Hand in Hand
Afghanistan
Organization

مؤسسه
دست به دست
افغانستان

ANNUAL REPORT

1404 - 2025

Percy Barnevik

CO-FOUNDER - HAND IN HAND

You don’t just create a job for one person; you create a future for five. When a mother earns an income, it immediately transforms the health and education of her children.

cover image:
A women in greenhouse, Ekzak village, Sar-e-Pul Province, Afghanistan (2025).

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A women in saffron farm, Seyahgird village, Nahr-e-Shahi District, Balkh Province, Afghanistan (2025).

AWomen making shoes, Mazar-e-Sharif, Balkh Province, Afghanistan (2025).

Message from the Chairperson and Executive Director

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Dear Partners, Supporters, and Colleagues,

As we reflect on the year 1404 (2025), we do so with a strong sense of resilience and gratitude. Afghanistan continues to face severe and compounding challenges, including protracted drought, alarming levels of food insecurity, a sharp reduction in foreign aid, and the return of millions of Afghans from Iran and Pakistan. These pressures have significantly increased humanitarian needs and reinforce the urgency for sustained development and relief efforts.

Despite this difficult context, Hand in Hand Afghanistan Organization (HIHAO) has remained steadfast in its mission to empower vulnerable communities and build resilient, inclusive livelihoods.

In 2025, HIHAO achieved meaningful progress through 11 humanitarian and development projects across 5 provinces, directly supporting 45,705 women and men and indirectly reaching 319,935 family members. Our programs contributed to improved household income, food security, women's empowerment, and community resilience, with Self-Help Groups (SHGs) at the core of our approach.

This year marked several important milestones. We expanded our operations into Badakhshan province, extending our reach to underserved communities. We also established a new partnership with the World Food Program (WFP), strengthening our capacity to address food insecurity at scale.

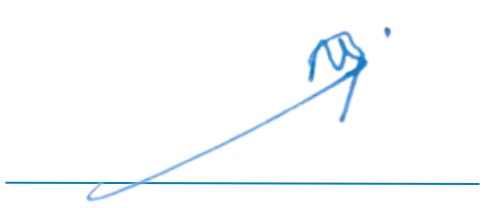
A landmark achievement was realized through our Organic Growth Project, which enabled Afghan saffron companies to achieve EU Organic and NOP certifications for the first time in the country's history—opening new opportunities for international market access and economic growth.

Our humanitarian interventions continued to provide essential support to crisis-affected families through food assistance, livelihood support, and skills training, guided by our commitment to leaving no one behind.

We remain deeply grateful to our partners; FAO, OCHA/AHF, DANIDA, Swedish Postcode Lottery, AGFUND, CAFOD, UN Women, Hand in Hand International, Hand in Hand Sweden, and WFP—whose continued trust and support have been critical to our impact.

These achievements would not have been possible without the dedication of our staff, the guidance of our Board of Directors, and the support of community leaders across Afghanistan.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to strengthening local ownership, advancing inclusive development, and creating sustainable pathways out of poverty. We invite all our partners and supporters to continue this journey with us, promoting hope, dignity, and resilience for communities across Afghanistan.



Najibullah Samim
Chairperson

Dr. Ahmad Kamran Hekmati
Executive Director

A Women in Beekeeping Enterprise, Angut Uzbakia, Sar-e-Pul Province, Afghanistan (2025).

HAND IN HAND AFGHANISTAN ORGANIZATION

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Hand in Hand Afghanistan Organization (HIHAO) is a non-governmental organization (NGO) registered as a national NGO with the Ministry of Economy of Afghanistan (license #890) dated 21 December 2006. HIHAO Head Office is in Mazar-e-Sharif and its project offices are in Herat, Kunduz, Saripul and Baghlan provinces.

HIHAO has been implementing projects in development and humanitarian sectors focuses on the real needs of community to address people's vulnerability before, during and after the crises. HIHAO coordinates project implementation with stakeholders and relevant authorities. Community leaders at village and district levels are engaged throughout the implementation of projects, from pre project scoping to impact evaluation after project completion.

HIHAO is committed to supporting the development of local capacities, effectively strengthening local ownership, and placing development tools in the hands of the community and project participants.

HIHAO is a member of the Hand in Hand global network of independent organizations, working together towards a shared vision to eliminate poverty through job creation. Hand in Hand's programs are designed and implemented by network partners in Afghanistan, India, East Africa (Kenya and Tanzania) and Zimbabwe. Network partners in the UK (Hand in Hand International), Sweden, Germany and the US provide technical support and fundraising. HIHAO is an approved partner of the Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund (AHF) since January 2021 and a registered member of the Food Security and Agriculture Cluster (FSAC), Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Cluster (WASH) and Gender Based Violence (GBV) Sub-cluster of Protection cluster.

HIHAO is also a member of the Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief & Development (ACBAR) and the Afghanistan Microfinance Association (AMA).

Vision

HIHAO's vision is an Afghanistan where all citizens have access to qualitative and comprehensive services, where their fundamental rights are met without discrimination of gender or ethnicity.

Mission

HIHAO's mission is to enable disadvantaged communities to determine their own development, enhance their livelihoods, foster social cohesion, reduce violence, and promote peace. HIHAO provides assistance to victims of humanitarian crises to protect their lives and dignity.

Core values

- Being pro-poor.
- Working in partnership with others to achieve results.
- Valuing objectivity, integrity, professionalism, and openness.
- Valuing transparency and accountability.
- Esteeming entrepreneurship and innovation.
- Sharing all knowledge about the work we do.

Food Package Distribution Process, Sar-e-Pul Province, Afghanistan (2025).

Core Humanitarian Principles

HIHAO is committed for fully applying and respecting the following core humanitarian principles:

- **Humanity:** Human suffering must be addressed wherever it is found. The purpose of humanitarian action is to protect life and health and ensure respect for human beings.
- **Impartiality:** Humanitarian action must be carried out on the basis of need alone, giving priority to the most urgent cases of distress and making no adverse distinction on the basis of nationality, race, gender, religious belief, class or political opinion.
- **Independence:** Humanitarian action must be autonomous from the political, economic, military or other objectives that any actor may hold with regard to areas where humanitarian action is being implemented.
- **Neutrality:** Humanitarian actors must not take sides in hostilities or engage in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

Food Package Distributions, Humanitarian Projects (Food Security) Accros Afghanistan, 2025.

The Governance

HIHAO is always committed to good governance and follows recommended best practices. General Assembly serves as the principal decision-making body of the Organization, comprising the 'Board of Directors' and the 'Executive Team.' It plays a crucial role in making key decisions, including the election of a new Board of Directors. The General Assembly is committed to regularly monitoring the effectiveness of the Board in carrying out its duties.

The Board of Directors is tasked with managing the overall business and affairs of the Organization, and all corporate powers are exercised under its direction. The Board appoints the Executive Director to lead the organization, with the support of the Executive Team. The Executive Director holds responsibility for program oversight, policy development, executive decisions, and the daily management of the organization. Furthermore, the Executive Director is accountable to the Board and regularly reports to the Board.

