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**AFGHANISTAN**

## SNAPSHOT

# New Roles in Media for Afghan Women

**A media company in Afghanistan is growing by producing projects that center on women.**



(Photo: USAID/ABADE/Zia Roshandel)

*The all-woman team at Pardaz includes a writer and narrator, videographer/photographer, lighting technician, set and costume designer and sound mixer.*

***New equipment helped Pardaz Advertisement and Media Services double the size of its staff. An all-woman team now produces projects about and for women.***

When Ahmad Zia Roshandel saw the need for an all-woman team to cover stories about women in Mazar-e Sharif, the largest city in northern Afghanistan, he didn't imagine his own small media company could fill the gap. Pardaz Advertisement and Media Services was doing well, but Roshandel couldn't afford to double his workforce and resources.

However, with help from USAID's Assistance in Building Afghanistan by Developing Enterprises (ABADE) program, that is exactly what Roshandel was able to do. ABADE enabled Roshandel to purchase new cameras, sound and lighting equipment and other materials for an expansion. He also hired five new women employees.

In the conservative city of Mazar-e Sharif, the all-women team at Pardaz interviews, photographs and films female subjects and also covers women-only events. New employee Ghezal Jan Osmani says, "Pardaz paved the way for me to realize my professional goal of being a writer and photographer. It is fulfilling to be doing my dream job and be part of an all-women video production team."

Pardaz was also able to refurbish a four-room studio to accommodate the new staff, including a writer and narrator, videographer/photographer, lighting technician, set and costume designer and sound mixer.

With women in each of these key roles, Roshandel can take on new business. "I used to have a staff of six working in a small two-room studio. Now I have 12 workers who work in much bigger studios using modern equipment," he said. "I am able to accept more projects and produce a variety of video commercials and in-depth documentaries that center on women."