

> The road to jobs during a protracted crisis

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Start and Improve your
Business (SIYB), Afghanistan



► Road to Jobs

Women's economic empowerment –
developing decent work conditions for
the women-centred carpet industry

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WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND CARPET SECTOR

The project targeted carpets because they have a cotton component and many women are employed there. Improving working conditions, incomes, market opportunities and skills.

Constraint: Women have traditional carpet weaving skills but they cannot make enough income from traditional carpet designs.

Root cause: Lack of opportunity for semi-skilled women including migrants and IDPs in the carpet sub-sector. This is also due to their carpet production skills not meeting international market standards.



INTERVENTION DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

The objectives of the interventions:

- Afghan Bazar, carpet exporting company, wanted to increase production to meet international demand.
- Refugees and IDP women needed skills upgrading to meet the requirements of Afghan Bazar Company.
- Women carpet weavers needed to learn and improve their functional literacy in order to use Digital carpet designs.



TO ACHIEVE MENTIONED OBJECTIVES:

- R2J project collaborated with two carpet weaving and exporting companies (Afghan Bazar Company and Marhaba Zareen Handicraft Company).
- Companies trained women and developed their capacity and skills on carpet weaving.
- They had to train them to understand how to weave modern (digital) designs and kilims as preferred by customers in Europe and the USA markets.
- The training included functional literacy because 80% of the women are illiterate. Digital designs require a level of functional literacy.



RESULTS

- Road to Jobs project partnered with two different carpet production and exporting companies.
- 400 women were trained and all of women now work for these two companies.
- Total 414 jobs have been created (4 men and 410 women).
- 50 women opened bank account.
- 50 women jointly purchased 25 looms.
- Afghan Bazar Company established a kindergarten.
- Marhaba Zareen Handicraft Company emerged as a result of intervention with Afghan Bazar, a woman working for Afghan Bazar established this company.



SYSTEMIC CHANGE

- The business model was adopted by both companies. They established 8 more carpet weaving centers (3 Afghan Bazar and 5 Marhaba Zareen Handicraft Company). Originally it was 4.
- Marhaba Zareen Handicraft Company adopted and adapted the business model. The company provides raw materials and looms to women to weave carpets from home.
- A digital carpet designer has emerged in Mazar-e-Sharif and now all carpet weavers (export companies and individuals have access to designer).
- Child care facilities have been setup by companies for women carpet weavers.
- During COVID-19 pandemic carpet weaving companies worked with certified business coaches and changed work modality to facilitate the business continuity.

A QUOTE FROM FINAL INDEPENDENT EVALUATION

“Previously, women in the rug industry were not satisfied. It was boring for them - they used to work 16 hours straight on carpet weaving and it exhausted them. But now, I provide them with entertainment opportunities. We picnic together once a week, they also get 1-2 hours of break and can use a music player.”(SSI, Merhaba Zarin, Balkh).”



Introduction to the SIYB-Afghanistan Company



The Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB)

- ★ The SIYB programme has originated in Sweden
- ★ has been developed by the International Labour Organization
- ★ comprises a range of material based, short, modular management training courses for small- and medium scale enterprises
- ★ today is used in more than 90 countries all over the world



Objective

Development objective:

- ★ To contribute to private sector development, economic growth and employment creation

Immediate objectives:

- ★ To strengthen the capacity of local business development services organizations to provide cost-effective quality business start-up and management training courses for MSME
- ★ As a result of SIYB training, to enable these MSME to start and grow their own enterprises and to create employment for others in the process



SIYB-Afghanistan Company

The SIYB-Afghanistan Business Consulting Company was founded in 2017 with great support and partnership with the United Nations International Labor Organization (UN-ILO) and United States Agency for International Development (USAID).



What Was the Challenge

After an assessment we found out that:

- Statistic-wise; 80% of new established companies and businesses could not survive more than 3 years
- There was no entity providing the standard business start-up training



Why We Set Up

- To overcome the aforementioned challenge
- To support businesses generate concrete business ideas
- To support businesses develop standard business plans
- To help the start-ups survive



How We Set Up

- SIYB and Get-Ahead Trainers come together to make a unity and platform
- Market the training packages
- Conducting the training and sharing the results

What Do We Do?