Mr. Najibullah Samim

Chairperson

Mrs. Eva Maaten

Treasurer

Mrs. Amalia Johnsson

Member

Dr. Qamaruddin Maqsoodi

Member

Dr. Habibullah Mahboob

Member

Executive Team

Dr. Ahmad Kamran Hekmati
Executive Director

Hasibullah Salimi
Development Program Manager

Sama Sahari
Chief Financial Officer

Habib Aminpoor
Humanitarian & Partnership Manager

Abdullah Faizi
MEAL Manager

Mohammad Kazim Khaki
Project Manager

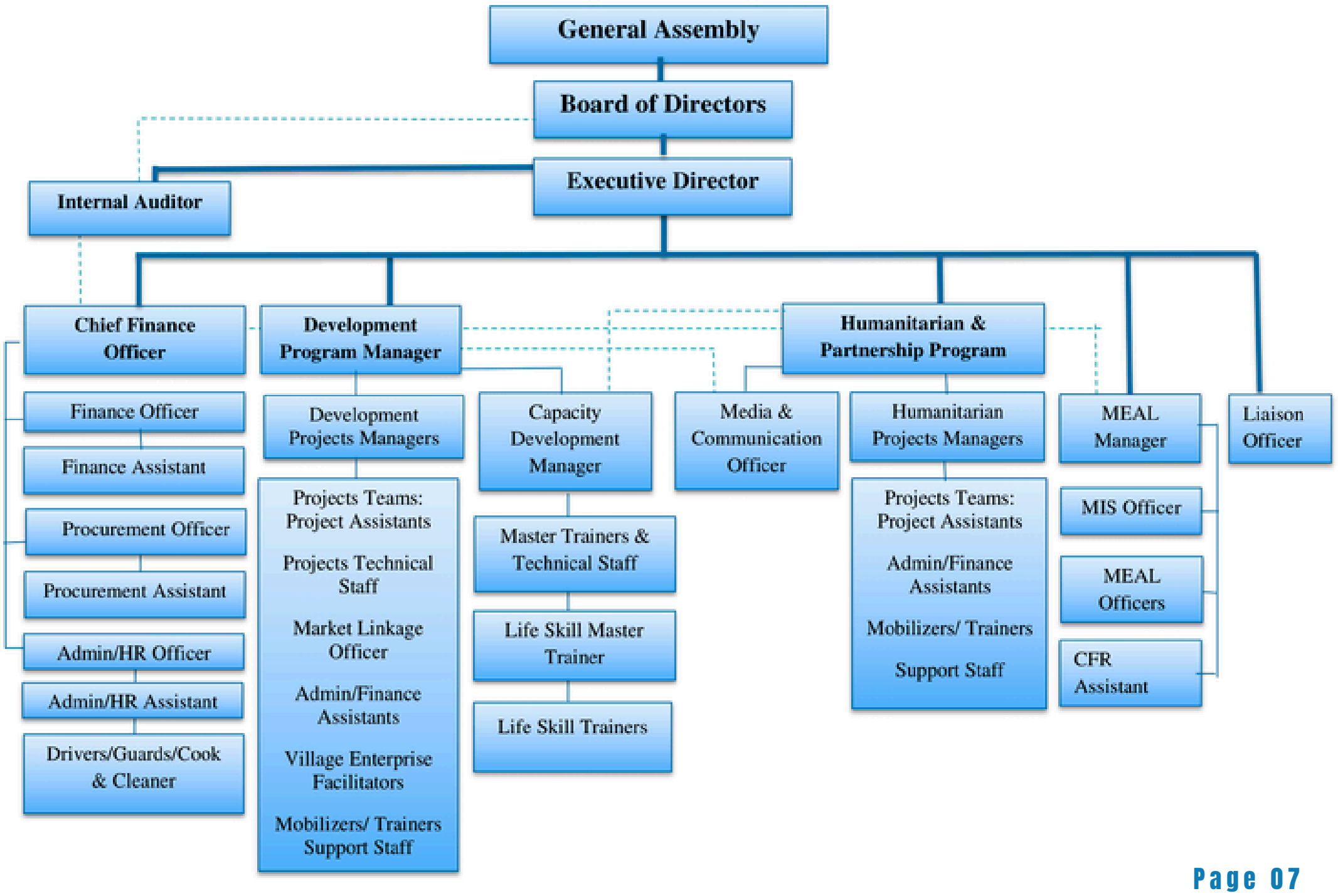
Gul Ahmad Adib
Project Manager

Ghulam Nabi Azami
Project Manager

Wahidullah Hadafmand
Project Manager

Ahmad Zahir Samim
Project Manager

Hand in Hand Afghanistan Chart



Coverage Map

HIHAO Head Office

Concluded Projects

Ongoing Projects (2025)

HIHAO: CHRONOLOGICAL PROGRESS

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2006-2012

1.Establishment and registration with the Ministry of Economy. Head office set up in Kabul. Regional office set up in Mazar-e-Sharif.
2.Implementation of the Mass Mobilization into Entrepreneurship project in Balkh province which served as a pre-pilot project for AREDP/MRRD.
3.Implementation of Horticulture and Livestock Project in Balkh province.
4.Implementation of Facilitating Rural Enterprise development projects in Badakhshan.
5.Implementation of SME Development project in Balkh province.
6.Provision of training for AREDP project staff in Kabul and Parwan provinces.
7.Implementation of Horticulture and Livestock Project (HLP) in Khulm district of Balkh province.
8. Implementation of the Sustainable Livelihood Program and Sanitation and Hygiene Awareness in the Kaldar, Marmul, and Sholgara districts of Balkh province.
9.Value Chain Improvement Project for Women Co-operatives in seven provinces.

2013-2017

1. Implementation of Supporting Rural Entrepreneurship and Promoting Women's Socio-economic Empowerment in Dara-i-Suf districts of Samangan Province.
2. Implementation of Improving Lives through the Creation of Microenterprises and Jobs in Jawzjan.
3. Piloting and implementing One District One Product (ODOP) for Community Led Micro-Enterprise in Rural Areas of Parwan and Herat Provinces.
4. Continuation of the Sustainable Livelihood Program and Sanitation and Hygiene Awareness in the Kaldar, Marmul, and Sholgara districts of Balkh province.
5. Training of Business Development for SMEs in Bamyan Province.
6. Implementation of the Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) in Shortepa and Kishindeh districts of Balkh province.
7. Implementation of Reducing poverty and gender inequality by improving household income and financial resilience for rural women through enterprise and job creation in Sar-e-pul province.
8. Implementation of the Socio-Economic Empowerment of Women and Men project in the Chimtal district of Balkh province.
9. Implementation of the Creating Future Economic Prospects for Reintegration of Refugees and IDPs through the Layers Poultry Value Chain in Nahr –i- Shahi and Sholgara districts of Balkh province.

2018-2022

1.Implementation of the Village Uplift Program in Shahrak Ulia Village of Mazar-e-Sharif, Balkh province -
2.Implementation of the Food Insecurity and Malnutrition Household Perception Survey in 12 provinces.
3.Execution of the Food Insecurity and Malnutrition Consultation Workshops in four provinces.
4.Implementation of the Promoting Women's Socio-Economic Empowerment through Layer Poultry Farming in Nahri Sahee districts of Balkh province.
5.Implementation of the Creating Future Economic Prospects for Reintegration of Refugees and IDPs through the Layers Poultry Value Chain in Balkh, Samangan, and Baghlan provinces.
6.Implementation of Creating future economic prospects for the reintegration of returnees and IDPs in Herat provinces of Afghanistan through the layers poultry value chain and Creating economic opportunities for returnees and IDPs during Covid-19.
7.Implementation of Village Uplift Program in Shah Rahim village of Khulm district.
8.Implementation of the Empowering Women in Afghanistan project in Balkh, Kabul, and Parwan provinces.
9.Implementation of the Reducing Poverty through Entrepreneurship and Female Empowerment project in the Sholgara dist.
10.Implementation of the Households Adopts Sustainable Economic Livelihoods Projects in Shahrak Wali Asr of Mazar-e-Sharif City.
11.Participation of HIHAO in ACBAR's twinning program II.
12.Implementation of Village Uplift Program in Shahrak Sayed Abad of Mazar-e-Sharif.
13.Implementation of the Helping the People of Dalkhaki bounce back from Covid19, in Samangan.
14.Implementation of Households Adopts Sustainable Economic Livelihoods (HASEL) project.
15.Implementation of the Integration of Peacebuilding into Households Adopts Sustainable Economic Livelihoods Projects in Shahrak Wali Asr of Mazar-e-Sharif.
16.Implementation of the COVID-19 Response Efforts project in Afghanistan.
17.HIHAO successfully completed the due diligence and capacity assessment of the UNOCHA to access the Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund (AHF) and started the implementation of its first- AHF project in 2021.
18.Implementation of Agriculture Support to Food Insecure and Vulnerable Farmers in Kunduz and Samangan provinces.
19.Implementation of the Strengthening Resilience and creating economic opportunities for Returnees and IDPs project in Balkh
20.Implementation of Organic Growth: Taking Afghanistan's Certified Saffron Value Chain to Scale project.
21.Implementation of Training the people of Hairatan to launch micro-enterprises.

2023-2025

22.Supporting the reintegration of 2,200 returnees and IDPs through an inclusive poultry value chain.
23.Implementation of Empowering the Women of Sheer Abad Turkmania in Balkh province.
24.Implementation of Emergency and resilience response support to vulnerable drought-affected smallholder farmers in Kunduz province.
25.Implementation of Creating Economic Opportunities for 1,050 Food-Insecure Households through Layer Poultry Farming in Pashtun Zarghun and Shindand districts of Herat province.
26.Implementation of THE RED GOLD (Improving Afghan Livelihoods through Saffron Cultivation) in Balkh province.
27. Implementation of Humanitarian Support projects (CAFOD) for the most vulnerable households in Balkh province.
28. Implementation of Empowering 400 women in Balkh through skills and knowledge to start businesses, support from AGFUND, CAFOD.
29. Support of 1,200 households in Sar-e-Pul improved their food and nutrition security through agricultural value chains.
29. Around 26,425 people in Sholgara district received in-kind food assistance through the ICCT winter response, 18,361 vulnerable individuals in Sar-e-Pul benefited from lifesaving humanitarian aid to mitigate economic shocks, funding from UNOCHA/AHF.
30. Around 35,218 smallholder farmers in Kunduz received agricultural and home gardening support to enhance food security and income, support of UN-FAO.
31. Supporting 60 SMEs through skills development and entrepreneurial support in Herat province of Afghanistan funded by GIZ/BBKs
32. Implementation of aiding the socio-economic recovery of internally displaced Afghan women project in Mazar City, Balkh Province, Afghanistan. Funded by UN-Women.
33. Start of empowering 80 Afghan women with the skills, knowledge and capital to start and run their own businesses in Kunduz through the financial support of HIHI
34. Implementation of empowering of women in Sare Chah Hairatan Town. Co-funded by HIHI and CAFOD
35. Implementation of Peer Learning Project: in partnership with LSO (Labour Spring Organization) to enhance the institutional capacity, programmatic effectiveness, and cross-organizational collaboration of HIHAO and LSO- funded by UN-WPHF
36. Providing skills and knowledge for women and youth to start businesses in Balkh, Afghanistan. By GIZ/TVET
37. Immediate provision of emergency cash for food assistance and emergency agriculture assistance in Herat. By WO-OCHA
38. Distribution of hotspot food packages, including BSFP rations, to beneficiaries (16,576 Packages for three months) and winter response food packages, including BSFP rations, to beneficiaries (12,517 Packages for 6 months) through WFP fund.
39 . Around 1,500 drought-affected households in Badakhshan province received immediate cash-based food assistance under the project “Provision of Immediate Humanitarian Assistance in Response to the Worsening Drought in Badakhshan.” Each household was provided with AFN 2,641.8 to support urgent food needs and basic expenses.

