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ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

AFGHANISTAN SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT (ASMED)

QUARTERLY REPORT APRIL TO JUNE 2010

JULY 2010

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QUARTERLY REPORT APRIL THROUGH JUNE 2010

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABA	Afghan Builders' Association
ABA	Afghan Banker's Association
ABC	Advanced Business Consulting
ACCA	Afghan Consulting Companies Association
ACCI	Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry
ACCW	Afghan Craft Carpets Weaving and Processing Company
ACEG	Afghan Carpet Exports Guild
ADP/E	Alternative Development Program/East
ADT	Agribusiness Development Team
AEW	Afghan Earth Works
AIBM	Afghan Institute of Business Management
AICB	Afghan Innovative Consulting Bureau
AISA	Afghanistan Investment Support Agency
AREDP	Afghanistan Rural Enterprise Development Program
ASMED	Afghanistan Small and Medium Enterprise Development
AWAA	Afghan Women's Agriculture Association
AWBF	Afghan Women's Business Federation
AWSBDA	Afghan Women's Social and Business Development Association
BBA	Bachelor in Business Administration
BDC	Business Development Center
BDS	Business Development Services
BSP	Business Service Providers
CBS	Comprehensive Business Services
CCI	Chamber of Commerce and Industries
CEFE	Competency Based Economies through Formation of Enterprise
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
EPAA	Export Promotion Agency of Afghanistan
ESDC	Entrepreneurship Skill Development Center
FICCI	Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industries
FMFB	First Micro Finance Bank
GDA	Global Development Alliance

HUDO	Hewad United Development Organization
IITF	India International Trade Fair
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
MDG	Marketplace Development Grant
MHP	Mini Hydro Power
MICC	Mashallah Ibrahim Construction Company
MoCI	Ministry of Commerce and Industries
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
PCCTNUK	Provincial Council of Crafters/Traders National Union of Kunduz
PCCUB	Provincial Council of the Crafters Union, Baghlan
PDT	Peace Dividend Trust
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
QSPA	Qataghan Seed Production Association
RFP	Request for Payment
RHL	Remote Hydro-lights
SCPC	Shadmerh Candy Production Company
SDLR	Social Development and Legal Rights
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
SPWA	Seed Producer and Wholesaler Association
TMF	Turquoise Mountain Foundation
WPCO	Women's Public Call Office
WWA	Women's World Association

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ASMED supports private sector growth in Afghanistan with the ultimate objectives of small and medium enterprise development and job creation. Following the awarding of the project's two-year extension and the allocation of supplemental funding for continued programming, ASMED expanded technical teams and established a new Central Region Office, enabling the project to increase the delivery of assistance to Afghanistan's private sector. Highlights of the last quarter's activities by program component are presented here.

COMPONENT 1: IMPROVE MARKET INFORMATION

Building market linkages through participation in trade fairs is a key priority for ASMED. Direct contact with buyers and agents, particularly from distant end-markets, not only provides valuable learning opportunities for Afghan SMEs, but generates significant economic growth. This quarter saw further penetration of Afghan SMEs into new and existing markets.

Highlight: Domotex Middle East, Dubai

The Afghan carpet traders completed another successful trade show at the DOMOTEX Middle East in Dubai May 10-12. DOMOTEX is the only specialized trade show for carpets, as it seeks to tap into an estimated \$22 billion value market for interior design products in the region. Although the market is suffering under the effects of the global economic recession, Afghan traders increased their sales and contracts by 15 percent from last year for an estimated total value of \$450,000. Buyers represented various hotel chains, luxury apartment complexes and carpet wholesalers, and retail outlets from across the region. Given this support to recapture the value-added inside the country, as well as higher-than-anticipated sales and contracts done at the two DOMOTEX trade shows in 2010, it appears that 2010-2011 will be a blockbuster year for the Afghan carpet industry. Further marketing initiatives this year by ASMED and EPAA include a trade mission to Russia and South Africa.

"I believe without your (ASMED) support we wouldn't be very successful. I really appreciate your effort. Your team did a great job. It is such a big honor for Afghanistan. I really did very good business. I sold all my carpets for around \$25,000, and I got orders for \$100,000 from Russia and Dubai."

– Abdul Hakeem, Afghan Rugs



COMPONENT 2: IMPROVE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT SKILLS

BDS providers are critical for sustained and efficient private sector growth. ASMED continues working with consultancy firms, local associations, and universities, to develop and expand trainings for SMEs in improved management practices, new investment and expansion, the introduction of new products and services, and the improvement of business productivity and profitability.

Highlight: First Computerized Carpet Design Center, Kabul

USAID/ASMED is establishing the first computerized carpet design center in Kabul. The purpose is to provide the proper carpet-designing software and to develop a network with the international design centers.

Afghan carpet industry is one of the most prominent and lucrative industries in Afghanistan. Lack of computerized design centers is one of the bottlenecks in the carpet industry. The design center will help carpet producers develop new ideas and keep manufacturers updated with international market demands and requirements.

The initial meetings arranged with ACEG, the largest carpet guild in Afghanistan, and Kabul Carpet Manufacturers and Exporters (KCMEA), Kabul's leading carpet association, finalized requirements and operational methods of the center.

ASMED arranged a meeting May 27 with Goethe Institute to collaborate and match all the possible resources to make the design center more successful. After explaining the project's objectives, the director of the institute was very receptive to the idea of supporting the carpet design center.



Paiman Atlas Group for carpet design
Center May 18
(USAID/ASMED)

COMPONENT 3: STRENGTHEN BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS

While continuing its support of national associations, this quarter, ASMED targeted smaller, locally based associations across the regions in improving its services, representation skills and financial sustainability. Consolidating nascent associations into effective organizations is a top priority for ASMED, working with each organization to define services and products that meet the needs of its members.

COMPONENT 4: GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCES AND GRANTS

The GDA and Grant teams continue implementation of new processing systems and controls, making it possible to process a great volume of activities, while greatly improving oversight and compliance. During this quarter, ASMED approved nine GDAs, committing \$2,275,878.00 and partners committing \$7,252,382.00. ASMED awarded 10 new grants during the quarter, totaling \$535,138. A total of six grants totaling 30,372 were completed during the quarter.

COMPONENT 5: HUMAN CAPACITY BUILDING

Building a professional, qualified workforce for continued private sector development continues to be a key priority for ASMED. Our professional internship programs support practical business training for Afghanistan's private sector leaders of tomorrow. With an extraordinary success rate in securing permanent employment for its graduates, ASMED continues receiving multiple requests for expansion.

Highlight: ASMED's New Internship Program Strategy

ASMED Internship Department worked on the new internship strategy in April, marking the transition of the internship program to the private or public sector universities in Afghanistan. Meetings conducted with private sector institutes – including Ajeer Institute Kabul, Kardan Institute Kabul, Karwan Institute Kabul, Khurasan Institute Nangarhar, Iqra Institute Paktia and, most recently, Heart University - discussed the transition. As a result the five institutes showed interest in the new strategy. ASMED will provide a manual to the institutes to help them to learn how to conduct and execute a successful internship program.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M&E)

ASMED Progress Towards Indicators, Q3 2010

PMP Ind	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR <i>(source of information)</i>	Region of Coverage	Qtr 03 10 April - June 2010			Cumulative Year 2010			LIFE OF PROJECT Totals		
			Target	Ttl	%	Target	Ttl	%	LOP Target	Ttl	%
Tier I Indicators											
II. BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT SERVICES											
Sub Immediate Result: Improve Business Development and Management Services											
2.1	50 BDS Firms Supported <i>(BSP Reg Forms)</i>	TOTAL	5	7	140%	20	13	65%	50	13	26%
		Central	1	2	200%	4	2	50%	10	2	20%
		Eastern	1	5	500%	4	6	150%	10	6	60%
		Western	1	0	0%	4	0	0%	10	0	0%
		Northern	1	0	0%	4	0	0%	10	0	0%
		Southern	1	0	0%	4	5	125%	10	5	50%
2.2	10,000 businesses supported. <i>(Enterprise and Association Reg forms)</i>	TOTAL	750	261	35%	9000	1478	16%	10,000	9,529	95%
		Central	200	106	53%	2400	145	6%	2,500	1,121	45%
		Eastern	181	49	27%	2175	325	15%	2,500	3,143	126%
		Western	181	26	14%	2175	334	15%	2,200	1,645	75%
		Northern	125	17	14%	1500	407	27%	1,800	2,681	149%
		Southern	83	63	101%	750	267	36%	1,000	939	94%
2.3	1450 new SMEs created. <i>(Enterprise Reg forms)</i>	TOTAL	100	3	3%	400	153	38%	1,450	800	55%
		Central	19	1	5%	75	2	3%	230	84	37%
		Eastern	25	1	4%	100	37	37%	300	134	45%
		Western	25	1	4%	100	113	113%	340	254	75%
		Northern	19	0	0%	75	1	1%	460	315	68%
		Southern	13	0	0%	50	0	0%	120	13	11%
2.4	140 SMEs accessed bank loans/equity as a result of USG assistance. <i>(Enterprise Survey DB, Reg. and Survey Forms)</i>	Afghanistan-wide	5	0	0%	20	1	5%	140	103	74%