- Start and Improve Your Business Training (SIYB)
- Gender and Entrepreneurship Together Training (GET-Ahead)
- Business Coaching - Discovering Your Potential and Achieving It
- Financial literacy Training
- Sell More For More (SMFM) – A Cooperative and Association Development Training
- Farming as a Business Training (FAAB)
- Food Safety Training
- Competency-Based Economies Through Formation of Enterprises Training (CEFE)
- Women Access to Agricultural Credit
- Agriculture Value Chain Development
- Good governance
- E-Commerce





SIYB-Afghanistan Company

- Currently SIYB- AFG has 6 full-time employees, 4 part-time employees, and certified 90 members all over Afghanistan, which is expanding rapidly.

What are the Results?

- 9 master trainers (7 certified, 2 potential)
- 90 trainers (56 certified, 34 potential)
- More than 5000 entrepreneurs (68% women)
- More than 50% started business and improved their business
- 4066 job created as result of the business start-ups

The Overall Contribution

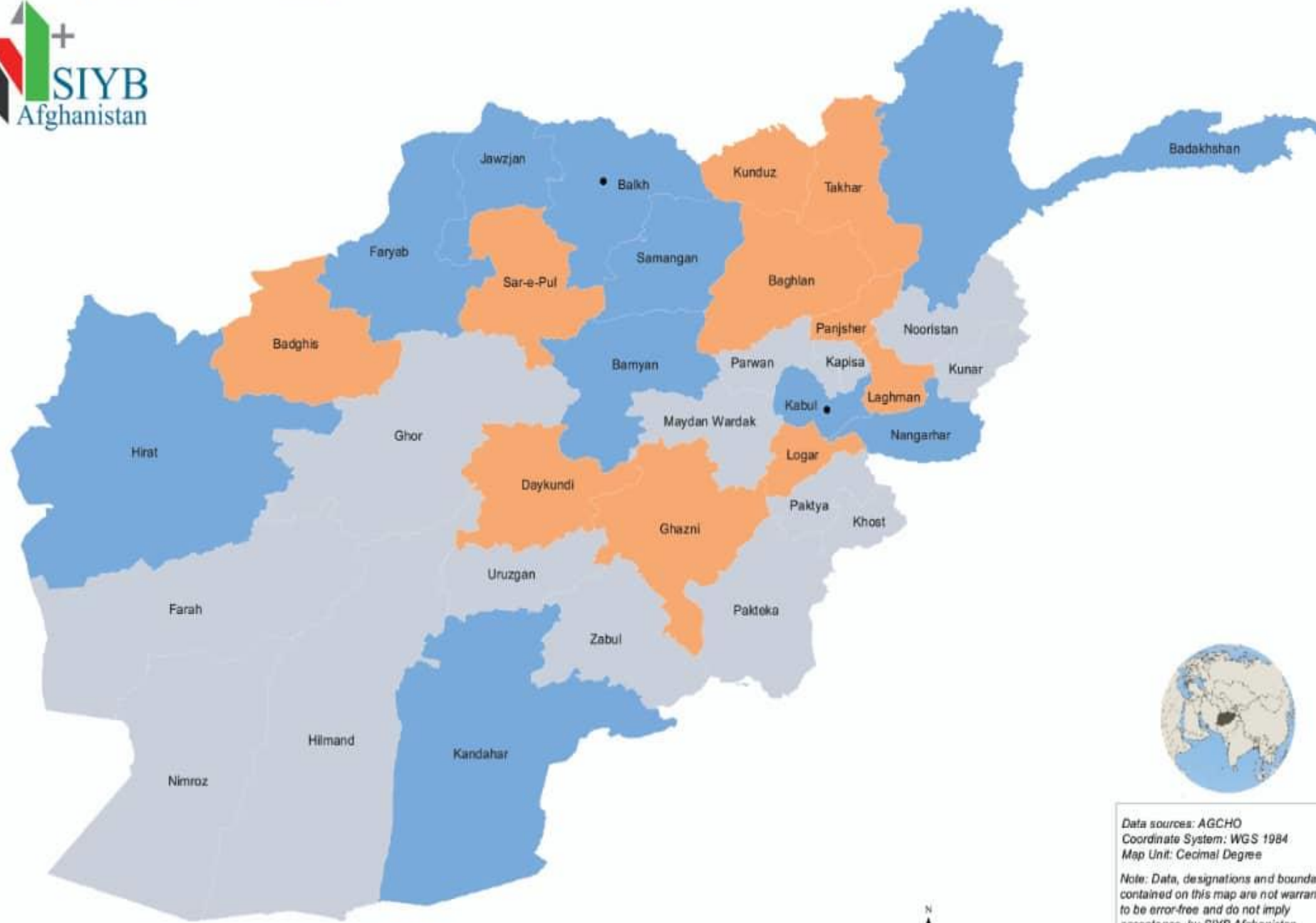


The Overall Contribution





SIYB Afghanistan coverage



SIYB Currently active SIYB Introduced Afghanistan Provinces SIYB Offices



Data sources: AGCHO
Coordinate System: WGS 1984
Map Unit: Decimal Degree

Note: Data, designations and boundaries contained on this map are not warranted to be error-free and do not imply acceptance by SIYB Afghanistan mentioned on this map.

Date: 11-Feb-2018

Strategic and Sustainable Partnership:

SIYB- AFG has partnered with various governmental, national and international counterparts:



SIYB Progress, Market Shares, and Challenges in Afghanistan





SIYB Progress

The SIYB program was launched in Afghanistan in 2016, followed by the establishment of the SIYB-AFG and it is recognized as the first SIYB Training Service Provider (TSP) in Afghanistan by SIYB Global based in Geneva.

SIYB Progress

To better serve the SIYB trainers and to provide them with on-time and high-quality learning materials, SIYB- Afghanistan took the initiative, revised and modified the SIYB books into Dari and Pashtu languages, and has been given the copyrights of SIYB books in Afghanistan, by the UN- ILO headquarter in Geneva.