Watershed Management Activity, Cash For Work, Kunduz Province, Afghanistan (2025).

HIHAO: PROGRAM FRAMEWORK

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Strategic Objectives

1. Support unemployed, poor, and vulnerable women, men, and young people to secure entrepreneurial opportunities that enable financial resilience, provide sustainable employment, and increase diversified income.
2. Ensure women, men, young people, and children affected by conflict, IDPs, returnees, or from underserved host communities in need of humanitarian assistance have access to food, potable drinking water, sanitation facilities, hygiene awareness, health, and education services to create and grow livelihoods enabling income generation.
3. Ensure that affected individuals have access to healthcare services, including the provision of nutritional support for malnourished children and mothers
4. Ensure disaster-prone communities can access natural and other disaster risk reduction training.

Development Programs

HIHAO's development and market system development programs both contribute to Strategic Objective 1 by empowering unemployed, poor, and vulnerable individuals, especially women, to secure entrepreneurial opportunities. Through mobilization into self-help groups, capacity-building initiatives, entrepreneurship training, and access to resources and market linkages, HIHAO aims to uplift individuals out of poverty, foster sustainable employment, and promote diversified income streams, thereby enhancing financial resilience and economic empowerment.

Humanitarian Program

In our humanitarian response, HIHAO adheres to the principles of the Sphere, providing emergency assistance to those affected by conflict, displacement, and natural disasters. This includes distributing emergency food baskets and cash assistance during critical periods, such as winter, to alleviate immediate food insecurity and save lives. Additionally, HIHAO offers emergency agricultural and livestock support to farmers affected by drought and other disasters, aiming to restore livelihoods and build resilience.

Progress towards Sustainable Development Goals

Hand in Hand Afghanistan ensures that our interventions are aligned with the Afghanistan Sustainable Development Goals (A-SDGs). These goals are part of the worldwide development agenda led by the UN. Hand in Hand Afghanistan's programs are continually geared towards sustainable development by working closely around the following goals:

SDG 1: No Poverty

Enhance resilience and eradicate extreme poverty, measured at $1.90 a day, by ensuring dignified and sustainable livelihoods.

SDG 2: Zero Hunger

Contribute to ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture.

SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being

Awareness and health education and provision of access to basic hygiene packages in response to pandemics such as Covid-19.

SDG 4: Quality Education

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

SDG 5: Gender Equality

Increase economic participation, control over resources, and decision-making power both within and outside of the household.

SDG 8: Good Jobs and Economic Growth

Promote decent job creation, entrepreneurship, and productive activities for all women and men.

SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities

Enable an inclusive society by promoting social, economic, and political participation among all its members.

SDG 13: Climate Action

Encourage climate resilience and adaptivity in individuals, while promoting mechanisms for climate change-related interventions focusing on women, marginalized groups, and youth.

SDG 15: Life on Land

Protect, restore, and promote the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, combat desertification, halt biodiversity loss, and ensure healthy and productive land through community-led conservation and sustainable land management practices.

SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals

Embrace global, multi-stakeholder partnerships for achieving sustainable development by mobilizing and sharing knowledge, resources, and expertise while respecting each country's policy space.

Woman Processing Saffron, The Red Gold Project, Nahr-i-Shahi District, Balkh Province, Afghanistan, 2025.

PROGRAM PROGRESS UPDATE

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In the year 1404, HIHAO, in collaboration with its partners and donors, initiated and implemented the following projects aimed at achieving its strategic objectives as outlined in the program framework. Additionally, these projects are aligned with Afghanistan's Sustainable Development Goals (ASDGs).

1. Development Projects:

1. Organic Growth: Taking Afghanistan's certified saffron value chain to scale:

The project aims to assist saffron companies in achieving ISO standards (5 companies, including 2 led by women) or EU organic certification (2 companies) to supply international market demand with increased volume. Additionally, the project seeks to enhance price premiums on ISO and EU organic certified saffron throughout the saffron value chain. Located in Herat, the project commenced in August 2021 and is scheduled to conclude in June 2026, funded by DANIDA. The project has contributed to the creation of 2,730 employment opportunities for saffron farmers through its partner companies.

2. THE RED GOLD – Improving Afghan livelihoods through saffron cultivation:

The project aims to contribute to economic prosperity and poverty reduction in Balkh province through sustainable production of saffron. A total of 2,400 saffron growers (of which 50% are women) improve their knowledge and capacity to use resource- and water efficient production in their enterprises and 1,200 environmentally sustainable small and medium-sized enterprises have increased access to starter packages and financing. The project is located in Balkh, began in May 2022 and is set to conclude in February 2026, funded by the Swedish Postcode Lottery.

3. Providing skills and knowledge for women and youth to start businesses:

18-month program is to make needs-based, target-group specific TVET accessible to marginalized young women and equip them with the skills and knowledge to start businesses, participate in the market economy, and raise their families out of poverty, as well as to support women to become trainers in sectors of the economy accessible to women. This project targets 1,166 women and 130 male (youths) is located in Balkh. It began in October 2023 and is scheduled to conclude in June 2025. The project is funded by Hand in Hand International.

4. Supporting food insecure women and their families through agriculture value chains in Sar-e-Pul province of Afghanistan:

To strengthen the resilience of the population in ruler areas against economic crises by improving food and nutrition security for at least 1,800 households.

5. Supporting SMEs 60 through skills development and entrepreneurial support in Herat province of Afghanistan: Supporting vulnerable returnee women through skills development and entrepreneurial support in Herat province of Afghanistan is a one-year project with the financial support of Hand in Hand International to implement in Herat city and Injil district of Herat province. The project have two outputs, with the first one focusing on increased social security of the target group through the establishment of 120 self-help groups (SHGs) which will provide a strong social network for its members and their families, as well as encouraging the members to save together and offer them some essential life-sill training (literacy and numeracy). The second output will be improved skills and capacity of the 1,800 members of these SHGs to create stable and income generating micro enterprises.

6. Aiding the socio-economic recovery of internally displaced Afghan women in Mazar City, Balkh Province, Afghanistan:

This project addresses gender inequality and restrictive social norms inhibiting Afghan women and girls' rights to access resources and markets, and live free of violence, by targeting two dimensions: Livelihoods: empowering women economically with skills, access to assets and income generation and financial control. The project will achieve sustainable livelihoods and contribute to women's economic resilience, with a 30% average uplift in household incomes, and women's economic empowerment with 60% or more women reporting greater participation in household decision making. Systemic change to promote gender equality: preventing acts of violence by sensitizing men on women's rights, encouraging women to be active as change agents and to participate in community decision-making processes and strengthening accountability mechanisms. The project will facilitate the creation of three women's Common Interest Groups (CIGs) and the creation of one Community Dispute Resolution Council (CDRC).

7. Empowering of women of Sare Chah Hairatan Town:

To empower Afghans with the skills and knowledge to start Agri-businesses, participate in the market economy, and raise their families out of poverty. To achieve this goal, Hand in Hand will focus on two objectives: Improved skills, capacity, and resource access for 450 households to create 450 stable and income-generating agri-businesses. Enhanced access of entrepreneurs to markets through the expansion of sustainable value chains, thereby increasing the economic capacity of the target group. In order to achieve the project's aim, the following measures are planned:

8. Peer Learning Project:

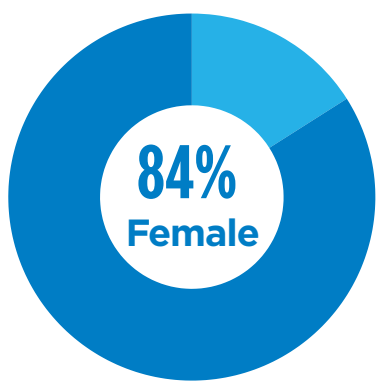
To enhance the institutional capacity, programmatic effectiveness, and cross-organizational collaboration of HIHAO and LSO in addressing the needs of forcibly displaced women and girls in Afghanistan through a structured peer learning process grounded in protection, accountability, economic empowerment, and resilience-building.

9. Empowering Afghan Women Through Enterprise Development and Self-Help Groups in Kunduz:

This project aims to empower 80 Afghan women in Kunduz Province by supporting the establishment of 80 women-led enterprises and Self-Help Groups (SHGs). Through a combination of skills development, business training, and access to start-up capital, the initiative will strengthen women's economic participation and financial independence. The project seeks to enhance income generation, resilience, and long-term economic stability for women and their households, implementing from July 2025 to June 2026.