PMP Ind	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR <i>(source of information)</i>	Region of Coverage	Qtr 03 10 April - June 2010			Cumulative Year 2010			LIFE OF PROJECT Totals		
			Target	Ttl	%	Target	Ttl	%	LOP Target	Ttl	%
III. BUSINESS ASSOCIATION											
Sub Immediate Result: Formalize and strengthen business associations to create economic reform and maintain sustainability											
	TOTAL		19	8	43%	75	14	19%	350	375	107%
3.2	350 existing business associations supported <i>(Association Reg forms)</i>	Central	4	1	25%	16	3	19%	80	91	114%
		Eastern	4	6	141%	17	6	35%	80	135	169%
		Western	4	1	25%	16	3	19%	75	73	97%
		Northern	4	0	0%	16	2	13%	75	62	83%
		Southern	3	0	0%	10	0	0%	40	14	35%
IV. PUBLIC-PRIVATE SECTOR ALLIANCES - GDA											
Sub Immediate Result: Establish private-public sector alliances to strategically invest in enterprises											
	TOTAL		\$3,000,000	\$4,887,782	163%	\$12,000,000	\$42,072,866	351%	\$36,000,000	\$55,890,663	155%
4.2	\$36 million leveraged through Private-Public partnerships (GDAs) <i>(GDA Agreements)</i>	Central	\$750,000	\$2,030,982	271%	\$3,000,000	\$2,926,082	98%	\$7,540,000	\$4,715,269	63%
		Eastern	\$750,000	\$1,441,600	192%	\$3,000,000	\$3,894,831	130%	\$7,225,000	\$5,318,411	74%
		Western	\$750,000	\$0	0%	\$3,000,000	\$26,779,745	893%	\$7,575,000	\$28,607,615	378%
		Northern	\$500,000	\$1,101,200	220%	\$2,000,000	\$7,936,205	397%	\$9,935,000	\$14,709,785	148%
		Southern	\$250,000	\$314,000	126%	\$1,000,000	\$536,005	54%	\$3,725,000	\$2,539,585	68%
V. HUMAN CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT											
Sub Intermediate Result: Build Capacity of Afghan work force to secure greater income through employment and improve performance of their enterprises											
	TOTAL		225	207	92%	900	770	86%	2,200	1779	81%
5.1	2200 internship opportunities provided <i>(Internship lists)</i>	Central	45	53	118%	180	116	64%	500	299	60%
		Eastern	45	29	64%	180	275	153%	550	860	120%
		Western	45	76	169%	180	125	69%	400	308	77%
		Northern	45	49	109%	180	111	62%	350	251	72%
		Southern	45	0	0%	180	143	79%	400	261	65%
5.2	500 Graduates Trained in Sector Specific Skills <i>(Graduate registration forms)</i>	TOTAL	75	36	48%	150	36	24%	500	36	7%

ASMED Progress Towards Indicators, Q3 2010

PMP Ind	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR <i>(source of information)</i>	Region of Coverage	Qtr 03 10 April - June 2010			Cumulative Year 2010			LIFE OF PROJECT Totals		
			Target	Ttl	%	Target	Ttl	%	LOP Target	Ttl	%
Tier II Indicators											
ALL COMPONENTS											
A	600 SMEs that have added value and/or diversified into higher value products and services as a result of ASMED assistance <i>(Enterprise Survey DB, Reg and Survey forms)</i>	TOTAL	75	0	0%	300	184	61%	600	184	31%
		Central	18	0	0%	70	32	46%	140	32	23%
		Eastern	20	0	0%	80	55	68%	160	55	34%
		Western	20	0	0%	80	52	65%	160	52	33%
		Northern	11	0	0%	45	16	35%	90	16	18%
		Southern	6	0	0%	25	29	117%	50	29	58%
B	25% increase in number of clients of Business Development Service providers <i>(BSP Survey)</i>	Afghanistan-wide	25%	0%	0%	25%	105%	420%	25%	105%	420%
C	55,000 full-time jobs created by USG supported activities <i>(Enterprise Survey DB, Reg. and Survey Forms)</i>	Afghanistan-wide	3750	0	0%	15,000	3,067	20%	55,000	37,579	68%
D	400 firms investing in improved technology as a result of ASMED assistance <i>(Enterprise Survey DB, Reg. and Survey Forms)</i>	Afghanistan-wide	50	0	0%	200	153	76%	400	2181	545%

PROGRAM COMPONENT I:

MARKET INFORMATION

FIELD ACTIVITIES – NATIONWIDE

Need's Identification Meeting

ASMED, along with Parwan Province PRT, met the provincial governor April 24. The meeting identified the needs and sought solutions for private sector development in the province. ASMED explained its activities to the officials. The governor requested building shops for women's parks. The ASMED team also visited two women's parks in Charikar to see the feasibility of a Marketplace Development Grant.

Domotex Middle East, Dubai

The Afghan carpet traders completed another successful trade show at the DOMOTEX Middle East in Dubai May 10-12. DOMOTEX is the only specialized trade show for carpets, as it seeks to tap into an estimated \$22 billion value market for interior design products in the region. The 10 Afghan companies that came to exhibit in ASMED's sponsored pavilion, represented the various carpet production regions of the country, and displayed various styles and designs - including Khal Mohammadi, Mushwani, Chobi Ziegler, Sherwan, Turkmen Bokhara, Kazak, Kargai and Belgique. Although the market is suffering under the effects of the global economic recession, Afghan traders increased their sales and contracts by 15 percent from last year for an estimated total value of \$450,000. Buyers

represented various hotel chains, luxury apartment complexes and carpet wholesalers, and retail outlets from across the region. They all said it was good to see traders at the show, as Afghanistan carpets are renowned throughout the world for its exquisite designs, subtle elegance, attractive colors and workmanship.

ASMED's partner, Export Promotion Agency of Afghanistan (EPAA), also sponsored a matchmaking event, bringing together the Afghan carpet traders and several buyers in a more intimate venue to discuss obstacles to trade between Afghanistan and the Gulf Region. The ASMED trade fair advisor also presented the various project initiatives supporting the value chain - including the cut-and-wash facilities and carpet-design training. Given this support to recapture the value-added inside the country, as well as higher-than-anticipated sales and contracts done at the two DOMOTEX trade shows in 2010, it appears 2010-2011 will be a blockbuster year for the Afghan carpet industry. Further marketing initiatives this year by ASMED and EPAA include a trade mission to Russia and South Africa. There is a higher demand anticipated in these markets.

"I have never experienced carpet exhibitions, though we are carpet producers in the west region of Afghanistan (Herat City). I never acted as a main seller in the international exhibition, but now I feel experienced enough to subscribe into the future exhibitions all around the world. Now I know the main carpet buyers and types of carpet they are looking for. Since returning from DOMOTEX in Dubai, we are trying to organize and renew our local design and upgrade them for international buyers."

– Shirjan Fushanj, North American Service Center

"I believe without your (ASMED) support we wouldn't be very successful. I really appreciate your effort. Your team did a great job. It is such a big honor for Afghanistan. I really did very good business. I sold all my carpets for around \$25,000, and I got orders for \$100,000 from Russia and Dubai."

– Abdul Hakeem, Afghan Rugs



Domotex Middle East May 2010, Dubai, UAE
(USAID/ASMED)

Carraramarmotec Marble Exhibition

The Carraramarmotec Marble Exhibition is a smaller, but very important fair held in Carrara, the heart of the marble capital in Italy. Carrara is famous worldwide for its unique and beautiful marble resources quarried for more than 500 years. Based on interest and results of the Afghanistan International Marble Conference II in Herat, ASMED sent a delegate of three to the Carrara Marble Show May 19-22 for immediate follow-up on opportunities presented at the marble conference. Conference attendees were able to display the vast resources and the ability to work in Afghanistan. They also said this was the complete opposite of nightly news depictions about Afghanistan. They agreed the focus should be on finding more quarries and different types of marble and granite samples. Suggestions included:

- Continue promoting Afghanistan marble recourse at international trade shows
- Establish new relationships with other key marble associations
- Focus on training in and out of the country
- Explore new quarries
- Evaluate the quarries
- Core drilling
- Sample collection
- Determine the quality and marketability of the samples

It was also suggested ASMED work closely with AMIA to take the advantage of the offer from the Italian Association for organizing the study tour/show in Verona, Italy in September.



Carraramarmotec Marble Exhibition, May 2010, Italy (USAID/ASMED)

Furniture Exhibition

ASMED organized the first-ever Furniture Manufacturers Exhibition June 17-20 with more than 40 manufacturers from Kabul, Herat, Balkh and Nangarhar Provinces exhibiting sample household and office furniture products in Kabul.

The exhibition was in response to a request from Camp Eggers Local Acquisition Group, who was unable to source Afghan-manufactured office equipment. ASMED BDS Department assisted Kabul Regional Contracting Center (KRCC) in its efforts to localize purchasing by conferring with local contractors at two “Vendor Open Days” organized at Camp Eggers in May. The concept of the exhibition was derived from discussions held during the “Vendor Open Days.”

ASMED Regional Offices contributed by identifying suppliers in respective regions, and the BDS Department audited each supplier, verifying local manufacturers. Vice President of Afghanistan and Government Ministers attended the exhibition opening ceremony.

The exhibition area was closed to the public June 19, and the Local Acquisition Group, toured the three exhibition halls, spoke to manufacturers and detailed capacity, firm size and capabilities. The Minister of Education also toured the exhibition site June 19, and the role of ASMED in the event was explained, as well as ASMED’s objectives and achievements since its inception.

A website is planned for these manufacturers, with their agreement, using funds from the project. The new Quality Management Program will assist manufacturers in developing “Quality Plans” to meet purchasing requirements for products being sourced by the Local Acquisition Group. The exhibition was organized using a \$16,000 budget made possible by ASMED BDS and GDA Departments.



Furniture Exhibition in Kabul, June 17-20 (USAID/ASMED)

FIELD ACTIVITIES – EAST

Marketing Materials for 35 SMEs/Associations

ASMED has created approximately 35 associations and supported many of them technically and financially. Most of the existing and ASMED-created associations/SMEs need marketing for their products and services. The associations lack marketing materials such as brochures, banners and business cards. Yoon Network will make marketing materials for 35 SMEs/Associations in the Eastern Region. The material includes brochures, two types of banners and business cards.

