



RE-BRANDING AFGHANISTAN CREATING JOBS, CHANGING PERCEPTIONS, EMPOWERING WOMEN (RACCEW)

NOVEMBER 2015 – NOVEMBER 2018

\$5 MILLION

OVERVIEW

The U.S. Agency for International Development’s Re-Branding Afghanistan Creating Jobs, Changing Perceptions, Empowering Women (RACCEW) project aimed to create a self-sustaining and diverse Afghan artisan sector that was able to flourish independently, utilizing the experience and expertise acquired by the acclaimed vocational school Turquoise Mountain, which was established in Afghanistan in 2006.

By empowering women, instilling pride, and employing thousands of Afghan artisans, RACCEW aimed to create a workforce that would enhance the positive image of Afghanistan around the world.

ACTIVITIES

- Provided business mentoring to at least 115 Afghan artisan businesses to help them enhance their product quality
- Facilitated access to capital and created international and domestic market linkages
- Created 1,100 new or better jobs over three years, with increased participation of women and youth
- Shaped a more positive international image of Afghanistan through the rebranding of Afghan artisan products
- Enabled the improvement of the Turquoise Mountain Institute curriculum and reviewed the implementation of the Institute's sustainability plan
- Reaffirmed Turquoise Mountain's partnership with the Murad Khani community

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- 84 artisan businesses supported in four provinces (Kabul, Bamyan, Balkh, Jawzjan)
- Of these, 25 businesses received intensive support; on average, sales during the first year of the project grew 29 percent
- Turquoise Mountain provided intensive business skills training to 52 enterprises, part of its wider efforts to mentor artisan businesses across the artisan sector.
- The "Turquoise Mountain: Artists Transforming Afghanistan" exhibition at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. attracted close to 400,000 visitors.
- International export partnerships were created, including with Nordstrom, a U.S. department store.
- Five international carpet wholesalers signed up in Europe and North America to source production from Afghanistan in partnership with a fair-trade verification organization.
- The Turquoise Mountain Institute's sustainability plan was reviewed and strengthened; its viability is guaranteed for at least the next 10 years.

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