



Aga Khan Agency for Microfinance

## **The First Microfinance Bank, Afghanistan launches loan product for Afghan Returnees**



**Kabul, Afghanistan, 9 June 2018** - The First MicroFinance Bank, Afghanistan (FMFB-A) today announced the launch of *Awdat*, a new loan product designed for vulnerable Afghan returnees who may not be able to avail loans from local banks due to their unique risk profile and vulnerable socioeconomic condition.

Six million Afghan refugees were hosted in Pakistan and Iran, making Afghanistan one of the largest refugee-producing countries in the world. Afghans currently make up the second largest refugee group after Syrians. The majority of Afghan refugees (95%) are located in Pakistan and Iran.

*Awdat* is the first loan of its kind in the country. It is tailored exclusively for Afghan returnees who, after a period of immigration to Iran and/or Pakistan, have returned to their homeland during the last 1-5 years. Softened collateral requirements, low interest rates and flexible repayment tenures will provide ex-refugees access to finance for the purpose of setting up or expanding income-generating activities.

“*Awdat* is designed to provide loans with greater flexibility and lower interest rates to vulnerable returning refugees,” said Frank van der Poll, CEO, FMFB-A. “By committing a portion of our lending portfolio in loans to returnee Afghans, FMFB-A continues to uphold its commitment to social responsibility by fulfilling the needs of financially excluded segments of Afghan society.”

The new loan will be retailed in Kabul, Herat and Jalalabad branches during the pilot phase.

### **Media Contact:**

Fareed Ashraf Chaudhry  
Head of Business Strategy and Marketing (FMFB-A)  
[fareed.ashraf@fmb.com.af](mailto:fareed.ashraf@fmb.com.af)

### **NOTE**

Founded in 2003, *The First MicroFinance Bank, Afghanistan* ([www.fmb.com.af](http://www.fmb.com.af)) is part of the Aga Khan Agency for Microfinance (AKAM), which has programmes in over 10 countries throughout the developing world. FMFB-A's vision is to be recognised as the leading microfinance services provider contributing to poverty alleviation and economic development through the provision of sustainable financial services primarily targeting micro/small businesses and households. The bank provides credit and deposit products to a wide range of clients including micro, small and medium enterprises along with commercial

banking and international remittance services. The bank is also a member of the Global Alliance for Banking on Values (GABV) – an independent network of banks using finance to deliver sustainable economic, social and environmental development. The bank's values-based banking agenda focuses on providing affordable financial services that promote entrepreneurship, agriculture, incremental housing and clean energy in Afghanistan.

Read online: <http://www.akdn.org/press-release/first-microfinance-bank-afghanistan-launches-loan-product-afghan-returnees>