FIELD ACTIVITIES – WEST

Marble Conference

The Afghanistan International Marble Conference II occurred in Herat April 12-16. There was an opening ceremony at the 1001 Nights Restaurant hosted by USAID/ASMED welcoming the 17 International delegates from Italy, Canada, United States, Turkey, Indonesia and Norway. Highlights from the conference, held at the Jalaluddin Mohammad Balkhi Hall, Herat City, included:

- Marble samplings and local carvings;
- A technical workshop and a helicopter flight to marble quarries in the Cheshti Sharif area arranged for approximately 50 attendees;
- The Ministry of Mines and Italian Embassy announced approval of \$20 million each (\$40 million total) for construction and improvements on the existing road from Herat to Chesht. The Governor of Herat showed full commitment to coordinate efforts to begin work. This road will allow better access for traders in the varying districts;
- The Ministry of Commerce, in partnership with other organizations through the Export Promotion Agency, will establish a one-stop shop to process exporting documentation, bringing fluency in the flow of produced goods from Afghanistan to the rest of the world. Plans call for the shop to be open sometime this year;
- The Ministry of Finance agreed to remove tariffs on all Afghanistan-processed marble as of April 12, creating tax-exempt marble exporting;
- The Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), American investors and its Afghan partners agreed to provide access to credit ranging from \$100,000 to \$250 million as long-term loans for businesses;
- Afghan Growth Finance has agreed to provide access to finances ranging from \$50,000 to \$10 million with interest rates set between 9 and 17 percent for businesses.

Herat's Craftsmen visit Tajikistan Crafts Exhibition

ASMED supported participation of 20 (five women) Herat craftsmen from West Craftsmen Union in the Crafts Exhibition Dushanbe, Tajikistan June 25-27. Participants represented antiques, handicrafts, bakery, carpentry, carpets, metal work, agro-processing and leather production sectors. This event raised the visibility of Afghan goods in Tajikistani markets, established contracts between Tajik buyers and Afghan producers, and built important trade partnerships between the two countries. Afghan producers learned about the interests of Tajik consumers and tailored products and markets accordingly.

PROGRAM COMPONENT 2:

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & MANAGEMENT SKILLS

FIELD ACTIVITIES – CENTRAL

Afghan Contractor Training Center

BDS assisted on this program with meetings at the Afghan Military Training Center Kabul – Trainers taught Contracting Modules at the center April 25.

Veterinary Field Unit business training

ASMED assisted the Dutch Committee for Agriculture in preparing business training for Veterinary Field Units to service the animal husbandry needs of these areas June 24.

Start & Grow Your Own Business modules

ASMED has gathered an in-house compilation of the Start and Grow Your Own Business modules, previously contracted outside without success. Dari translations were available.

Food Safety Program

ASMED coordinated efforts with TAFA on Standards and Training in a pre HACCP-type course April 21. Preparatory work began using food safety consultants, based in the Regional Command East area.

First Computerized Carpet Design Center, Kabul

USAID/ASMED is establishing the first computerized carpet design center in Kabul. The purpose is not only to use computers for designing, which currently most of the carpet manufacturers are doing, but also to provide the proper carpet-designing software and to develop a network with the international design centers.

Afghan carpet industry is one of the most prominent and lucrative industries in Afghanistan. Lack of computerized design centers is one of the bottlenecks in the carpet industry. The design center will help carpet producers develop new ideas and keep manufacturers updated with international market demands and requirements.

The initial meetings arranged with ACEG, the largest carpet guild in Afghanistan, and Kabul Carpet

Manufacturers and Exporters (KCMEA), Kabul's leading carpet association, finalized requirements and operational methods of the center.

ASMED arranged a meeting May 27 with Goethe Institute to collaborate and match all the possible resources to make the design center more successful. After explaining the project's objectives, the director of the institute was very receptive to the idea of supporting the carpet design center.

In a separate meeting, ASMED team met with the dean of Fine Arts Faculty at Kabul University May 24. The university agreed to give a series of lectures on the traditional motifs, designs and the history of carpet weaving in Afghanistan and the region. In addition, the assistant professor for graphic design and computer graphics expressed his interest in lecturing at the design center. In another meeting May 25, ASMED discussed the design center with Turquoise Mountain Foundation. The foundation is interested in collaborating on this project.



Paiman Atlas Group for carpet design
Center May 18
(USAID/ASMED)

Business in a Box

ASMED, with Paiwastoon, an established IT development company, has developed a training system, which will be menu- and exercise-driven from a handheld laptop. Many association members, farmers and other agricultural producers, processors, village groups, cooperatives and individuals are difficult to reach due to security considerations or because terrain makes access difficult. A high proportion of training costs comprise expenditures on logistics and security. Delivery of a training module can be assisted substantially by transferring the content into a “netbook” designed for this type of use,

With this Computer Based Training (CBT), content is delivered through the computer, using any combination of text, video, audio, or interactive assessment. It can be as basic as reading text on a screen or as advanced as answering quiz questions based on a computerized video the trainee has viewed. With CBT, the training program is stored on the hard-drive and can be upgraded by a USB memory stick. The training program for Veterinary Field Units (VFU) presently under construction will be the test module for this CBT-based system and is being developed by Paiwastoon and Flag International with oversight supplied by ASMED.

FIELD ACTIVITIES – EAST

Handicraft training for women, Nangarhar, Laghman and Kunar Provinces

A total of 200 women - 100 in Nangarhar, 50 in Laghman and 50 in Kunar Provinces – received training in handicraft production as a precursor to starting their own businesses, generate supplemental incomes and create further jobs for the community. The first round of handicraft training began April 11 for 50 women in two classes for 45 days in Shaikhmisri Camp. At the end of the training, participants were able to produce high-quality handicrafts with designs to meet market demand.

Gem cutting, polishing facility, Jalalabad

The first gemstone cutting and polishing facility opened in Jalalabad April 25. Representatives from the Ministry of Mines, gemstone traders, NGOs and donor agencies attended the opening ceremony. Representatives consider the facility very important for the development of overall gemstone sector in the region. The owner of the facility has hired two qualified trainers from Jaipur, India who, in one year, will train approximately 50 people in gemstone cutting and polishing. The facility will help local gemstone traders have their products cut and polished in Jalalabad.



Gem cutting and polishing facility
(USAID/ASMED)

AWBF Handicraft training

ASMED Jalalabad funded a one-week handicraft training to improve the handicraft quality of the 15 Women Relief Association members working in handicrafts June 3. The training allowed them to improve the quality of their handicrafts. AWBF implemented the training.



AWBF Handicraft training
(USAID/ASMED)

Handicrafts Training for women, Laghman & Nangarhar Provinces

USAID/ASMED supported Afghan Women Social and Business Development Association to train 100 women in Nangarhar and Laghman Provinces in handicraft production. The training allows the women to start their own businesses, generate supplemental income, and create further jobs for the community. The first round of handicraft training began April 11 for 50 women for 45 days in Shaikh Misri Camp, outside of Jalalabad, and 50 women in Laghman Province. Participants received Certificates of Completion May 26 and 27.

Handicraft Training Batch, Nangarhar & Kunar Provinces

AWSBDA began the second batch training of handicrafts for an additional 100 women in Nangarhar and Kunar Provinces May 29. Fifty women from Chawkay District, Kunar Province, and 50 from Jalalabad City were trained.

Pathology equipment handover to Moghul Khan Memorial Hospital

USAID/ASMED supported Moghul Khan Memorial Hospital in the purchase of Pathology Lab Equipment. The first shipment arrived and was handed over to the hospital June 6. The equipment included:

- Tissues processing kit
- Microtome
- Embedding Center (also called Paraffin Embedding Center)
- Slide Stain Set (Tissues Slide Staining Kit)
- Microscope and Camera

FIELD ACTIVITIES – WEST

Artisan Producers BSP

USAID/ASMED supported an international business-planning consultant May 29 to support four Herat City-based entrepreneurs (one woman), to develop a comprehensive business plan with five years of financial projections for their new start-up venture. Their venture introduces Afghanistan's first "on-line Marketplace" company, Herat4soo.com (pronounced herat-char-soo, and is named after the very famous ancient market place in Herat of that name). The company will operate as an international artisan production wholesaler/retailer.

Business training, Badghis Carpet dealers

ASMED supported an exposure visit and training for Badghis carpet dealers to develop market linkages and demonstrate the use of carpet cutting machines as post production value addition. The team visited Tahmina Association June 15, and saw their carpet-cutting machines. Tahmina Association gave training on the machine usage and helped them practice.

The delegation met Herat carpet dealers and discussed mutual problems, linkages and bottlenecks June 16. They built market-linkages and carpet sales with Herat carpet dealers, and used carpet-cutting machine for the first time.



Trainer teaching carpet dealer's method of cutting carpet and process of machine work
Herat Province
USAID/ASMED

FIELD ACTIVITIES – NORTH

Business Development Training, Mazari Sharif

With USAID/ASMED technical support, Balkh BDS conducted the Basic Business Development Training course for 20 women entrepreneurs who are the members of the Women World Association. This training course strengthens the theoretical and practical knowledge of members to start and sustain businesses at the Mazar Women Market. It will also help participants identify constraints hindering business skill development, provide professional technical support and prove beneficial for conducting matchmaking events with banks in Mazar City. The course ended May 2.



Basic Business Development training
Mazari Sharif
(USAID/ASMED)

Business Development Training, Mazari Sharif

USAID/ASMED completed the Basic Business Development Training course for 20 women entrepreneurs, members of Women World Association May 2. This training course builds up the theoretical and practical knowledge of the association members to start and sustain their businesses at Mazar Women Market.

FIELD ACTIVITIES – SOUTH

SME Business Development, Helmand Province

ASMED started three business development trainings for 60 women SMEs in the fields of SME Business Basic Accounting, SME Business Management and Marketing in partnership with Hewad United Business Consultancy began April 3 for 30 days in Nahri Saraj District, Helmand Province. This training supported women-owned businesses in more rural and unsecured areas, where women can increase their productivity, gain more profit and provide quality products. Participants learned standard techniques of basic accounting, including systematic financial recording, preparing profit/loss accounts, effective management of their businesses, clients and products, proper communication skills, identifying new marketing alternatives, etc. It also encouraged other women in the area to start their own businesses.