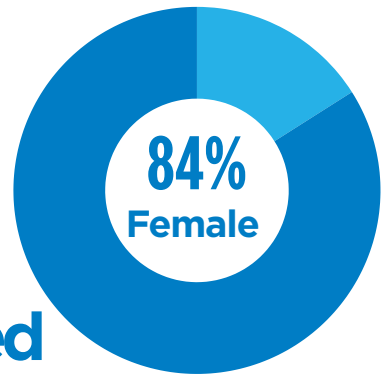
Development Projects Progress 1404 (2025)

64,281
Member Mobilized



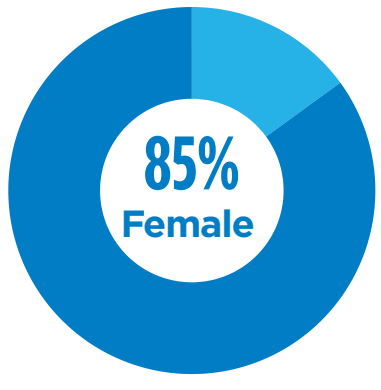
During 1404:
3,542 members mobilized, 2,969 women (84%), and 573 men (16%)

3,748
Self Help Groups Created



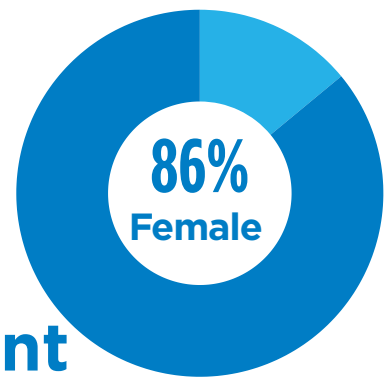
During 1404:
208 Groups created, 174 female groups (84%), and 34 male groups (16%)

50,481
Members Trained in Group Management



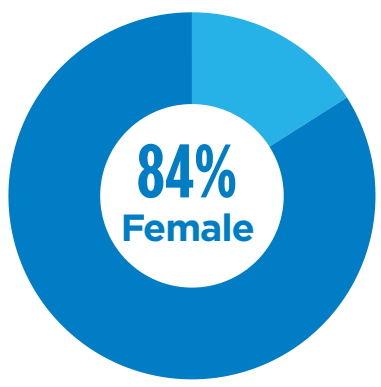
During 1404:
3,300 Members trained in group management, 2,817 women (85%), and 483 men (15%)

42,884
Members Trained in Business Development



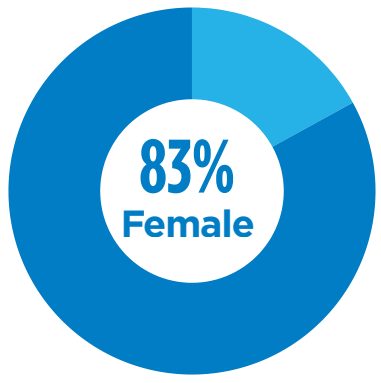
During 1404:
3,327 Members trained in BDS, 2,852 women (86%), and 475 men (14%)

46,282
Members Trained in Microfinance



During 1404:
2,650 Members trained in microfinance, 2,217 women (84%), and 433 men (16%)

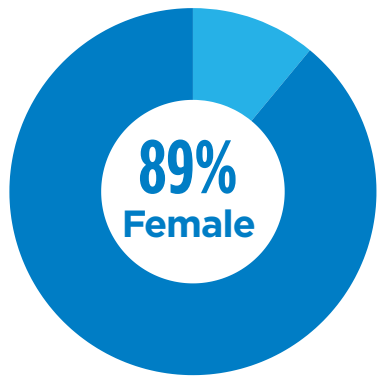
50,162
Members Trained in Vocational Trainings



During 1404:
2,540 Members trained in vocational training, 2,111 women (83%), and 429 men (17%)

8,123

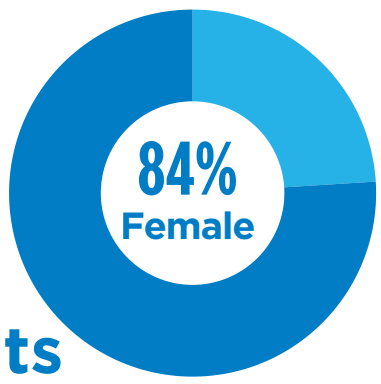
Members Trained in Life Skills



During 1404:
1,134 Members trained in microfinance, 1,014 women (89%), and 120 men (11%)

44,847

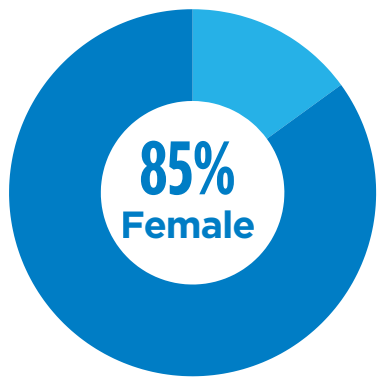
Members Received Enterprise Startup Kits



During 1404:
2,629 Members received enterprise startup kits, 2,197 women (84%), and 432 men (16%)

55,719

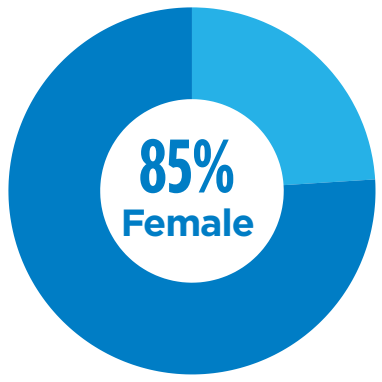
Micro-Enterprises Created/ Enhanced



During 1404:
3,110 micro-enterprises created, 2,635 women (85%), and 475 men (15%)

63,784

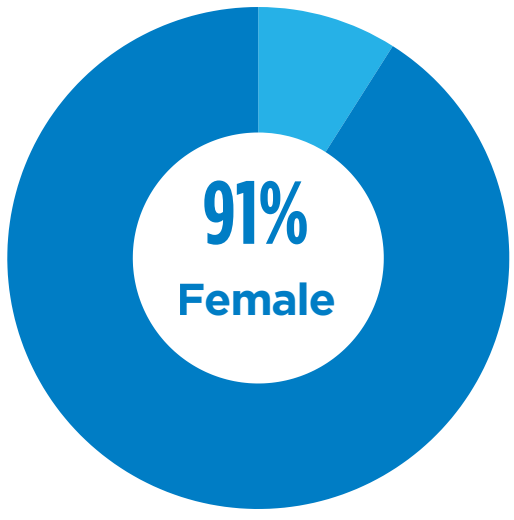
Job Created



During 1404:
2,910 jobs created, 2,475 women (85%), and 435 men (15%)

106,798,416

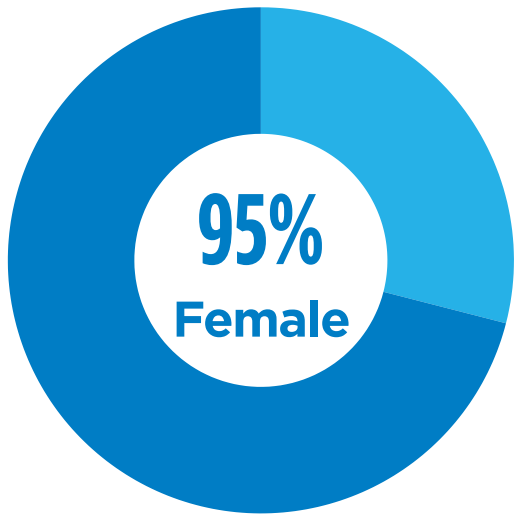
Internally Saved by SHG Members



During 1404:
7,225,086 AFN, 6,547,786 AFN by women (91%), and 677,300 AFN by men (9%)

91,686,470

Internally Lent by SHG Members



During 1404:
6,924,270 AFN, 6,602,520 by women (95%), and 321,750 AFN by men (5%)

Buzzing with Hope: Rakia's Journey from Struggle to Success in Poultry farming

Ms. Rakia, daughter of Din Mohammad, is a 43-year-old resident of Boghawi Uzbekia village, located in the Bala Kent area of Sar-e-Pul province. She lives with her husband, five sons, and four daughters. Due to the large size of her family and the lack of basic living facilities and sufficient income, Rakia and her family faced numerous challenges, particularly in accessing education and meeting daily needs.

Rakia had always dreamed of contributing to her family's income. One day, staff from the Hand in Hand Afghanistan Organization (HIHAO) visited her home to collect information for a survey aimed at identifying beneficiaries for a project titled "Supporting Food-Insecure Women and Their Families through Agricultural Value Chains."

"I provided the information they requested," Rakia recalls. "A few days later, I was informed that I had been selected as a project beneficiary. That was a very pleasant day for me."

As part of the project, Rakia joined a Self-Help Group (SHG) consisting of 20 villagers who saved money on a twice a month. This group not only provided access to small loans for business development and emergencies but also became a platform for social interaction and learning. Through the SHG, Rakia received valuable training on topics such as nutrition, agriculture, marketing, and small business management.

During these sessions, she learned about the entrepreneurial opportunities offered by the organization. Given her interest, the training she received, and the resources available, Rakia chose to start a poultry farming business. HIHAO supported her by providing materials to build a standard chicken coop, 20 chickens, chicken feed, other essential tools.

In addition, she received technical training and ongoing mentoring focused on poultry farming, which equipped her with the knowledge and confidence to manage her business effectively.

With ongoing supervision and guidance from HIHAO staff, Rakia successfully managed her small poultry farm. She gradually increased the number of poultry to 33 through local regeneration. By selling fresh eggs, she began contributing to her family's expenses fulfilling a long-held dream.

Encouraged by her initial success and with continued support from the project team, Rakia reinvested her earnings to purchase an incubator with a capacity of 300 eggs. After receiving specialized training on incubator use, she began collecting fresh eggs from her own farm as well as neighboring farms to initiate chick production. This step marked a significant advancement in her poultry business, enabling her to scale operations and increase her income.

Since starting her poultry farming business, Ms. Rakia has earned a total of 55,000 AFN. She strategically reinvested part of her earnings by purchasing an incubator for 18,000 AFN, poultry pelleted feed for 8,000 AFN, and medicine worth 2,000 AFN to maintain the health of her flock. The remaining balance was directed toward covering household needs, enabling her to support her family while also strengthening her enterprise for future growth.

