3 million girls are enrolled in school. USAID is improving the quality of basic education by helping train nearly 25,000 women teachers, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. USAID support has also increased female enrollment in higher education. About 30 percent of the student body at the American University of Afghanistan are women.

On average, nearly one million people per month are treated at USAID-supported health facilities. Seventy-six percent of these patients are women and children younger than five. Increased access to skilled birth attendants is essential to improving maternal and child health, and more than 2,050 midwives have graduated from USAID-supported programs. With the support of USAID and other donors, the number of midwives increased from 467 during Taliban rule to at least 4,000 today. In 2013 alone, more than 150,000 babies were delivered by skilled birth attendants as a direct result of U.S. government assistance.

LEADERSHIP

Promote is a major initiative to strengthen Afghanistan's development by boosting female participation in the economy, helping women gain business and management skills, supporting women's rights groups and increasing the number of women in decision-making positions within the Afghan government. The ambitious program seeks to help 75,000 young Afghan women become leaders in their fields.

USAID partners with the Afghan government to provide women's rights awareness training for law students and judges, and sponsor roundtables that promote public debate and dialogue on women's rights. USAID also helps the Afghan government build women's skills to influence public policy and advocate for reform, support equal voter registration, assist women candidates, and promote gender equality in political parties. USAID supports the training of female judges to officiate over courts, manage cases, and provide due process to Afghan citizens. Additionally, USAID has supported training for 2,135 women media professionals, 720 women executives, and 166 national legislators across the country. USAID initiatives have helped shape gender-related legislation, including the Elimination of Violence Against Women law.

CONTACTS

USAID/Afghanistan

Stefan Korshak, Development Outreach and Communications
U.S. Embassy
Great Massoud Road
Kabul, Afghanistan
Phone: +93 (0)700-10-8000
Email: KabulAIDDOC@state.gov

Washington Headquarters

Ciara Corbett, Administrative Assistant
U.S. Agency for International Development
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC, USA 20523
Phone: (202)-712-1900
Email: cicorbett@usaid.gov



More than 2.5 million Afghan girls are enrolled in school.

Photo credit: USAID/Afghanistan



USAID trains women media professionals.

Photo credit: USAID/Afghanistan