Business Development Training, Daman District

ASMED successfully completed SME Business Accounting, SME Business Management and Marketing Training in partnership with HUDO for 20 women SMEs in Daman District for 27 days (March 6 to April 6) in Da Ghara Kali Village, Daman District, Kandahar Province. Participants practiced accounting, management skills and marketing techniques, which will periodically increase their productivity, profits, enhance quality products, and increase clients.

Business Development Training, Helmand Province

ASMED successfully completed the Accounting, Business Management and Marketing Training for 60 women in Nahri Saraj District, Helmand Province for 27 days from April 3 to May 9 in partnership with Hewad United Business Consultancy. Participants learned different methods and techniques of standard accounting, management and marketing through lectures and group discussions. This will help the trainees keep records of their accounts properly and enables them to find out about the profit and loss of their businesses. Overall, this training has widely supported women-owned SMEs in the area, while others inquired about starting their own businesses.



**Basic business development training
Mazari Sharif
(USAID/ASMED)**



**Graduation Ceremony: Business
Development Trainings for women, Daman
District, Kandahar
(USAID/ASMED)**



**Graduation Ceremony: Training for
women owned SMEs in Nahri Saraj
District, Helmand Province
(USAID/ASMED)**

AutoCAD Training, Kandahar City

ASMED started AutoCAD training for 25 engineers in Kandahar City for 60 days (120 training hours) consisting of both theoretical and practical sessions June 20. The program was implemented by Hewad United Business Consultancy (HUBC) in collaboration with Loy Kandahar Construction Companies Association (LKCCA) for the civil engineering staffs of construction companies who are members of LKCCA. This program not only enhances the capacities of the construction companies, but also increases services, which creates job opportunities at a local level. This also helps improve the quality of construction jobs as per required standards which empower local government and supports donor agencies by working with qualified construction partners.

PROGRAM COMPONENT 3:

BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS

FIELD ACTIVITIES – CENTRAL

Cold Storage Opening Ceremony, Panjsher Province

ASMED, in collaboration with Koh-e-Tolkha Cooperative based in Bazarak District of Panjshir Province, conducted an opening ceremony April 27, displaying the new cool storage facility. The facility has the capacity of 50 metric tons for storing fresh fruit and other agricultural products.

The agribusiness in Afghanistan plays a significant role in its economic system. Developing this sector will contribute to the country's economic sustainability.

In the past, one of the major concerns was the lack of product storage facilities. Farmers had to sell their products upon harvesting, thus flooding the market with fresh products, reducing the price to the lowest level, leaving farmers with great profit losses. In addition, about 30 percent of the products were unsold due to spoilage.

Panjshir's farmers suffer the same fate as farmers in other parts of the country. Building this cool storage allows local farmers to keep the produce longer and sell the produce when prices are more reasonable during post-harvest months, bringing more income to the farmers, allowing them to sell over an extended period.

The Deputy Provincial Governor, ASMED and PRT representatives, and local residents of Panjshir Province attended the ceremony.



Opening ceremony for Koh-e-Tolkha Cold Storage in Panjsher (USAID/ASMED)

Spring Gift Exhibition by AWBF

AWBF organized a Spring Gift Exhibition in coordination with 20 members at Kabul Serena Hotel May 13 and 14. AWBF is an apex association representing 110 sub-associations with a total of 30,150 members.



Spring Gift Exhibition at Kabul Serena Hotel, May 13 (USAID/ASMED)

FIELD ACTIVITIES – EAST

Nangarhar Association Incubator's Purchase Order modified

Seven agribusiness associations (Eastern Region Fruit Growers, Nangarhar Fish Producers, Nangarhar Beekeepers, Agriculture Development Association for Afghanistan, Nangarhar Seed Producers and Wholesalers, Nangarhar Nursery Growers and Spin Ghar Poultry Farmers) were placed in the basement of Nangarhar Agricultural Directorate in Jalalabad City after its renovation by ASMED in 2007. In order to make them sustainable, ASMED provided technical and financial support, sponsored them at national and international trade fairs and printed business cards, brochures and banners. The associations drastically improved and took steps toward sustainability, although they still need financial support until Sept. 30.

FIELD ACTIVITIES – WEST

New Technologies for Carpet Producers

ASMED supported the Tahmina Industrial and Cultural Association to install new productive technologies (carpet-cutting equipment). The association, based in Herat Province, will use this equipment to support its 130 members (110 women) to improve the “final cut” quality, therefore improving the profitability. The grant gave the association access to two sets of high-quality carpet-cutting equipment procured from Jalalabad.



Tahmina Industrial & Cultural Association
(USAID/ASMED)

FIELD ACTIVITIES – NORTH

Aryana Poultry Production in Mazar

With support of an ASMED grant, the association will increase the poultry productions including one-day-old chick and poultry feed. The association members work closely with farmers, indirect beneficiaries of the project. The farmers will get the poultry production on a discounted price. The next step of the implementation will be procurement of a master chick incubator with capacity of 40,000 eggs per cycle (20 days). So far, the association has completed the registration with the Ministry of Justice. The association and ASMED implementation team collected the quotations for the needed master chick incubator. Delivery of this big-capacity master chick will happen in 15 weeks.

Mazar Dry Fruits Processing Association

The association has registered at the Ministry of Justice with USAID/ASMED grant support. This warehouse will enable association members to purchase large quantities of dry fruits and raise their incomes accordingly.

Amo Liquorice Association Shortepa, Balkh Province

The grant support to Amo Liquorices Association will assist the association members in building one storehouse, purchasing a liquorice-cutting machine and the processing tools. ASMED technical support encourages liquorice traders and farmers to join the association to improve their businesses, since the association has planned to support its members to increase their revenues through introducing international standards, methods of increasing production, marketing techniques and increasing value addition.

With technical support of ASMED Mazar, the Kaweyan BDS Company completed registration with the Ministry of Justice. A construction company was selected and subcontracted to construct the storehouse.

Ajmeer Bee Keeping Association, Baghlan-i-Jadid District

With ASMED technical support, the association members collected 92 honey hive boxes as well as a Wax Printing machine, assisting members in increasing their production, as well as improving the quality of produced honey. It will also increase the income of the association. AZAR BDS firm conducted the technical training course on Bee Keeping Techniques for 46 members.

Gemstone Training Center, Kunduz City

The ASMED grant support to the Jewelers Guild in Kunduz City includes purchasing tools and equipment for a Gemstone Processing and jewelry skills training center to improve the product quality, and conduct skills training for members and non-members in gemstone cutting, polishing and jewelry manufacturing. The training will improve business opportunities and provide jobs for family businesses and others. Provision of one unit big generator with high-capacity (55 KW) and one smaller one (5.5 KVA), ensure availability of adequate electricity to the Gemstone Training Center. This will increase the Jewelry Guild's production and income as well as will assist training more SMEs to acquire skills on the jewelry processing business.



Generators for gemstone center, Kunduz province

Mazar Dry Fruits Processing Association

USAID/ASMED supported the association to register at the Ministry of Justice May 20. Construction work of a warehouse for the association is 70 percent completed. Provision of the warehouse enables association members to purchase large quantities of dry fruits and raise their incomes accordingly.

Qataghan Seed Production Association, Baghlan Province

ASMED supported the Qataghan Seed Production Association, particularly utilization of the donated tools and equipment contributed to the association's improved/enhanced production. Farmers in Baghlan Province are aware of the association, and they have recognized the Qataghan Seed Production Association as one of the most reliable sources of seed production. This has motivated some of the farmers to trust and gain membership to the association. ASMED supported the association in the design and procurement of 6,000 brochures in May. These brochures explain the objectives, products and services of the association.



Seed quality control training course, Baghlan province (USAID/ASMED)

Turkmen Women Active Rights Association

USAID/ASMED signed value chain improvement grant agreement with Turkmen Women Active Rights Association June 21. This project is designed to establish two felt carpet training and a manufacturing center in Shortepa District, Balkh Province and Khanaqa District, Jawzjan Province. It will replace the traditional tools and equipment to modern technology equipment ensuring the production capacity is increased.



VIP visits a carpet center, Mazari Sharif (USAID/ASMED)

PROGRAM COMPONENT 4:

GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCES AND GRANTS

Global Development Alliances (GDA)

FIELD ACTIVITIES – NATIONWIDE

Afghan Marmar

The marble industry has expanded rapidly since the 1990s. International trade is an increasing component of the marble market. Large domestic demand exists in Afghanistan that currently absorbs limited local production and imported marble from neighboring countries. With numerous high-quality deposits, the Afghanistan dimension stone industry has great potential to become a driving force in the Afghan economy. Furthermore, a vibrant dimension stone industry will provide thousands of rural jobs at the quarries, many of which are located in poppy-growing regions. Projections by the Ministry of Commerce indicate the industry could grow to annual revenues of \$450 million in 10 years – with more than 95 percent of that in exports. The industry was hindered for more than 25 years by its lack of investment into knowledge and equipment. Growth is contingent on private sector investment and the availability of adequate technical assistance. AMM has access and license to extract marble from Tang-e-Asadabad Mine with high-quality and quantity white and black marble. Three years ago, AMM invested more than \$660,000 in mining and processing operations, and has been mining and processing marble for export to Kuwait and supply for local consumption. USAID approved the Afghan Marble Mining Public/Private Partnership.