“I counted the days, eagerly waiting to witness my first successful hatch using the incubator, and I did it,” said Rakia with pride.

“I am fortunate to have become acquainted with Hand in Hand Afghanistan Organization,” she says. “They helped me achieve my dream of supporting my family’s basic needs. I am now more respected within my family, and I have proven that even in conservative communities, women can play a vital role in generating income.”

She expressed her sincere gratitude to Hand in Hand Afghanistan Organization and its dedicated coaches for their unwavering support in empowering women through sustainable livelihood opportunities and small-scale enterprises. Rakia emphasized the transformative impact of these initiatives on her life and expressed hope that more women would be granted similar opportunities, enabling them to support their families, achieve financial independence, and contribute meaningfully to the development of their communities.

“I counted the days, eagerly waiting to witness my first successful hatch using the incubator, and I did it. I am fortunate to have become acquainted with Hand in Hand Afghanistan Organization.”

Stitching Her Future: How Ms. Anisa Built a Successful Tailoring Business

Ms. Anisa, the daughter of Mawlawi Gul Ahmad and a member of the Saadat Self-Help Group, is a mother of three and one of Afghanistan's hard-working women. She has always dreamed of owning a small business so she could both support her family and gain financial independence. Despite her strong interest, at the beginning she lacked sufficient professional knowledge and experience in business and also faced the challenge of limited literacy in reading and writing.

Ms. Anisa faced several obstacles on her path to starting a business. As she explained; "lacked professional skills in both business and advanced tailoring, and my life skills and business management abilities were limited. In addition, I struggled with reading and writing, and I did not have enough capital to launch her own enterprise."

Ms. Anisa enrolled in a professional training program offered by the organization Hand in Hand Afghanistan, through the "Supporting vulnerable households through skills development and entrepreneurial support in Herat province of Afghanistan" project. During this course, she received practical and advanced instruction in tailoring as well as business management. To provide further support, the organization supplied her with essential equipment such as a sewing machine, iron, scissors, and a chair. In addition, through her own initiative, Ms. Anisa borrowed 45,000 AFN from her brother and purchased a more advanced zigzag sewing machine.

After completing the course and receiving both training and equipment support, Ms. Anisa was able to officially launch her own tailoring business. She attracted students and began teaching sewing skills to others, while the tools and equipment she received helped her improve the quality of her work and draw more customers. She says; "my life skills such as self-confidence, time management, and planning, strengthened, and I made notable progress in basic literacy, including reading and writing."

Through the income from her business, Ms. Anisa gradually contributed to her family's economic growth and built a brighter future for herself.

At present, Ms. Anisa has seven students, each paying her 300 AFN per month, while she produces and sells a variety of women's and children's clothing, including trousers, which she markets along the 64-meter street bazaar. Her monthly earnings include 2,100 AFN from her students and about 5,000 AFN from her own clothing production, bringing her total monthly income to 7,100 AFN. She says; "These earnings come solely from teaching and production, in addition to the contributions my family members also make to the household income."

Ms. Anisa's story is an inspiring example of how a combination of professional training, equipment support, and personal determination can transform a woman's life. With persistence and dedication, she overcame limitations, made smart investments, and established a successful business. As she says; "Today, I am not only a skilled and thriving tailor but also a role model for other women in my community."

These earnings come solely from teaching and production, in addition to the contributions my family members also make to the household income.

The Sound of Life: Soraya’s Transformation Through Beekeeping

Ms. Soraya, a 45-year-old woman, lives with her husband in the village of Angot Uzbekia, located in Bala Kent area of Sar-e Pol province. Despite limited access to education, she is facing significant economic challenges, and successfully grow up her seven children through small-scale farming.

Due to the family's financial hardship and inability to meet basic needs, Soraya’s eldest son migrated to Iran country in search of better opportunities. There, he was introduced to work in a beekeeping farm and gradually developed a passion for it after observing the success of Iranian beekeepers. During his regular calls home, he shared his experiences with his parents, describing how beekeeping could generate a good income and potentially transform their lives.

One day, Soraya received a visit from staff members of the Hand in Hand Afghanistan organization, who were implementing a program under the name supporting food insecure women and their families through agriculture value chains in Sar-e-Pul province, Afghanistan. After conducting a survey, Soraya was selected as a beneficiary. At the beginning she was enrolled in Self-help Group (SHG), and received comprehensive training in agribusiness, microfinance, nutrition, market linkage, and more. Furthermore, the HIHAO staff provided brief information regarding of enterprises. Motivated by her son’s stories and the knowledge she gained through the program, she decided to choose beekeeping enterprise. Initially, the beekeeping experience was unfamiliar and scary to her.

Soraya was afraid of being stung by bees. However, with the theoretical and practical trainings, technical guidance, and encouragement by the project team, her confidence grew. The Hand in Hand Afghanistan Organization provided her with two honeybee colonies and the essential tools to launch her beekeeping enterprise. Moreover, she received value addition kits such as honey bottle and printed label to increase the value of her products. She keens herself to learning and caring for the bees, spending countless hours nurturing her new venture.

Her first honey harvest yielded just 7 Kgs, but this modest beginning ignited a deep sense of hope. Through perseverance, hard work, and ongoing support from the organization staff, Soraya expanded her colonies from 2 to 9 in the second year and harvested an impressive 176 Kgs of pure honey.

Since launching her beekeeping enterprise, Ms. Soraya has extracted a total of 150 kilograms of honey, selling it at prices ranging from 900 to 1,000 AFN per kilogram and earning an average income of over 150,000 AFN. From this income, she wisely reinvested in her enterprise by purchasing a honey extraction machine for 5,000 AFN, four new beekeeping boxes for 4,000 AFN to support hive regeneration, and varroa mite medicine worth 1,000 AFN to ensure the health of her colonies. Beyond strengthening her business, Soraya also used part of her earnings to cover household expenses and successfully managed to save a portion of the income for future needs,

showcasing her commitment to both her family's well-being and the sustainability of her enterprise. She now packs the honey in bottles with capacity of half and one kgs, labels them with branding provided by the organization, and sells them under the name "Anbir Natural Honey" in the local market. The income helps cover household expenses, and she has even purchased a honey extractor machine from her earnings.

To further support beneficiaries like Soraya, HIHAO facilitated market linkages by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the newly established associations under the program and local buyers. This initiative helped ensure a stable and accessible market for their products.

Today, Soraya speaks with pride: "When I look at the hives, I no longer feel afraid. The buzzing of bees is the sound of life to me. I used to believe I couldn't do anything, but now I'm one of the breadwinners of my family." Soraya is not only a successful beekeeper but also a role model for other women and a symbol of Afghan women's resilience. Her story is a proof to how determination and wise choices can turn adversity into opportunity and guide a family toward a brighter future.

She expressed heartfelt gratitude to HIHAO and all the dedicated coaches who played a vital role in empowering women by creating livelihood opportunities through small-scale enterprises. Soraya also shared her hope that more women would be given similar chances, enabling them to support their families and contribute meaningfully to their communities.

Her first honey harvest yielded just 7 Kgs, but this modest beginning ignited a deep sense of hope. Through perseverance, hard work, and ongoing support from the organization staff, Soraya expanded her colonies from 2 to 9 in the second year and harvested an impressive 176 Kgs of pure honey.

“By harvesting and selling 150 kilograms of honey, I earned over 150,000 AFN. I reinvested in my beekeeping business by purchasing equipment, new hive boxes, and medicines, while also supporting my family and saving for the future.”

2. Humanitarian Projects

HIHAO delivers principled, timely, and needs-based humanitarian assistance to populations affected by conflict, displacement, natural disasters, and economic shocks across Afghanistan. Grounded in the Sphere Standards and humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence, HIHAO ensures that assistance reaches the most vulnerable populations with dignity and accountability.

HIHAO's humanitarian interventions focus on life-saving assistance, early recovery, and resilience-building, contributing to the humanitarian-development nexus. Key areas of intervention include:

A. Emergency Food Security and Cash Assistance:

Provision of in-kind food assistance and multi-purpose cash support to vulnerable households during periods of acute food insecurity, particularly during winter and drought emergencies.

B. Emergency Agriculture and Livelihood Support:

Distribution of agricultural inputs (seeds, tools, livestock support, animal feed) and technical training to protect and restore livelihoods of smallholder farmers affected by climate shocks.

C. Nutrition Support:

Targeted support to malnourished children and pregnant and lactating women through supplementary feeding and awareness on improved nutrition practices.

D. Resilience and Early Recovery:

Supporting communities to transition from emergency assistance to sustainable livelihoods through integrated approaches, including linkages to HIHAO's Self-Help Group (SHG) model.

1. Enhancing food security and resilience for smallholder farmers in Kunduz province, Afghanistan:

To support vulnerable smallholder communities and farmers through the Emergency Food Security Project by improving food security, increasing fruit, nut, and livestock production, and sustaining local livelihoods. This project focuses on assisting 44,386 households (310,702 people directly reached) in orchard establishment on existing croplands and rehabilitating degraded rangelands through improved artificial reseeding and rangeland management practices. This project is located in Kunduz province, commenced in May 2024, and is scheduled to conclude in July 2025. It is funded by FAO.

2. Enhancing food security through general food distribution in Sar-e-Pul province, Afghanistan:

To improve food security levels for 92,701 women, men, girls, and boys across the districts of Balkhab, Gosfandi, Sancharak, and Sozmaqala. This project is located in Sar-e-Pul province, commenced in July 2024, and is scheduled to conclude in June 2025. It is funded by WFP.

