

▶ EIIIP Afghanistan News Brief



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▶ **Welcome** to our fourth edition of Employment Intensive Investment Programme (EIIIP) Afghanistan News Brief, published to share news and information on EIIIP Afghanistan project's activities.

The Special Trust Fund for Afghanistan (STFA) is funding this project and ILO is implementing it as an intervention for Promoting Employment and Decent Work through the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus.

We will provide you with a brief on our interventions to address the humanitarian crisis through the project, and particularly the efforts being made at promoting employment and decent work through employment intensive investment programs. Our aim is to inform how the project is being implemented together with the people and for the people and will also include human interest stories. In this issue, we have a touching story of Mobina Sediqqi, a woman head of household who got a lifeline through the EIIIP project. This follows all other 4 members of the household including her husband and children living with disabilities. We would appreciate your feedback as we hope you enjoy this issue.

▶ Project Update...

The project has completed all its four infrastructure projects in Mazar City. This follows the recent completion of the rehabilitation of Rawza Alsafa Road. Besides the essential access and community infrastructure provided to the communities, the projects have managed restoring and sustaining livelihoods through the income support provided through the employment and decent work opportunities. There is ongoing work on the recently commenced rehabilitation of the 3.6 km Shortepa road, that was destroyed by the encroaching Amu river. The Shortepa project, with challenging sandy dunes, terrain, high water table, encroaching river, and adverse weather will involve use of geo-composite soil stabilization solution. Another two rehabilitation sections and one maintenance/ spot improvement project are expected to kick off by September 2023.

The project has also been busy with the procurement of three other rehabilitation and one maintenance/ spot improvement work in Jawzjan province that are also envisaged to start in September 2023. A long-awaited National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health (NEBOSH) accredited course in Occupational Health and Safety (OSH) to facilitate OSH in the workplace is in advanced stages of preparation, with the delivery expected in late August/ September 2023.

The development of the internal performance tracking tool and EIIIP Afghanistan website is in final stages. The performance tracking tool will provide an effective monitoring on-line system to enable the project and stakeholders in tracking the project deliverables including employment generation, assets creation and training interventions.

In response to the need to provide livelihoods beyond the project lifetime, the EIIIP Afghanistan project, through STFA funding, is also collaborating with its sister ILO Roads to Decent Jobs for All Afghans (R2DJ4ALL) project to train women beneficiaries linked to the EIIIP projects in entrepreneurial skills and make linkages to enterprises that will provide them with either self or other employment opportunities for livelihood.

Continue to watch this space....



► Human Interest History

A disadvantaged mother of four people with disabilities finds a ray of hope to feed her children after girls' schools' closure



Mobina Seddiqi joined the STFA funded EIIP project as a female unskilled worker on the Khalid bin Walid project during the initial days of the project. At 35 years of age, Mobina is the head of a household of five comprising dependents with disabilities including her husband, daughter and two sons. It is a sad story, as while the father of the family became disabled at the age of 20, all the children were born healthy and later became disabled at different ages of between 7 or 10 years old, owing to reasons which cannot be explained.

As Mobina relates her predicament, she says "Being the head of household, and the only bread winner is very hard in Afghanistan, let alone being a woman who also heads a household of family members who are living with disability."

Mobina Seddiqi explains that she is the only person who can work and earn income to support the family. She was working in a private school which has been closed after the ban on girls education. "The school closed, and we lost the only source of our income", Mobina explains.

Interestingly, it was Mobina's husband, Allah-udin, who was first directed to the project, by the community, after being informed that the project employs People with Disabilities (PWD). This is however contingent on the medical and health condition of the person to carry out specified tasks safely. This is based on an Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESSF) developed by the project. "Her husband came to me for hiring him as a daily unskilled worker for the construction project of Khalid bin Walid. When I reviewed his health situation and understood his life story, I empathised, but unfortunately, his condition did not allow for him to work safely within the construction environment, and I thus was not able to pass him the application form", relates the EIIP Community Liaison Officer, Freshta Najafizada.

Mobina then recounts that "The CLO then asked my husband to give me permission to work instead of him as he was not able to work owing to his medical and health conditions". Initially it was not easy for Mobina to join the project, owing to the social norms and stigma, and it involved the ILO Community Liaison Officer and project team reaching out to Mobina's husband and explaining the project activities and safeguards to protect the cultural norms related to women like separated workspaces, dedicated duties, women supervision which later convinced the husband to allow her wife to work. "I was very happy. Everything was well organized in the site camp, and the Contractor, Engineers, ILO officers were very professional and more importantly the daily wages were very good. The school paid me 6,000 Afghanis, but I made about 10,000 Afghanis in a month on the EIIP Project", she narrates happily.

EIIP project helped Mobina and other women to pass the cold winter weather allowing them to buy food and necessities for their families. Mobina expressed the need of similar actions for many Afghan families who have family members living with disability as a result of several years of war or other social issues including unemployment.

Mobina thanked the donor and the ILO for implementing the program allowing them to get income and advocate for their right to work. Mobina Seddiqi hopes that this kind of project will continue and help other families too around the country.

► Greening the Environment



The rehabilitated sidewalks along Khalid bin Walid road motivated the community to complement the project activities and contribute native trees to be planted along both sides of the road. Trees are important in mitigating carbon emission and in providing some shade during extreme hot weather in Mazar-i-Sharif.