



USAID/ACEBA Apprenticeship Program Empowering Afghan Women

USAID/ACEBA transformed the life of a determined woman, enabling her to provide for her family through her newfound tailoring expertise.



Photo by ACEBA

Nadia learning tailoring skills in Balkh, Afghanistan

USAID/ACEBA's apprenticeship program empowers Afghans, primarily women, to acquire valuable skills for long-term employment opportunities. Since 2022, the program has facilitated 26,525 Afghans in learning new skills.

Mrs. Nadia, a mother of three, is a shining example of Afghan women's resilience as they face considerable financial and social challenges. After being diagnosed with a type of cancer in 2022, Nadia traveled to Pakistan, where she spent nearly a year undergoing treatment. Upon her return to Afghanistan in mid-2023, her husband, who had been working as a taxi driver for a relative, lost his job. Since then, Nadia's husband has been unemployed, struggling to find even sporadic daily wage work, making it difficult for the family to afford necessities.

While struggling with these challenging situations, Nadia stepped in to assist her husband. In her quest for a job, she heard about USAID's Afghanistan Competitiveness of Export-Oriented Businesses Activity (ACEBA) apprenticeship program and an opportunity to learn a craft at a tailoring company. The apprenticeship program gives people new skills or modest assets to earn a livelihood while helping businesses to develop a skilled workforce and control labor costs.

Accepted into the program, Nadia learned tailoring skills over a three-month apprenticeship. Despite having no experience in tailoring, Nadia approached this opportunity with a willingness and determination to succeed, overcome challenges, and support her family. By the end of her apprenticeship, she had acquired the skills necessary to sew hijabs, traditional Afghan clothing, and baby garments. During her apprenticeship tenure, she received a modest stipend, allowing her to provide her family with basic necessities. Impressed by Nadia's dedication and hard work, the host company offered her a permanent position with a monthly starting salary of AFN 4,000.

Nadia is deeply grateful for the opportunity, as it has provided her with stable employment and the means to feed her children and help her husband. She is thankful for USAID's support, which has made a significant difference in her life and that of her family, stating:

"I am truly thankful for the support from USAID//ACEBA, which has been instrumental in empowering me and other needy women in our community. This opportunity has enabled us to learn valuable tailoring skills and earn a sustainable income to provide for our families."