3. Immediate Provision of Emergency Cash for Food and Agricultural Assistance in Herat:

This project aims to improve food security and strengthen livelihoods in Herat Province by providing emergency cash assistance for food and essential agricultural support to the most vulnerable households. The intervention seeks to reduce reliance on negative coping mechanisms while enhancing household resilience in the face of ongoing economic and food security challenges. Under this project, 8,939 people including women, men, girls, and boys will receive four rounds of emergency cash assistance, and 1,700 households supported with agricultural input packages to sustain food production and income generation benefiting 11,900 people , implemented from January to September 2025.

4.Provision of immediate humanitarian assistance in response to the worsening drought in Badakhshan

The project aims to enable timely, coordinated, and inclusive life-saving food and agricultural assistance to drought-affected households in the districts of Arghanjkhwah, Jurm, and Khash in Badakhshan Province, in order to reduce preventable hunger, malnutrition, and displacement. The intervention will provide four rounds of cash assistance to 1500 households (10,500 individuals) and distribute 190 metric tons of animal feed to 1,900 households (13,300 people). In addition, the project will conduct deworming for 19,000 livestock to safeguard animal health and protect household livelihoods.

WFP
Beneficiary Identification Point

AHF
FOOD SECURITY CLUSTER
-AFG-25-
37751

ADB
Australian Aid
Canada
UKaid
USAID
WFP Assistance to Vul
خانواده های بی بضاعت
WFP مرسته

Humanitarian Projects Progress 1404 (2025)

Total Cumulative:

145,374

Number of households supported

During the Year:

16,456

Total Cumulative:

91,537

Number of households received Livestock and Agriculture support

During the Year:

1,729

Total Cumulative:

7,674

Number of households received Cash-based

During the Year:

2,210

Total Cumulative:

37,619

Number of households received Food baskets

During the Year:

12,517

Total Cumulative:

115,717

Number of households received training

During the Year:

2,977

We No Longer Sleep Hungry”: How Emergency Food Packages Saved a Family during Harsh Winter

In the remote village of Arab Baye, Sar-e-Pul Province, 51-year-old Mohammad Ibrahim lives with his family of twelve. Life for Ibrahim had always been difficult, but years of ongoing droughts and job scarcity pushed his family into deep food insecurity. “I was unable to feed myself and my children,” he shared. “We were always waiting for the neighbors to bring us something to help.”

Without a stable job or land for farming, Ibrahim was forced to rely on irregular hard labor mainly in orchards. But as drought dried up livelihoods, even these small opportunities vanished. “Orchard owners no longer invest in their orchards, and there are no job opportunities for us anymore,” he explained. The struggle grew more painful, and the family would often go to bed hungry. “If I found porter work, we’d eat. If not, we would sleep with empty stomachs.”

Amid this harsh winter and crushing hardship, emergency food packages became a turning point. “I felt extremely happy and relieved. After a long time, my children and I could finally fill our stomachs with wheat bread,” Ibrahim recalled about the moment he received the assistance. The food flour, cooking oil, and red beans though only enough for twenty days due to the size of his household, made an immediate and significant difference.

“For the first time in a long while, we ate with full stomachs,” he said.

The emergency food packages didn’t just fill their bellies they brought hope, stability, and peace of mind. “We haven’t gone to bed hungry, and we sleep peacefully and satisfied,” he added with visible relief. His wife, who had recently given birth, also benefited greatly. “After receiving Super Cereal, my wife’s breast milk increased, and now she can feed our newborn son properly,” he shared. “The plumpy supplements helped my children who were at risk of malnutrition.”

Before receiving assistance, Ibrahim had to borrow money or even sell household items just to get through the day. “But now, I’ve started repaying my debts,” he said. The food packages allowed the family to direct their limited income toward other critical needs, reducing the reliance on harmful coping strategies.

Despite these improvements, Ibrahim remains cautious about the future. “I feel secure for now, but I’m worried that the food assistance might stop,” he said. With no land or stable income, he hopes for borders to reopen so he can seek work abroad again.

In his message to those who provided the aid, Ibrahim was clear: “I am extremely happy that I haven’t had to see my children go to sleep without food. Please continue your assistance and consider family size, because our needs are greater.”

For Ibrahim and many others, emergency food packages have been more than just a lifeline they’ve been a reason to hope again.

World Food Programme

Receipt Voucher Poi...

معدل لخذ رسيد مواد

Help Desk

طریق شماره تماس رایگان ذیل نیز با ما به تماس شوید.

۷۹۰۵ - (رایگان)

[۸ صبح - ۴ عصر]

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Hand in Hand Afghanistan Organization

GUZAD GROUP

A Glimpse of Hope in Maghzar: Tahera's Story of Survival and Strength

In the remote Maghzar Village of Sar-e-Pul Province, Afghanistan, Ms. Tahera, a 50-year-old widow and the head of an eight-member household, shares a stark and honest reflection of life before humanitarian aid reached her door. "No, we weren't able to provide enough food," she recalls. "Most of the time, we had to eat only two meals a day." The prolonged drought compounded their struggle, as food prices soared and harvests failed, pushing families like hers to the edge of survival.

For Tahera's household, surviving meant resorting to painful coping mechanisms. "We had to live with skipping meals, borrowing money, and relying on charity," she says. The loss of her husband to COVID-19 while in prison left her family with no breadwinner. "We have no stable income; we rely on charity organizations," she explains. The bleak employment landscape added to the despair: "In Afghanistan, there's no work for men how can there be jobs for women?"

Basic necessities such as rice, oil, and clean water became unaffordable luxuries.

Financial stress weighed heavily, with the family borrowing from neighbors and shops several times a month. "Yes, especially with items like oil, rice, and other essentials due to lack of money," she admits, describing how often she faced the impossible choice between food and debt.

Yet, amid the hardship came a glimmer of hope. When Tahera was included in a food distribution program, she experienced what she describes as "hope and reduced anxiety." Though the assistance which included cooking oil, flour, and red beans lasted only two weeks, it made a tangible difference. "It improved access to food and fewer skipped meals," she says. With better nutrition, she noticed visible improvements in her children's health and a reduction in illness. "Improved child health and fewer illnesses," she smiles.

Support from the humanitarian organization went beyond food. "The HIHAO staff informed us well… on how to use the nutritious WSB and LNS food items," she adds. The assistance allowed Tahera to save money for medicine and reduce her reliance on borrowing a step toward financial dignity.

Still, uncertainty looms. "I don't feel good about our food security. If this program stops, the situation will return to what it was no food," Tahera warns. Despite receiving temporary relief, the absence of job opportunities or agricultural land leaves her future insecure. "I have no particular plan because of no job opportunities and no agricultural land," she admits.

Looking back, she finds solace in the stability this support brought: "Peace of mind," she says simply. To those who extended help, her message is clear and heartfelt: "I hope this program creates job opportunities for us so we can work and build a bright future for our children, provide them with good food, and save them from hunger."

Tahera's story is one of quiet resilience, shaped by hardship but held together by hope a reflection of countless Afghan families enduring with dignity and dreaming of a better tomorrow.

میز معلومات
WFP
World Food Programme

LESSONS LEARNED

6

1. **Integrating Safeguarding Information into Frequently Used Beneficiary Documents**

Distributing safeguarding information through standalone brochures proved ineffective, as beneficiaries sometimes misplaced them. To ensure that critical safeguarding contacts remain accessible, HIHAO has learned that integrating this information directly into beneficiary passbooks, documents they regularly use, offers a more reliable and practical solution. This approach reduces the risk of lost materials and strengthens ongoing safeguarding efforts.

2. **Strengthening Procurement Process to Improve Quality and Timeliness**

Working with unqualified vendors who failed to meet quality standards and delivery timelines negatively impacted project planning and implementation. To prevent such issues, HIHAO recognized the importance of strengthening the procurement process by organizing pre-bid meetings with potential vendors, including item images and detailed specifications in procurement documents, issuing requests for quotations earlier, and conducting close follow-up. These measures aim to ensure timely delivery and maintain the quality of toolkits, thereby improving overall project execution

3. **Promoting Self-Sufficiency through Local Poultry Feed Production**

Some entrepreneurs faced losses and reduced productivity due to purchasing low-quality poultry feed from local markets. In response, HIHAO's technical team introduced a cost-effective, locally adaptable poultry feed formula and trained layer poultry entrepreneurs on how to produce high-quality feed themselves. This approach not only reduced dependency on unreliable external suppliers but also improved egg production and enhanced the sustainability of poultry enterprises.

4. **Selecting Livestock Enterprises Based on Environmental Suitability**

Establishing livestock enterprises in areas without accessible pastureland leads to high operational costs, primarily due to expensive animal feed, which significantly reduces return on investment. For future projects, it is advisable to prioritize livestock enterprise support in locations with sufficient pasture resources to ensure cost-effectiveness and improve the sustainability and profitability of the enterprises.

5. **Factoring in Administrative Delays for MoU Signing**

The requirement to sign an MoU with the relevant sectoral department before starting project activities often causes significant delays, with the process typically taking 2–5 months. This delay impacts project timelines and work plans. To mitigate this challenge, it is essential to factor in a minimum three-month inception period for future projects. By including this additional time for the MoU signing and project registration process in the project proposal and budget, we can better align project implementation with timelines and ensure smoother execution

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6. **Ensuring Timely Provision of Vocational Training Equipment and Start-Up Kits**

Delays in procuring start-up kits can disrupt the transition from vocational training to income-generating activities. Where procurement delays are anticipated, timely local arrangements for essential training equipment should be considered to minimize interruptions and enable trainees to begin applying their skills as planned.

