



ABA E-Newsletter

Kabul Access to Finance (A2F) Business to Bank Conference and Roundtable

During March 24-25, 2014, Afghanistan Banks Association (ABA) with the support from USAID's Financial Access for Investing in the Development of Afghanistan (FAIDA) project held a two-day A2F Business to Bank Conference and Roundtable in Kabul to introduce the entrepreneurs with loan facilitation opportunities, sector development through business planning, contract farming best practices, financing mechanism, mobile money and roundtable discussions. The event provided opportunity to Kabul province enterprises and financial institutions to exchange their viewpoints in identifying challenges and opportunities in improving production, access to markets and finance. Invitees included public and private sector representatives engaged in multi sector trading, production, export and financing activities. In the event, Mr. Ahmad Javed Wafa, ABA Director Economic Research, Mr. Abdul Hasib Rahimi, Executive Director of Kabul Chamber of Commerce and Industries (KCCI), 60 businesses, 9 banks and MFIs participated. The businesses that are interested to take loan from banks/MFIs were facilitated with the loan procedures.

Mr. Wafa welcomed the participants and addressed on the evolution of the banking sector in Afghanistan. Furthermore, he discussed brief overview of the reforms in the banking sector and its strengths. He emphasized on the role of ABA in banking sector, its activities and plans. He added that such events provide a good platform for entrepreneurs/SMEs that had never got a chance to discuss their financial needs and know about various banks products and services at once.

Mr. Abdul Hasib Rahimi, Executive Director of KCCI welcomed the participants, thanked from regular support of ABA and USAID/FAIDA with businesses and banks in Afghanistan. He discussed the role of KCCI in Kabul private business facilitation and development, he encouraged businesses to participate in business to bank events to talk directly with banks and access financing for their business expansions and liquidity shortages.



Mr. Ahmad Javed Wafa, ABA Director Economic Research
Kabul A2F Business to Bank Conference and Roundtable
Q-Kabul Hotel, Kabul
Date: March 24-25, 2014



Mr. Abdul Hasib Rahimi, KCCI Executive Director
Kabul A2F Business to Bank Conference and Roundtable
Q-Kabul Hotel, Kabul
Date: March 24-25, 2014

9 banks and MFIs participated in the event to introduce their products and services to entrepreneurs and pick potential applicants from the event. The participating banks and MFIs in the event were Afghanistan International Bank (AIB), Afghanistan Commercial Bank (ACB), Afghan United Bank (AUB), Azizi Bank, Bakhtar Bank, Bank-e-Millie Afghan (BMA), Ghazanfar Bank, Oxus Afghanistan and The First Microfinance Bank of Afghanistan (FMFB-A).



Kabul A2F Business to Bank Conference and Roundtable, Q-Kabul Hotel, Kabul-March 24-25, 2014

Herat A2F Business to Bank Roundtable

ABA with the support from USAID/FAIDA project held a two-day A2F Business to Bank Roundtable at Markopolo Hotel in Herat province during March 16-17, 2014. The roundtable targeted enterprises functioning in Herat by facilitating them in business planning and Islamic finance trainings in order to help them in business financing and development. The roundtable provided a good opportunity for the participating businesses and financial institutions to exchange viewpoints in identifying challenges and opportunities in improving their productivity, access to markets and finance. Invitees of the roundtable included public and private sector representatives who are involved in production, trade and financing activities.



Mr. Shafiq Ahmad Ahmadi, Herat Head of AISA,
Event: Herat A2F Business to Bank Roundtable
Venue: Markopol Hotel, Herat
Date: March 16-17, 2014



Ms. Aziza Jami, Acting Head of Herat Women Affair
Event: Herat A2F Business to Bank Roundtable
Venue: Markopol, Herat
Date: March 16-17, 2014

Main objectives of the event was to improve access to finance for the enterprises in Herat province through facilitation of targeted discussions and meetings between relevant stakeholders, to link enterprises with the financial institutions and to develop enterprises' technical skills requirement. In the event 8 financial institutions namely Agricultural Development Fund, Bakhtar Bank, Bank Al-Falah, Ghazanfar Bank, FINCA, The First Microfinance Bank of Afghanistan (FMFB-A), Muthahid introduced their products and services to the participating enterprises.

In total, 79 participants attended the event on the first day while 61 participants appeared on the second day. The event was attended by government departments, USAID representatives, ABA member banks, MFIs, and enterprises from Herat provinces. Total number of 2 potential concepts notes were developed from the event and almost 9 businesses have had initial meetings with banks for financing.