Paman Atlas Group Carpet

At \$150 million in 2009, the largest official export of Afghanistan is carpets. Eighty percent of unfinished Afghan carpets are shipped to Pakistan for cutting and washing, and these carpets are exported with “Made in Pakistan” labels, since there are few local, and no large-scale processing facilities with advanced technology in Afghanistan. An opportunity for Afghans to capture higher value from carpet production is lost due to a lack of good, quality carpet finishing facilities and access to international markets. According to On the Frontier Group (OTF) analysis, Afghanistan can capture up to twice the higher value if there are more trade-related activities in country. With establishment of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (IRoA) and support of international donors, Afghanistan has shown great progress in terms of reconstruction of the country. Afghanistan has emerged from nearly 30 years of conflict and is rapidly growing at 10 percent real GDP annually. Private business is booming, with the establishment of more than 18 banks, five telecommunication companies, four airlines and hundreds of small manufacturers. The Paman Atlas Group (PAG) facility will replace the Pakistani carpet cut and wash facilities. This will enable Afghans to re-establish the Afghan Carpet Brand and export with the “Made in Afghanistan” brand showing product differentiation. USAID approved the Paiman Atlas Group partner.

Awaz Communication airs first episode

Awaz Communications will produce a weekly Business & Economical newsmagazine called “Afghan Successes” to be broadcast via television and radio. By showing successful enterprises and projects, while visually demonstrating the true business opportunities Afghanistan offers, the global aim of the program is to encourage private initiatives and investments. Primarily targeting the Afghan business community, the program combines information (interviews, features) and entertaining formats (reports, portraits, business tips), attracting a wider audience of young entrepreneurs, farmers, and women. An important component of the program each week will be its dedication to Afghan business women. Recorded in Dari and Pashto, the program content mixes topics and formats in both languages, using simple and accessible words and concepts. The show includes guests from private sector, leading political figures, and key members from the business community. The initial episode, covering TMF in Kabul and the Olive Factory in Nangarhar, aired on Radio Television Afghanistan April 24. Other topics included: a poultry farm, the Annual International Marble Conference, the first oil/water paint company, and a candy factory - all in Herat.

One Laptop Per child deployed in Kabul

After years of war, instability, and times when computer technology was banned, ASMED is bringing laptops designed to improve education into Afghan schools. This classroom of the future is in Afghanistan today thanks to an innovative GDA between ASMED, OLPC, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, Roshan Social Programs, and Afghan IT Company Paiwastoon Networking Services. With the help of ASMED, the Afghan Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, gave the low-cost, power efficient laptops to approximately 313 students and teachers at the Jamhuryat Technical School in Kabul April 27. This brought the total number of laptops distributed to 3,700 in Afghanistan, and close to 1.4 million units worldwide.

Afghan Marmar Company

USAID/ASMED signed a GDA contract May 23 for \$297,000 with Afghan Marmar Company. The GDA partner will travel to Turkey to purchase equipment. Afghan Marmar Company has access and license to extract marble from Tangi Asadabad quarry with high-quality and -quantity white and black marble. Three years ago, Afghan Marmar invested more than \$660,000 in mining and processing operations and has been mining and processing marble for export to international and local markets. Current AMM quarrying operations consist of blasting with dynamite and black powder, a process that yields irregularly shaped pieces of stone that is difficult to process, and wastes roughly 40 percent of the marble at the quarry. Blasting not only creates 80 percent waste, costing AMM more than 30 percent of its operating returns, but also risks destroying the value of the deposit. The AMM processing plant is equipped with primary cutting and polishing equipment and produces non-standard marble with uneven width. The produced marble is of international standards and limits the ability of AMM to capitalize on the lucrative export market for its products. In order to capitalize on available export opportunities and address aforementioned bottleneck issues that hinder higher returns, AMM wants to invest in proper mining and processing equipment. The mining equipment will enable the company to extract blast-free marble blocks. With additional investment in marble processing equipment, AMM will be able to produce tiles of standard width and different sizes sold at 50 percent higher than local markets and exported to other countries.

Pamir Feed Mill

USAID/ASMED signed a contract with Pamir Feed Mill May 23 for \$159,700. This GDA supports the feed mill, producing and supplying poultry feed and other necessary equipment for regional and national markets. The feed mill will produce quality feed at lower prices. The initiative will have the overall benefit of providing an important foundation of the poultry value chain for poultry farmers throughout Afghanistan. Currently, poultry feed is mainly imported from Pakistan and Iran with an average rate of 16,000 to 21,000 metric tons per year (Data Source: Jalalabad and Hirat Custom House and Chemonics International).

The feed mill will also function as a primary source for direct employment opportunities for 24 households. Other indirect employees will be the farmers providing raw materials into the feed mill. Wholesalers and retailers in different regions will become supporters of their households. By supporting and facilitating the establishment of the feed mill to increase the sustainability of the poultry sector in Afghanistan, this GDA aims to redress the high cost of the feed and address the qualitative and quantitative demand of the feed in the local, regional and national market.

Mushkani Paper Recycling Company

This GDA of \$85,000, approved May 19, with the partner contribution of \$314,000 supports the creation of a paper recycling company in Kandahar. The factory will produce enough paper for the carton manufacturing companies in Kandahar at a reasonable time and cost. It will also create job opportunities for approximately 537 skilled and unskilled workers. The paper-recycling machine will produce paper of various sizes for various purposes - primarily manufacturing cartons used for fresh and dried fruits. Most recycling machines produce waste. The waste from the paper-recycling machine will be minced and shredded paper. The shredded paper will protect products from damage during shipping. Establishment of this industry will benefit:

- Producers of cartons/cardboard boxes for packing dried and fresh fruits in Afghanistan who will be able to get raw materials for their production line locally;
- Potential employees who will have job opportunities;
- New SME creation across the region and;
- SMEs exporting dried/fresh fruits to international markets

Olum Wool Spinning, Washing & Drying Company

This GDA approved May 23 for \$124,000 with the partner contribution of \$411,000 will assist the Olum Company in its plans to establish a wool spinning, washing and dyeing facility. The operation consists of three stages. The unprocessed wool received from sheep breeders is washed, removing all dirt and insects. After drying the wool, it is processed into the wool-spinning machine for making wool yarns. The final operation is wool dyeing. (The company will also be selling the colorless wool yarns.) Some carpet production companies prefer to dye the wool separately. Wool dyeing is a complicated technique, and not each company has these capabilities. The new facility will benefit the entire region's carpet sector. The Olum Company has already consulted with other companies, association members, and received positive feedback on the purchase of pure wool yarns. Starting the wool spinning and extending wool yarns dyeing in Aqcha will help cover a wide segment of potential consumers. The other important factor will be a support to sheep-breeders in the Central and Southern Provinces.

FIELD ACTIVITIES – EAST

Nurgal Marketplace completed

With assistance from an ASMED Marketplace Development grant, the completion of the construction of stalls at Nurgal District, Kunar Province concluded April 27. In addition to creating 10 SMEs and providing permanent job opportunities for at least 20 locals, this MDG gives the community improved access to its daily necessities.

The District Governor's Office has already received 40 applications from local retailers for the 12-market stall facility. A committee will be set up to review the applications for selection.



Nurgal Market Stall.
(USAID/ASMED)

FIELD ACTIVITIES – WEST

Ayoubi Poultry Farming Inputs

ASMED secured the procurement of a high-capacity Industrial Poultry Hatchery for the Ayoubi Poultry Industrial Company. The company is the main regional supplier of imported poultry farming inputs, which also operates a European-standard processing plant for supply of frozen chicken products. The GDA supports the introduction of new technologies (improved breed mother stocks, industrial incubators, a feed-mill combined with a blood and offal processor), allowing the company to supply inputs of a higher quality and lower price than current imports. The GDA provides 234 new jobs (31 direct, 203+ indirect) in the region upon completion in 2011.

Steel Foundry

With the completion of the purchase of the technology and support in the shipping to the Herat site May 2, ASMED continued to support the implementation of a GDA with the Afghan Folad Steel Mill Company (AFSMC), currently the only regional producer of steel reinforcement bars (rebar) used in reinforced concrete construction. Through this GDA, AFSMC plans to expand its operations to recycle scrap steel into the raw product for the production of a range of construction inputs. Through the supply of a "12-Ton Capacity Furnace Unit", the GDA will allow the company to source raw materials domestically, redressing its existing sourcing difficulties, creating the first domestic buyer in the scrap metal value-chain. By facilitating the only regional producer of steel construction inputs to develop a domestic production of their inputs, this GDA aims to redress the high cost of these inputs, while vastly increasing its availability in the local market. In redressing this bottleneck in the value-chain (i.e. lowering cost and ensuring a regular supply of inputs), the GDA will increase the profitability of the growing number of construction companies in the country. In addition, the GDA will also provide the missing component for a large-scale formal network of scrap metal dealers to develop in the country. The GDA will provide more than 745 new jobs (95 direct, 650+ indirect) across the country upon completion in 2011.

FIELD ACTIVITIES – NORTH

Sadat Tomato Paste Production Company

The Sadat Tomato Paste Company project began Aug. 31. Construction of the cold storage is 70 percent complete. The company received the fourth installment of the GDA April 26 to purchase quality-checking equipment. The company has already built a room for the laboratory and will purchase the equipment before the tomato season.

Shadmehr Candy Production Company

Machinery was installed at the Shadmehr Candy Production Company April 5. The project was approved Sept. 7, 2009. This equipment increases the production level of the factory from 4 to 10 metric tons per day with better quality and shapes.

Pamir Iodine Salt Production Company

Pamir Iodine Salt received the second installment for purchasing of equipment for a power supply and a 540 kw generator. This generator is going to provide power for the company when city power is unavailable.