7. **Accelerating Value Addition and Market Linkage**

Delays in registration and MoU processes can compress the implementation period available for enterprise development activities. Where feasible, value-addition inputs should be planned and procured alongside start-up kits so that market linkage and value-addition support can begin promptly after enterprise establishment.

8. **Establishing Sustainable Mechanisms for SHG Handover and Management**

To ensure the sustainability of savings and lending in the Self-Help Group after the project ends, a simple journal format has been developed which is economically affordable. The group can cover its cost through membership fees. Moreover, A formal mechanism has been developed for the handover of Self-Help Groups along with a bookkeeping system that includes a specified format showing the amount of savings and loans. This handover will be conducted in the presence of the community elder and the association head, and it will be mandatory to implement this in the next pro ject.

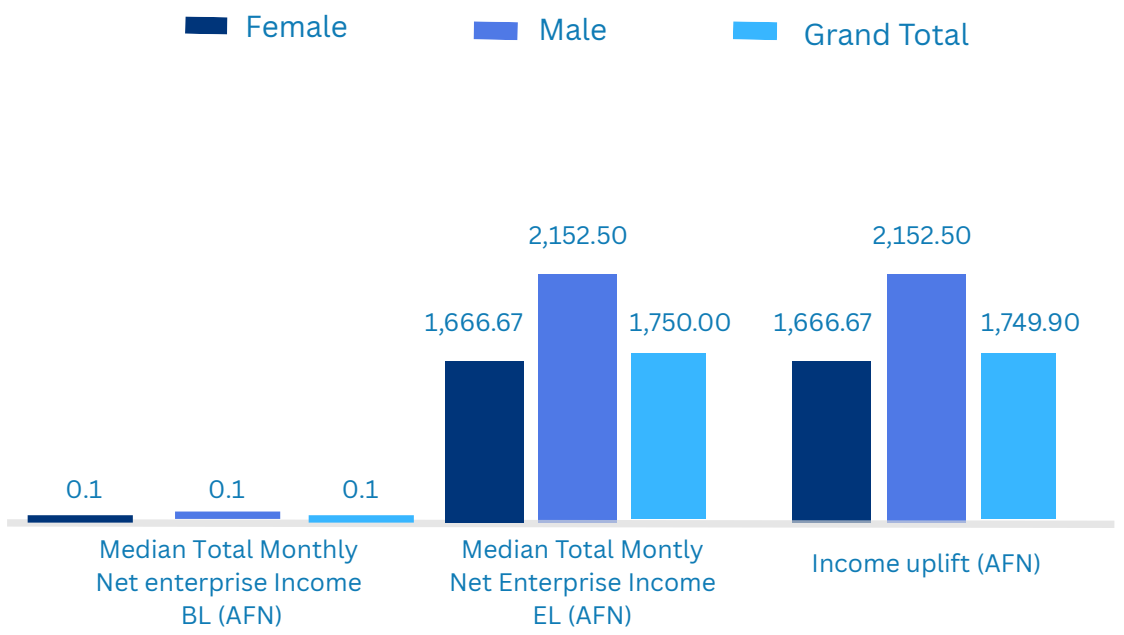
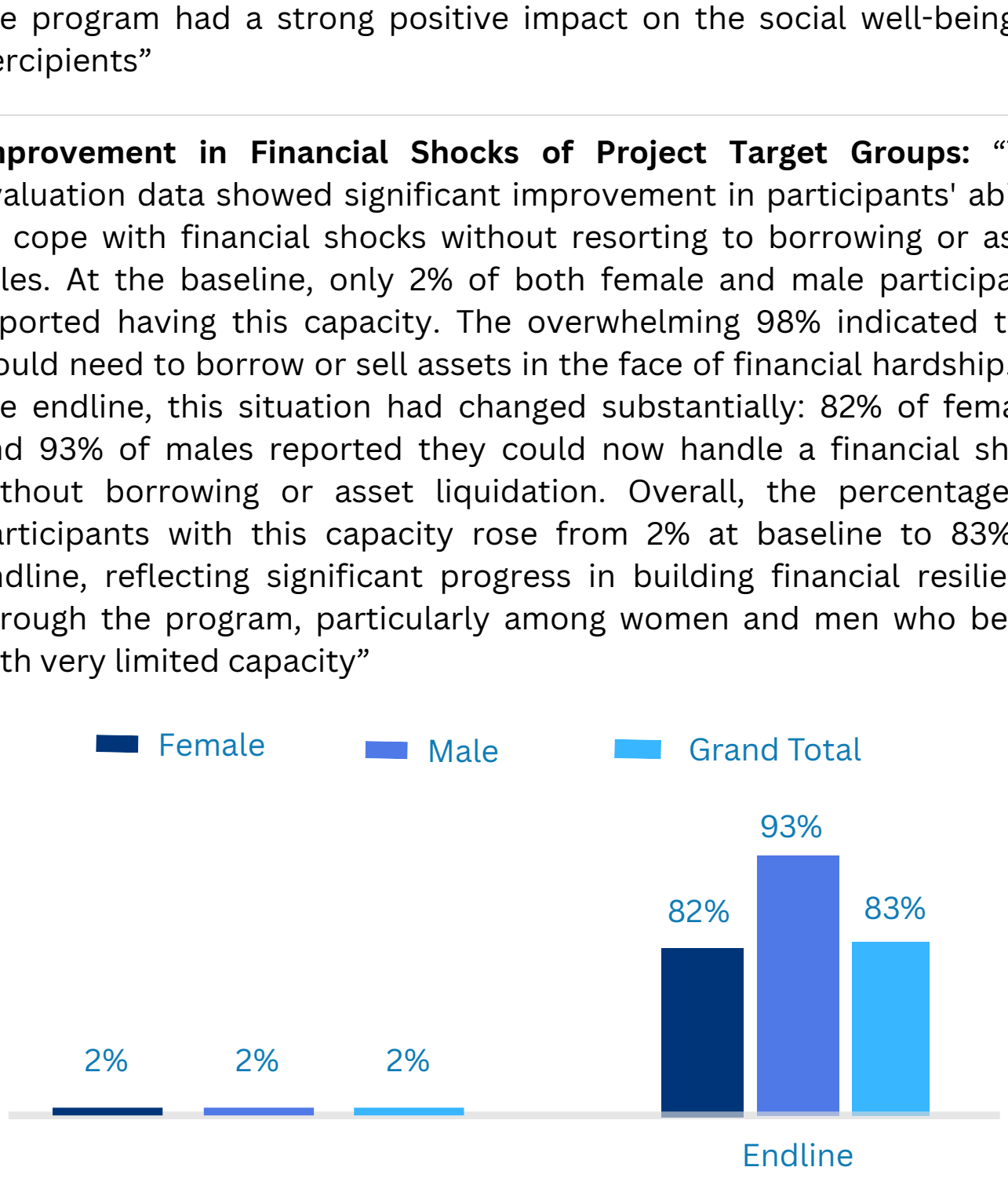
A woman in Beekeeping Farm, Sar-e-Pul Province, Afghanistan, 2025.

TESTIMONIALS

7

NO	Finding / Evidence	Source / Verification Method
1	**Inclusion, Accountability & Gender -Sensitive Delivery:** *"The project's inclusion and accountability processes were largely robust, with participatory-based needs identification and household profiling effectively targeting women in the lowest income brackets. Beneficiary selection was viewed as fair and transparent, with all respondents confirming the absence of influence, elite capture, or post-distribution diversion"*	**TPM Report – Supporting food insecure women and their families through agriculture value chains project in Sar-e-Pul province of Afghanistan:** This project strengthen the resilience of the population in Bala Kent area against economic crises by improving food and nutrition security for 1,800 households.
2	**Importance of Saving Groups on Participants Financial Stability:** "The Saving Groups emerged as one of the most impactful interventions, with all 68 groups active, strong savings participation, and 41% of members accessing loans averaging AFN 4,542. Members reported improved financial stability, stronger money-management skills, and increased confidence in household decision-making. The groups also fostered social cohesion and provided a reliable safety net during economic shocks. Scaling the model will require standardized ledgers, structured financial procedures, and strengthened linkages to formal financial institutions, supported by dedicated community spaces for secure financial meetings"	

NO	Finding / Evidence	Source / Verification Method
1	**Project Relevancy: Intervention fit within structural constraints:** "The intervention was highly relevant to the realities facing the beneficiary households. At baseline, the households operated under chronic income insecurity, rising input costs, declining agricultural returns, and growing water scarcity. Saffron offered rare yet perfect alignment between agronomic suitability and livelihood needs. It also has limited water requirements, can be cultivated on small plots, has a high value per unit area, and can be processed at household-level enabling women's participation even under restrictive mobility conditions"	**External Endline Evaluation THE RED GOLD – Improving Afghan livelihoods through saffron cultivation:** The implanted to contribute to economic prosperity and poverty reduction in Balkh province through sustainable production of saffron. A total of 2,400 saffron growers (of which 50% are women) improve their knowledge and capacity to use resource- and water efficient production in their enterprises and 1,200 environmentally sustainable small and medium-sized enterprises have increased access to starter packages and financing.
2	**Program Effectiveness:** strong technical adoption, conditional income gains:"Delivery performance was strong. Within the valid response base, 96% of respondents received saffron corms and 93% received cultivation training. Technical uptake has consolidated across production cycles: 78% of households rated their saffron quality as "high," and recommended practices are widely applied"	
3	**Program Impact:** participation expanded: "Women's participation in saffron production is one of the most consolidated outcomes. Among female respondents, 96.5% reported involvement in harvesting and 95.3% in processing and drying. These roles are now widely normalized within communities"	
4	**Project and Program Sustainability:** "Behavioral sustainability is strong. Technical knowledge is internalized, women's participation is embedded, and continuation intent is exceptionally high"	