Herat Business to Bank Roundtable, Markopol Hotel, Herat-March 16-17, 2014

The 2nd India-Afghanistan Innovation Partnership Fair

Afghanistan banking sector is regularly participating in innovative fairs to further expand financial inclusion in the country by financing businesses in various sector of Afghan economy. During March 4-5, 2014, ABA member banks operating in Mazar-i-Sharif province of Afghanistan participated in 2nd India-Afghanistan Innovation Partnership Fair held in Mazar-e-Sharif and featured 23 Indian organizations and 31 Afghan organizations which showcased their innovative solutions in the areas of clean energy, health, agriculture, ICT, and SME businesses. The two-day India-Afghanistan Innovation Partnership Fair focused on showcasing successful Indian innovations, establishing contacts, and sharing information on financing and the establishment of private and public-private alliances. This event looks to capitalize on a growing wave of interest within the Afghan business community to develop and strengthen regional economic partnerships.



Event: The 2nd Innovative Partnership Fair
 Venue: Amprator-i-Baran, Mazar-i-Sharif
 Date: March 4-5, 2014



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Over 1, 750 representatives from private and public sector participated in the event which included around 90 VVIPs and 550 VIPs from the Balkh governor office, USAID field office, Afghanistan Parliament member, Indian Consulate in Mazar, Financial Institutions, Donors, national and international NGOs, businesswomen, board members of Balkh Chamber of Commerce and Industries (BCCI), Balkh business communities as well as the representatives from the other northern chambers and businesses, all together 640 people attended inaugural ceremony. And more than 1,100 people participated on the second day including 200 university students.



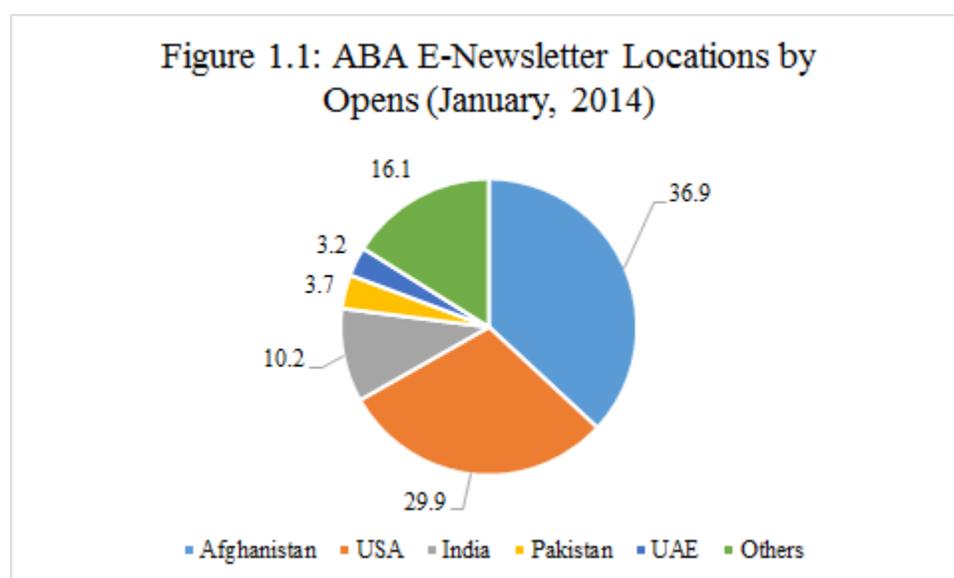
The 2nd Indian-Afghan Innovative Partnership Fair, Amprator-i-Baran, Mazar-i-Sharif-March 4-5, 2014

More than 300 Business to Business (B2B) and Business to Bank matchmaking meetings took place between the Indian organizations and Afghan companies and ABA member banks, and around USD 5 million of potential deals has been recorded. The banks and MFIs played a key role into the matchmaking sessions; they are committed to finance the vital ideas, and to contribute to the improvement of innovation solutions in Afghanistan.

News Highlights

ABA January E-newsletter

On February 22, 2014, ABA released fifth issue of ABA E-Newsletter to its member banks, private sector business and government organizations in Afghanistan. In addition to local subscribers, ABA E-newsletter has subscribers from various countries. E-Newsletter is mainly targeting professionals/interested parties in Afghanistan banking sector. The E-newsletter included brief highlights on Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) audit report, Kandahar Access to Finance Business to Banks Roundtable, The Banker Award 2012 & 2013 and ABA Website. It also covered ABA upcoming activities and events. The fifth issue top locations by opens are depicted in the following figure 1.1:



ABA Printed Newsletter

To provide update information and news on banking sector to its member banks and other stakeholders, ABA has released its first Voice of the Banks (VoBs) printed newsletter for the fourth quarter of 2013. VOBs is providing update information in local official languages (Dari & Pashto) to its member banks and other stakeholders. VOBs is accessible online through the following link: <http://www.aba.org.af/aba/pdfcontent.php?lang=en&content=Publications>

ABA Official Facebook Page

ABA is taking strong steps in expanding its communication networks and implementing its communication strategy. To expand its communication networks, ABA opened official Facebook page on December 14, 2013. The page is sharing update information on banking sector developments, updates and promotional information with more than 2514 subscribers. The page is accessible through the following link: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Afghanistan-Banks-Association/556634211085352>