Based on the agreement in between UN-ILO headquarter and SIYB- Afghanistan, the company has the privilege of printing and distributing SIYB- learning materials among SIYB trainers and TSP in Afghanistan, and obligated by UN-ILO to ensure good quality and accessibility of learning materials for the trainers, collecting SIYB training data, preparing SIYB country reports and reporting the figures to UN- ILO headquarter in Geneva on annual basses.

Market Share

Subsequently the SIYB program growth rapidly in Afghanistan and today there are more than three TSPs in Afghanistan including Aghez and ANAFEA.

The reasons behind the success of SIYB program in Afghanistan are:

- 1- SIYB-Afghanistan functions as a unified entity among all SIYB trainers across the country to ensure high quality of service delivery.
- 2- Introduction of SIYB program to wider spectrum of donors working in Afghanistan.
- 3- Acting as unified umbrella for 75% TSPs and most of the SIYB trainers who are actively working as the member of SIYB- Afghanistan.
- 4- The single supplier of modified SIYB learning materials in Afghanistan, which assures high quality learning materials for SIYB program.

Challenges

With the rapid growth of the SIYB program, competition accelerated among the TSPs in Afghanistan, which unfortunately meant some of the TSPs unfairly competed in the market using donor funds in order to gain their desired market share, for instance:

- Conducting free TOTs with donor money, while the other TSPs from the private sector offering the same service by charging fee
- Violating the copyright law and irresponsibly trying to print the SIYB materials which have been revised and modified by SIYB- Afghanistan based on Afghanistan context
- Preferring quantity over the quality e.g. conducting huge number of events and violating SIYB Global standards

Even though the SIYB program had remarkable success so far in Afghanistan; but if the DNH (Do Not Harm) principles are not followed by TSPs, the future of SIYB program and its sustainability will be in jeopardy.

The background features a series of overlapping, semi-transparent geometric shapes. On the left, there are vertical bands of light orange, light purple, and light green. Overlaid on these is a large, stylized arrow pointing towards the right. The arrow is composed of several overlapping layers in shades of yellow, light green, and light blue. The text 'Thank you' is positioned in the center-right of the image, overlapping the arrow and the background shapes.

Thank you