Cold storage of Sadat tomato paste
(USAID/ASMED)



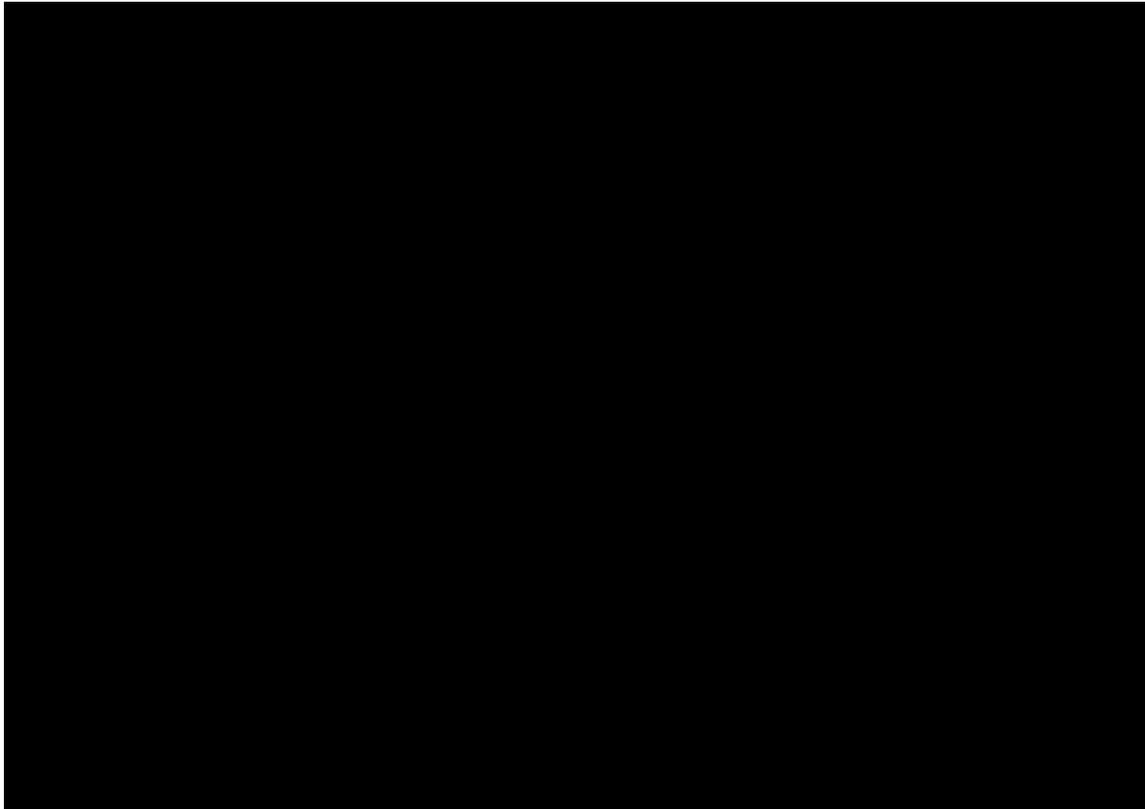
Shadmehr Candy Production Equipment
(USAID/ASMED)

Abdul Rahman Wool Dyeing Facility

The Abdul Rahman Wool Dyeing Facility project began Nov. 25, 2009. The project has received the first installment for purchasing good quality wool spinning and wool washing equipment from Pakistan. With ASMED's support, the company will begin industry-level wool spinning in Andkhoy District, which is famous for its carpet throughout Afghanistan.

Takht Rustam Marble Company

The Takht Rustam Marble Company has received 40 percent of the second installment of a grant for purchasing extracting marble equipment from India. The representative of Takht Rustam Marble Company, together with ASMED Mazar developmental staff, made a visit to India in search of the required equipment. The new equipment extracts the marble in a modern technological way by cutting from the quarry sans rock blasting.



GRANTS

Afghanistan Marble Industry Association

ASMED awarded Afghanistan Marble Industry Association (AMIA) an association grant (\$134,237) April 20. The grant project will support them in promoting marketing materials and conduct a global positioning system (GPS) survey to locate marble and granite resources in Afghanistan.

The AMIA is a newly established association, registered with the Ministry of Justice.

The quality and quantity of Afghan marble deposits provides a comparative advantage the industry can leverage to build a competitive advantage. With numerous high-quality deposits, the Afghanistan dimension stone industry has great potential to benefit from this growth and become a driving force in the Afghan economy.

With investment and training on modern marble extraction and processing technology, Afghanistan can be very competitive in the region. Furthermore, a vibrant dimension stone industry will provide thousands of rural jobs at the quarries.

Turkmen's Women Actives Rights Association

To modernize, reduce production cost and increase the profitability and output, ASMED supported Turkmen's Women Active Rights Association through a Value Chain Improvement Grant (\$16,600) to procure machinery for felt carpet production June 15. The grant will also be used to conduct training seminars on new felt carpet designs, consultancy training, construction of platforms and digging wells.

Turkmen's Women Actives Rights Association is located in Khanaqa District, Jawzjan Province and Shortepa District, Balk Province. The association mainly targets the Turkmen women living in remote areas of country, women with low literacy rate and lack of awareness of economic opportunities. Turkmen's Women Actives Rights Association is also working with women in promoting their handicraft skills, especially handmade felt carpets. The Association works at finding markets and providing them with guidance to improve the quality of their work and ultimately improve their economic condition. Fifty trainees will directly benefit from the project and they will be certified as master trainers. After the successful completion of the project, they can train more villagers at these manufacturing centers.



Handmade felt carpet, Turkmen Women's Actives Rights Association (USAID/ASMED)

Charikar Fruit Processing

ASMED awarded a Value Chain Improvement Grant (\$15,000) June 15. The project helps Charikar Fruit Processing to sort, clean and pack the fruits and vegetables for export to United Arab Emirates. The grantee is located north of Charikar City, Parwan Province at the regional agricultural area. This is a pilot project to integrate the whole value chain from the farmer to the final customer.

The Charikar Fruit Processing is packaging fresh fruits and vegetables for export and local markets. The packaging facility will be established in Charikar in accordance to the international standards and requirements.

Etefaq Dawlatabad Carpet Weaving Company

ASMED funded a Value Chain Improvement Grant (\$28,400) to support Etefaq Dawlatabad Carpet Weaving Company in Dawlatabad District, Balkh Province June 15. This value chain grant helps the company increase carpet production and creates 220 permanent jobs for carpet weavers. This grant will contribute 495 square meter carpet loom together with benches (160 meters), printing poster and brochure and a 10 KW Generator. A total of 220 (20 women) Skilled Carpet weavers benefits from this project.



Etefaq Dawlatabad Carpet Waving Company, Balkh Province (USAID/ASMED)

Western Region Craftsmen Union

ASMED funded an Association Grant (\$8,800) to the Western Region Craftsmen Union, a regional business association June 16. The grant supports the association to sell, promote their members' products and develop trade relations with producers/wholesalers in neighboring countries by participating in a regional business promotion exhibition held in June in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. An Afghan market linkage event was held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan June 25-27. Twenty craftsmen (five women) participated.

Completed Grants:

Bihsud District Market Construction

USAID/ASMED funded a small wholesale market building (\$11,000) through a Marketplace Development grant for 14 individual shops inside the larger bazaar area. Construction was completed May 25. The market is located in Bihsud District, Nangarhar Province.

The market will serve as a centralized wholesale market, resulting in lower transportation costs and increased wholesale prices by providing a storage facility. This should encourage more local farmers and merchants to bring more food, vegetables and other items to the market, which will create more job opportunities. Approximately 8,000 men and 1,000 women will be indirect beneficiaries of this project. The grant was completed May 15.



Constructed Bihsud District Market
(USAID/ASMED)

Waste Collection System in Sar-e-Pul

Sari Pul waste collection system project was completed and handed over in an official ceremony to the mayor and community of Sari Pul June 22.

This project improves the sanitary system in the city and will decrease the health risk to the population. This project encouraged the shopkeepers and customers to stay longer in the market, increasing commercial activities and creating job opportunities.



Sari Pul Trashcan and Waste Collection, Sari Pul
(USAID/ASMED)

Trashcan for Aibak City, Samangan Province

Aibak City, Marketplace Development Grant was completed and handed over May 11.

The MDG improved the market sanitary system and decreased the health risk to the population.

The district governor of Aibak was happy for this project as the project helped the community being safe from illness, and the project was designed to keep the city clean.



Aibak City, Samangan Province

Foroshgah Emergency Relief Fund

USAID/ASMED Marketplace Development grant (\$281,000) provides additional emergency relief for 80 shopkeepers of Foroshgah-e Afghan shopping center, which was affected by the damage caused during the Taliban attack in January.

The second emergency relief fund continues assisting shopkeepers in re-establishing their businesses by refurbishing shops and restocking inventories.



Foroshgah-e Afghan Shopping Center,
May 11
(USAID/ASMED)

Grain Market Sari Pul Province

ASMED completed the grain market project in Sari Pul and handed it over to the community May 12. In this market, several types of seeds and dry fruits such as wheat, barley, peas, beans, sesame, almond, walnuts and many more are available. Sari Pul grain market is a main area where people from far districts and villages come to supply their needs.

“Before, we had several problems during the cold and hot seasons, and now, after having concrete pavements, we feel very good in winding, loading and the market looks very clean. We are happy the USAID assisted with the rehabilitation of our market. On behalf of 35 shopkeepers, I am thankful for ASMED, which is the first organization to show interest in grain market.”

-Mohammad Khairullah a shopkeeper of the grain market.

Ghoryan’s Women Saffron Association

The Association Development Grant (\$9,972) funded to Ghoryan’s Women Saffron Association was closed in June. The following equipment and services has been funded by the grant:

- Software (Microsoft windows and office) IT equipment including desktop computer, UPS, printer + scanner + copier (All in One)
- Computer and admin Desk and two chairs
- File Drawers
- Plastic baskets for Saffron Collection
- Sign board and marketing material (brochures and business cards)
- Saffron post harvest and Marketing training

Ongoing MDG Projects

Women’s Market in Mazari Sharif

The Construction Company began survey work on three latrines and one septic tank April 24 for the Women’s Market in Mazari Sharif, and the data was submitted to the Field Program officer, USAID/PRT.