NO	Finding / Evidence	Source / Verification Method
1	**Project Participants Enterprise Income Increase:** "Baseline results showed that the median monthly net enterprise income was virtually zero (0.1 AFN) for both female and male participants, indicating little or no income-generating activity before the intervention. By the endline, median monthly net enterprise income increased to AFN 1,666.67 for females, AFN 2,152.50 for males, and AFN 1,750.00 overall. These results demonstrate the project's strong positive impact on household livelihoods and 	**Endline Evaluation – Providing Skills and Knowledge for Women and Youth to Start Businesses:** The 18-month project enhanced access to tailored TVET opportunities for marginalized young women, equipping them with the skills and knowledge needed to establish businesses, participate in the market economy, and improve household livelihoods. The project also supported women to become trainers in sectors accessible to women, fostering sustainable economic empowerment.
2	**Project Participants Quality of Life Improved:** "The findings indicate a significant improvement in participants' quality of life. Among female respondents, 88% reported that their quality of life had "very much improved," while 12% reported a slight improvement. Similarly, 80% of male respondents reported a substantial improvement, with the remaining 20% indicating a slight improvement. Overall, 87% of all participants experienced a significant improvement in their quality of life, while 13% reported a slight improvement. These results suggest that the program had a strong positive impact on the social well-being of percipients"	
3	**Improvement in Financial Shocks of Project Target Groups:** "The evaluation data showed significant improvement in participants' ability to cope with financial shocks without resorting to borrowing or asset sales. At the baseline, only 2% of both female and male participants reported having this capacity. The overwhelming 98% indicated they would need to borrow or sell assets in the face of financial hardship. By the endline, this situation had changed substantially: 82% of females and 93% of males reported they could now handle a financial shock without borrowing or asset liquidation. Overall, the percentage of participants with this capacity rose from 2% at baseline to 83% at endline, reflecting significant progress in building financial resilience through the program, particularly among women and men who began with very limited capacity" 	

ORGANIZATIONAL CHALLENGES

- **Increased demand vs. limited resources**:

Hand in Hand Afghanistan is experiencing increasing demand from communities for livelihood, resilience, and development interventions, reflecting the significant level of unmet needs across the areas where it operates. Communities increasingly approach the organization with requests for support in areas such as income generation, skills development, agriculture, women's economic empowerment, and access to essential services. However, available funding remains limited and competition for humanitarian and development resources continues to make it difficult to respond to all community priorities. In addition, operational resources constrain the organization's ability to expand its geographical coverage and provide sustained support to all communities requesting assistance. As a result, Hand in Hand Afghanistan must carefully prioritize interventions based on assessed needs, available resources, organizational capacity, and donor priorities while continuing to explore new partnerships and funding opportunities to respond to the growing demand.

- **Limited Supplier Options In Remote Area:**

Hand in Hand Afghanistan faces challenges in sourcing qualified and reliable suppliers in remote and less commercially developed provinces such as Sar-e-Pul and Kunduz. The limited number of vendors operating in these areas reduces market competition and can result in fewer competitive bids, higher prices, and limited availability of required goods and services. In some cases, suppliers from other provinces need to be approached, which increases transportation costs, delivery times, and logistical complexities. These constraints can slow down procurement processes and may affect the timely implementation of project activities, particularly when goods or services are required within specific project timelines. To address this challenge, Hand in Hand Afghanistan continues to expand its supplier networks, strengthen market assessments, encourage wider vendor participation, and explore practical procurement approaches that maintain transparency, competitiveness, and value for money.

- **Delay in project registration and signing MoU with sectoral departments:**

Delays in project registration and the signing of Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with relevant sectoral government departments can significantly affect the timely commencement and implementation of project activities. The administrative and coordination processes required for registration and MoU approval may take longer than anticipated, particularly when multiple government departments and authorities are involved.

Such delays can compress the implementation period, create pressure on project teams, and affect the timely delivery of planned activities and achievement of project targets. To minimize the impact, Hand in Hand Afghanistan will consider an appropriate inception phase within project planning and timelines, allowing sufficient time for government coordination, project registration, MoU finalization, and other preparatory activities. In addition, initiating project registration and engagement with relevant sectoral departments at an early stage will help reduce delays and enable smoother and more timely project implementation.

- **Female Staff Participation and Access Constraints:**

Restrictions on the movement and field participation of female staff continue to affect the implementation, monitoring, and supervision of project activities in some areas of Afghanistan. These restrictions can limit the ability of female staff to directly engage with women beneficiaries, conduct field visits, provide technical support, and participate fully in community-level activities. Hand in Hand Afghanistan has adopted localized and context-sensitive strategies to mitigate these challenges, including considering Mahram arrangements for female staff where required and prioritizing the recruitment of qualified female staff from local communities. Regular communication and constructive discussions with local authorities, community leaders, and other relevant stakeholders also help facilitate female staff participation and improve acceptance of project activities. These measures, combined with flexible field-level planning and close coordination with communities, help reduce operational constraints while ensuring meaningful participation of women in project implementation an

d support.

Field training and visit (saffron), Balkh district, Balkh province, 2025.

Soraya in her Beekeeping Farm, Sar-e-Pul Province, Afghanistan, 2025.

HIHAO AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT

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RSM

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Independent Auditor's Report

To Hand-in-Hand Afghanistan Organization (HIHAO)

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of ***Hand in Hand Afghanistan Organization (HIHAO)*** (here-in-after referred to as the "Organization"), which comprise the statement of financial position as at 20 March, 2025, statement of income and expenditure, statement of changes in general funds and statement of cash flows for the year then ended and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Organization as at 20 March, 2025 and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the basis of accounting as described in note 2 to the financial statements.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with the International Standards on Auditing (ISAs). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are independent of the Organization in accordance with the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants' Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Emphasis of Matter – Basis of Accounting and Users of the Financial Statements

We draw attention to the note 2 of the financial statements, which describes the basis of accounting and users of the financial statements. These financial statements are prepared for the intended use of those to whom it is addressed. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Other information

In connection with the audit of our financial statements, we have been informed by the management that there is no other information that is attached by them along with the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

The management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the basis of accounting as described in note 2 and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the management is responsible for assessing the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and

using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Organization or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Organization's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statement, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Organization's internal control.

- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.

- Conclude on the appropriateness of the management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Organization to cease to continue as a going concern.

- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosure, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Avais Hyder Liaquat Nauman;
Chartered Accountants
Muhammad Arif Saeed, FCA
Engagement Partner
Kabul, Afghanistan
Date: 30 July, 2025

HAND IN HAND AFGHANISTAN ORGANIZATION
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 20 MARCH, 2025

	Notes	As at 20 March, 2025	As at 19 March, 2024
		---------- *AFN* ----------	
ASSETS			
Current assets			
Advance, deposit and other receivable	4	305,001	5,001
Cash and cash equivalent	5	37,766,730	25,794,864
		38,071,731	25,799,864
Total Assets		38,071,731	25,799,864
LIABILITIES AND GENERAL FUND			
Current liabilities			
Bid security deposit payable	6	2,019,720	496,300
Other current liabilities	7	687,577	2,831,437
		2,707,297	3,327,737
General fund			
Accumulated fund		35,364,434	22,472,127
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND GENERAL FUND		38,071,731	25,799,864

Auditor's Report Annexed.

The notes from 1 to 15 & Annexure 'A' to 'P' form an integral part of these financial statements.

Chief Financial Officer

Executive Director

HAND IN HAND AFGHANISTAN ORGANIZATION
STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURES
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED MARCH 20, 2025

	Notes	For the Period from 20 Mar, 2024 to 20 Mar, 2025	For the Period from 01 Jan, 2023 to 19 Mar, 2024
		---------- AFN ----------	
INCOME			
Grant income	8	**195,608,135**	234,536,749
Other Income/(loss)	9	**(4,341,050)**	-
Total income		**191,267,085**	234,536,749
EXPENDITURE			
Employee compensation	10	**79,804,515**	81,707,817
Project expenses	11	**80,472,031**	141,650,065
Financial charges	12	**1,746,826**	1,785,636
Administrative expenses	13	**16,337,509**	14,693,045
Total expenditure		**178,360,881**	239,836,563
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR		**12,906,204**	(5,299,814)

Auditor's Report Annexed.

The notes from 1 to 15 & Annexure 'A' to 'P' form an integral part of these financial statements.

Chief Financial Officer

Executive Director

HAND IN HAND AFGHANISTAN

PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

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Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

OCHA
Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

WFP World Food Programme

UN WOMEN

Sida
SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF DENMARK
Danida

SVENSKA POSTKOD LOTTERIET

HAND IN HAND SWEDEN

CAFOD
Catholic Agency for Overseas Development

HAND IN HAND INTERNATIONAL

Hand in Hand Afghanistan Organization

مؤسسه دست به دست افغانستان

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