



SUCCESS STORY

Women Open Poultry Businesses in Qalat



Women farmers raising chicken in Qalat



Poultry is now a more affordable option than beef after drought reduced the number of cattle farmers in Zabul.

Government sponsored training builds women's businesses

Bibi Derkho, a poultry farmer in Afghanistan, has sent her children back to school after opening her own poultry business in Qalat district of Zabul province. *"Earlier my children were working to support the family,"* she said, *"now I am supporting the family and the children are going to school."* Bibi Derkho is one of 180 women selected by government representatives to attend a six month training in home-based poultry rearing.

As many as 35 women who attended the training have now opened their own home-based poultry rearing businesses in villages in and around Qalat city.

"As a result of this training, I have opened my own business and now have my own source of income to support my family financially," said one of the trainees.

In partnership with the provincial Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Ministry of Agriculture Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) trained 180 women in poultry breeding and poultry management. USAID also distributed a poultry package to all graduating students, which included 13 female and 2 male chicks.

"It is unbelievable for all of us how soon our family life changed from misery to prosperity," said Bibi Derkho. *"Many chicks have grown and laid eggs. We are selling the eggs and also using them as a source of food."* On average, women who started their own poultry businesses now earn between US\$3 and US\$5 each day, enough to cover living costs for the typical family in Zabul.

Beef prices have risen dramatically in recent months

after a drought that reduced the number of cattle farmers in the province. Poultry meat production has helped supplement the traditional beef and mutton diet, and has offered a more affordable option for families in Zabul.

Requested by the local government, this project opened doors for many women in Qalat. In the past, the women were unable to work and were reliant on their husbands or sons for a livelihood.

This initiative comes as part of a USAID project to improve government legitimacy by strengthening the delivery of government services to Afghan constituents.