This project will:

- Establish a new market for women in the North Region;
- Support commercial activities for women entrepreneurs;
- Establish a permanent place for women’s products and exhibitions;
- Allow women shopkeepers and customers to stay longer in the market;
- Create 40 full-time job opportunity for women;
- Support the role of the government;
- Disseminate information on MDG projects in Balkh Province and establish a working relationship with local government and women business communities.

Meat Market in Puli Khumri City

To improve the current poor sanitary conditions at the meat market in Puli Khumri City, Baghlan Province, ASMED funded a Marketplace Development Grant (\$14,927), to support the construction of concrete pavers inside the market and a septic well with a drainage system, April 24. The project implementation directly supported the development of a commercial activity in the meat market of Puli Khumri City. More than 170 shopkeepers are direct and approximately 15,000 customers are indirect beneficiaries.

The security in Baghlan Province is very critical, and it will be important to demonstrate the support to local inhabitants.



Meat market in Puli Khumri
(USAID/ASMED)

Pavilions for Sari Pul Women’s Market

The Women’s Affairs Department, shopkeepers and Sari Pul municipality will install two pavilions and graveling in the women’s market. Officials are seeking other donor agencies to provide support. This will establish a new market for women, support commercial activities for women, establish a permanent place for women to sell their goods and



Sari Pul women Market, Sari Pul
(USAID/ASMED)

services, and will create 42 full-time job opportunities for women in the area. The ASMED engineering team visited this MDG project April 26.

Nawai Barakzai District Center Market Stalls, Nawai Barakzai District

The USAID/ASMED Marketplace Development grant (\$12,357) supported the construction of eight market stalls in Nawai Barakzai District. The district is located in the southern area of Helmand Province, and is one of the unsecure and least-developed districts in the area. The majority of the residents are dependent on the income acquired through their agricultural lands where business growth is dramatically low. Approved May 12, the project completion date is Nov. 30. The construction of the market stall will have positive impact on the area including: food items protected from adverse weather, easy access to agriculture and food items of local residents, cost of the product will be reasonable, and farmers will be able to sell their products locally. As a result, this project will create 16 direct jobs. There will be 25 direct and 150,000 indirect beneficiaries of the project.

Pavement and Drainage System, Kandahar City

USAID/ASMED awarded a Marketplace Development grant (\$10,002) for construction of a pavement and drainage system for Rangrizan Street in Kandahar City. This marketplace is located at the center of Kandahar City, where many markets and hundreds of shops are located. Majority of the clients (more than 80 percent) are women who shop in this specific area. Approved May 12, the project completion date is Aug. 31. ASMED will contract the construction of an approximately 383-meter-long drainage with concrete slab over the drainage. The successful completion of the grant activity will make a better and clean environment for the SMEs and clients. Improved market conditions will create a hygienic and easily accessible market area.

Daman District Center Market Stalls, Kandahar Province

USAID/ASMED supported the construction of 12 new market stalls in Daman District, Kandahar Province through a Marketplace Development grant (\$13,815). Daman District is located in the east of Kandahar Province and is predominantly agricultural in nature, where the majority of the population is farmers. Many of the residents purchase food and agricultural products from city markets.

The project will have a positive effect on customers in the local market, and the food items protected from sunlight, seasonal weather changes and dust. This creates easy access to quality products locally. There will be 33 direct and 40,000 indirect beneficiaries from this project.

FIELD ACTIVITIES – NORTH

Afghan Carpet Exporters Guild, Mazar Branch

This USAID/ASMED Association Development grant (\$21,410) support improves the association as the Northern Region's strongest information center/union for the carpet business. Services provided by ACEG will move to a new level – the third floor of the Babur Hotel, east of the Shrine, Mazari Sharif City, Balkh Province. Seventy percent of grant activities has been achieved, including the creation of a website, and the printing of association posters and brochures.

Mawj Packages Factory, Mazar City, Balkh Province

The project, with assistance from a USAID/ASMED Value Chain grant (\$35,000) is now 100 percent complete. The grant funds used were for manufacturing and production of carton packages.

Qadari Plastic Recycling Company, Dash Shoor, Mazar, Balkh Province

Supporting activities for this Value Chain Improvement grant (\$55,000) is 100 percent complete. Beads and grinding machines were delivered to Mazar from Pakistan and installed in Qaderi Plastic Recycling factory. Currently the company is able to produce approximately 10 tons/month of beads from the waste plastic.

New Baghlan Grain Market Construction, Baghlan Province

Supporting activities for the Market Development grant (\$9,940) includes installing concrete and cover with gravel to the Grain Market of New Baghlan, Baghlan Province. The grant activity is 50 percent complete.

Waste Collection System improvements, Aybak City, Samangan Province

Supporting activities for this Market Development grant (\$9,400) includes producing waste cans for the Aybak municipality. The project is 80 percent complete. The trashcans are prepared and installed in Aybak City.

Afghan Carpet Knotting/Weaving, Washing and Exporting Association, Jawzjan Province

Supporting activities for this Association Development grant (\$49,950) includes construction of a cut and wash facility to serve members of the association. The grant activities are complete. The cut and wash equipment has been purchased, and construction activities are complete.

Wahdat e Sari Pul Dry & Fresh Fruit Processing Association, Sari Pul Province

Supporting activities for this Association Development grant (\$8,630) included ensuring the association registers with the Ministry of Justice, purchasing office equipment (computer, printer, scanner & copier), along with organizing the initial roundtable meeting. The association has registered with MoJ. Office equipment was purchased and handed over to grantee.

Faryab Leather Processing Association, Faryab Province

Supporting activities for the Association Development grant (\$10,000) includes the association registering with the Ministry of Justice, digging of a 75-meter-deep well, purchasing 70 meters of PVC pipes, a water pump machine, a generator and a three-inch water pipe.

Women's World Association, Mazari Sharif, Balkh Province

Supporting activities for this Association Development grant (\$41,198) includes purchasing small equipment to start the operation of the Women's Market in Mazar-e-Sharif, Balkh Province, begin a marketing campaign for the women's market and impending opening ceremony. This will be the first women's market in the Balkh Province.

PROGRAM COMPONENT 5:

CAPACITY BUILDING

FIELD ACTIVITIES – CENTRAL

Kabul University Internship Program 2009-10

The second batch of 54 interns from Kabul University has successfully completed the second month of the practical session of the internship training April 4. Precisely 42 out of 54 interns received job offers from companies hosting the three-month practical period, proving the internship program is a good source for university graduates to find a job.

All 54 interns of Kabul University successfully completed their six-month ASMED internship program April 27 in locally based host companies and organizations. Interns found work in banks, NGO's, private sector companies and BDS firms. The government sector also placed some interns.

ASMED's New Internship Program strategy

ASMED Internship Department worked on the new internship strategy in April, marking the transition of the internship program to the private or public sector universities in Afghanistan. Meetings conducted with private sector institutes – including Ajeer Institute Kabul, Kardan Institute Kabul, Karwan Institute Kabul, Khurasan Institute Nangarhar and Iqra Institute Paktia - discussed the transition. As a result the five institutes showed interest in the new strategy. ASMED will provide a manual to the institutes to help them learn how to conduct and execute a successful internship program.

Kabul University Internship Graduation Ceremony

A third evaluation of the second batch of the Kabul University internship (2009 -2010) occurred May 19 for 51 interns. In this evaluation, 31 out of 51 interns received permanent job offers with their host companies.

A graduation ceremony for 50 (seven women) interns of Kunduz University students in Kunduz City Governmental Hall commenced May 29. These interns successfully completed the six-month internship program (three months theoretical and three months practical training) in different private sector firms based in Kunduz.

Kabul University Internship Graduation Ceremony

ASMED arranged a Graduation ceremony for 51 (15 women) interns for batch of Kabul University Internship Program 2009-10, June 14. General Secretary of the Afghanistan Banks Association said he appreciated the ASMED Internship Program and showed willingness in placing the interns for their practical session in the members' banks in future programs.



**Kabul University Graduation Ceremony
(USAID/ASMED)**

GENDER REPORT

ASMED Audited AWBF

ASMED, with the help of DAI Afghanistan Operation Office, audited AWBF May 2. The AWBF grant was completed May 31. They also provided their financial sustainability plan for the coming year at the request of ASMED, as they had been asked to provide a financial sustainability report for 2010 which includes details and realistic projects.

AWBF Organized Spring Gift Exhibition

ASMED sponsored the Spring Gift Exhibition May 13-14, in Serena Hotel, Kabul. The exhibition was also sponsored by AICB, Pixar Services, Carrier, and TASK.

The deputy minister of women affairs and CEO of ACCI including delegates from the ministry of commerce participated in the opening ceremony.

ASMED facilitates Access to Microfinance

The ASMED Gender specialist had a meeting with Ariana Financial Services Management to know about their relation with Kiva website ([.kiva.](http://www.kiva.org)) and the loans they provide with the assistance of MISFA and Mercy Corps.

The gender specialist is trying to help women to access loans or join microfinance and start their businesses.



FIELD ACTIVITIES –EAST

Business Training for Young Professionals, Laghman, Kunar Provinces

ASMED Jalalabad signed a purchase order April 12 with Blue Chip (a BDS firm) to train 100 (20 women) interns in Laghman and Kunar Provinces. Under the program, the interns received three months of theoretical training in basic accounting and office management. After the theoretical training, interns were introduced to SMEs for internships, followed by three months of practical training in Laghman and Kunar Province. To coordinate the program with the government, preliminary meetings were held with the governor of Kunar Province, deputy governor of Laghman Province and other relevant directors in both provinces.

Nangarhar Internship Program

The theoretical session of the Nangarhar Internship Program is in progress. Theoretical training of two business subjects - Accounting and Business Management - has been completed, and theoretical training of two business subjects - Marketing and Business and Financial Planning – was completed July 10. After theoretical training, interns met different SMEs in Nangarhar for practical training.

Nangarhar Interns Completed Theoretical Session

Khurasan University administered an exam for 51 students after the completion of the theoretical session May 26 in Jalalabad City. The theoretical session for women was administered June 6.

FIELD ACTIVITIES – WEST

Capacity Building Internship Program

ASMED continued to support the second batch of 70 interns (20 women) to participate in the practical session of a six-month internship program May 25. This program provides interns with actual work experience, which will aid them in competing when entering the job market, as well as benefiting the general business environment.

Internship Program 2009-2010, Herat Province

ASMED held a graduation ceremony for 131 students, marking the completion of the 2009-2010 internship program May 13. A number of local business owners attended the graduation ceremony. Currently, 27 students of the first batch of 55 students found employment in their desired fields as a direct result of the internship program.

Internship Program 2010/2011, Herat University

ASMED and Herat University began the Internship Program for the academic year 2010/2011. This iteration was substantially modified from the previous program. It supports the internalization of the program into the operations of the university, enhancing the sustainability of the program sans ASMED assistance in the future. To achieve this, ASMED has developed a partnership with the University of Herat for them to take on all the functions of the program, while ASMED will support the cost of the training, and jointly support the cost of the practical placements with the host companies. This process began at the entrance exam, attended by 180 candidates May 17, with 54 students (22 women) passing the exam and included in two batches of 27 students each. The first batch of 27 students (12 women) began the three-month theoretical training May 25.



Entry test for internship program at Herat University (USAID/ASMED)

ASMED's New Internship Program Strategy

ASMED in cooperation with Herat University started fourth Batch of internship program, May 2010. Out of 180 participants from 6 departments of Herat University 54 (22 Women) were selected and divided into two groups of 27 each. During internship program, all interns are supposed to study three months theoretical followed by a three-month apprenticeship in the selected companies.

FIELD ACTIVITIES – NORTH

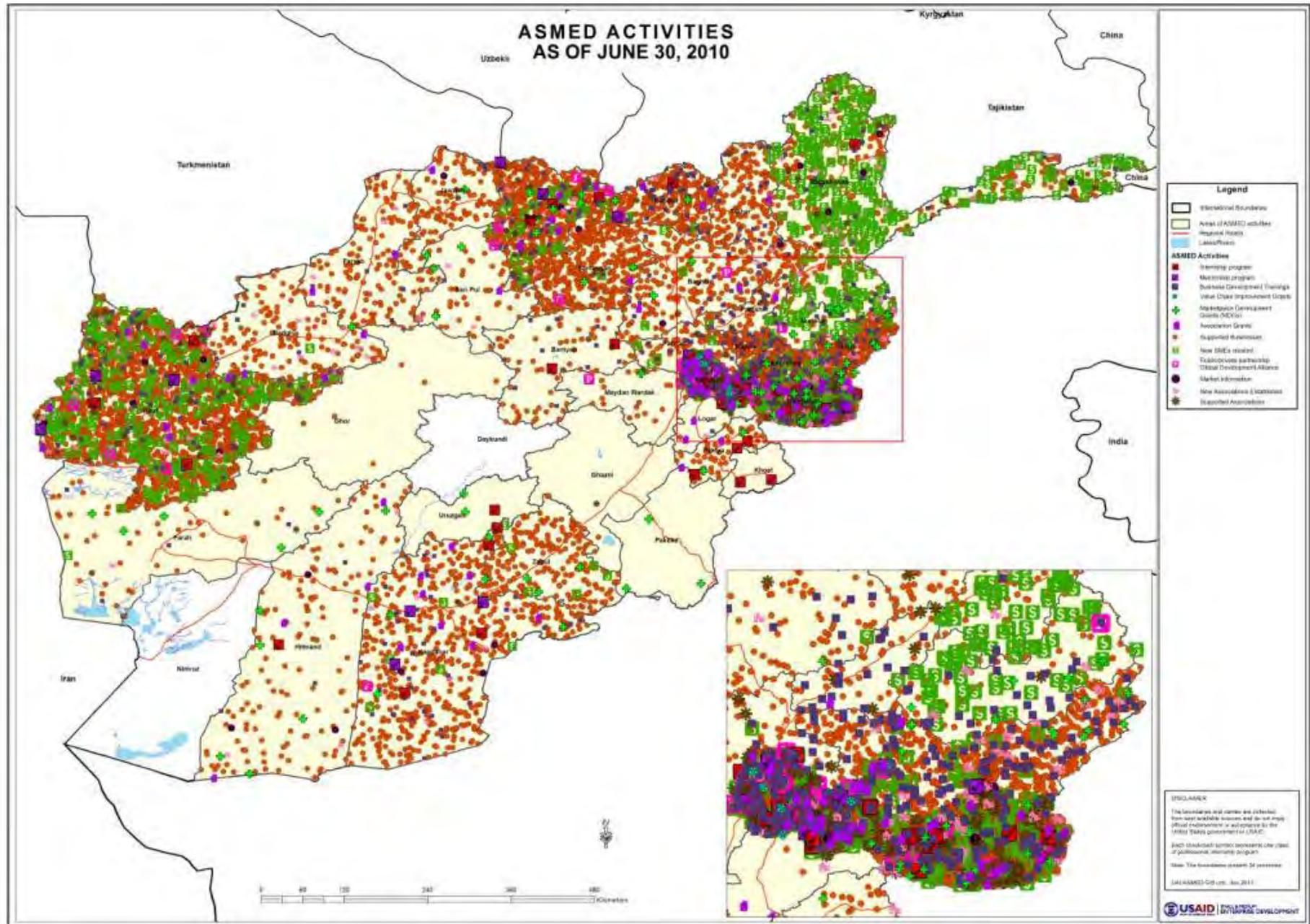
Internship at Baghlan University

The practical stage of the training was successfully concluded April 16. With ASMED technical support, AZAR BDS completed the theoretical training (Business Management, Accounting and Marketing) for 60 interns of Baghlan University. Interns placed in business companies effective from Jan. 17.

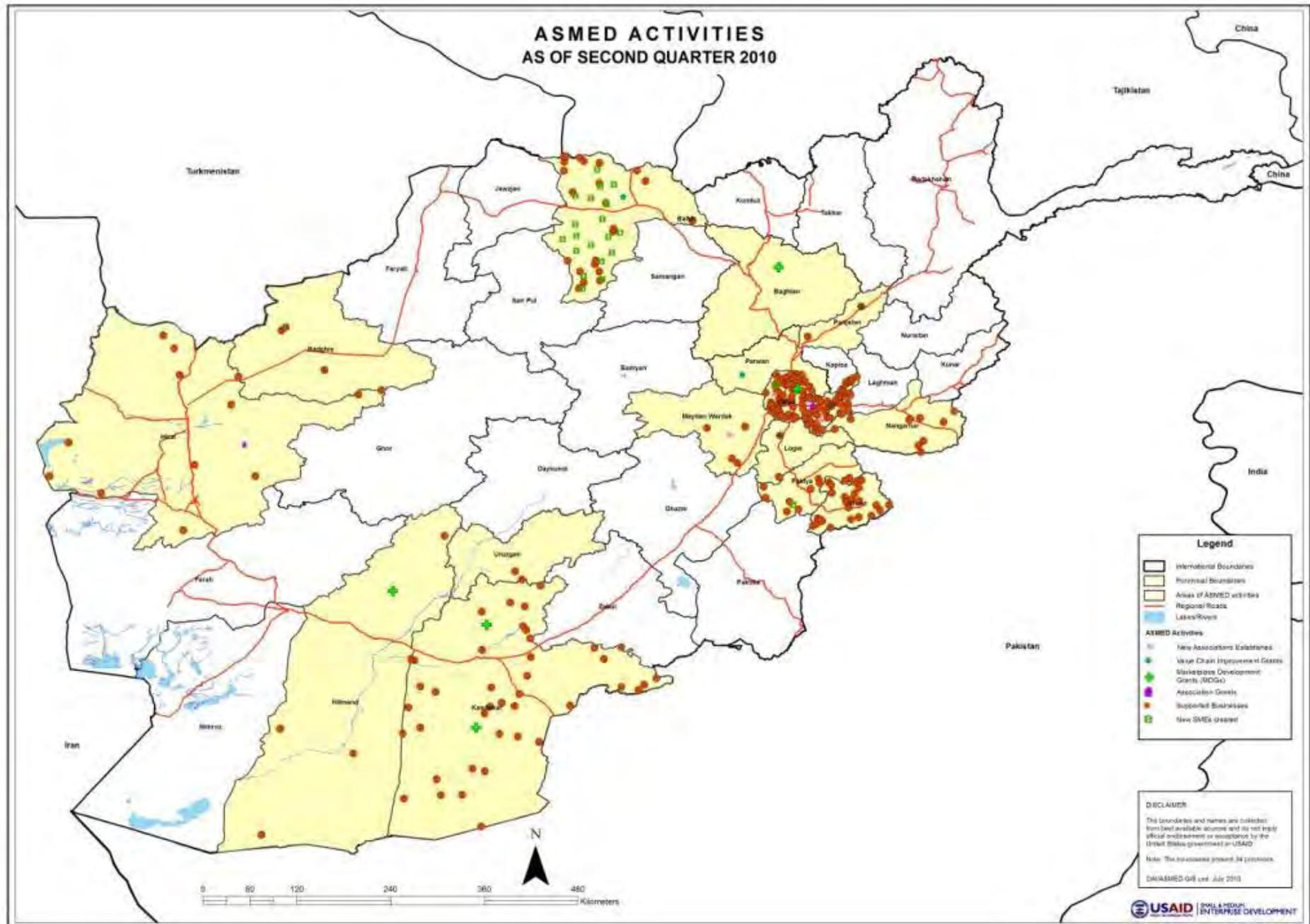


Theoretical session of the new internship at Herat University (USAID/ASMED)

ACTIVITY MAP I: PROJECT TO DATE



ACTIVITY MAP II: SECOND QUARTER 2010



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