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Turning ambition into profitable artistry

A Microfinance Client Story

Story of Shamayel

The Microfinance Investment Support Facility for Afghanistan (MISFA) was set up in 2003 at the invitation of the Afghan government — to get donor coordination right from the start and avoid the counter-productive efforts that have emerged from conflicting donor objectives in other post-conflict situations. It was established as a vehicle through which the Afghan Government and international donors could channel technical assistance and funding to build microfinance in Afghanistan.

In March 2006, MISFA was registered as a limited liability non-profit company whose sole shareholder is the Ministry of Finance of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. MISFA Ltd is an independent apex organization with a select group of implementing partners on the ground.

With four school-aged children, the eldest being 15 years old and the youngest at three years, Shamayel is determined to use her sewing and embroidery skills to support her husband in giving their children a good education and a bright future.

Shamayel, who lives with her family in Takhar province, says her husband alone could not fulfill the needs of their children and daily household expenses if she did not work to supplement his income. Her husband, a taxi driver, earns AFN 500 to 1000 on average per day.

Taking a loan of AFN 30,000 from FINCA to expand her tailoring business was the best decision Shamayel said she made for her family: "I make an average of between AFN 10,000 to 15,000 per month, through my business." This more than covers her monthly loan repayment amount of AFN 3,030. She earns between AFN 3,000 to 4,000 per piece of work, sewing and embroidering beads on bed sheets, curtains, and other kinds of fabric.

"It is a tough craft that requires full concentration on every single bead, but I have two more junior workers, who help me



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FINCA Afghanistan started operations in 2004 with the support from FINCA International (US based parent company) then followed by MISFA and ARIES, a USAID funded project.

FINCA Afghanistan offers a wide array of credit products, including individual and solidarity group loans all of which can be accessed through conventional lending or Islamic financing. Headquartered in Kabul, FINCA Afghanistan serves almost 30,000 clients through 15 locations in 8 provinces across Afghanistan. FINCA Afghanistan is helping clients in the informal economy create their own jobs and build small businesses. Almost 80% of these clients are female borrowers with fewer economic and employment opportunities. FINCA Afghanistan is dedicated to helping clients build successful businesses while ensuring that they are protected from unnecessary risks through its commitment to client protection standards.

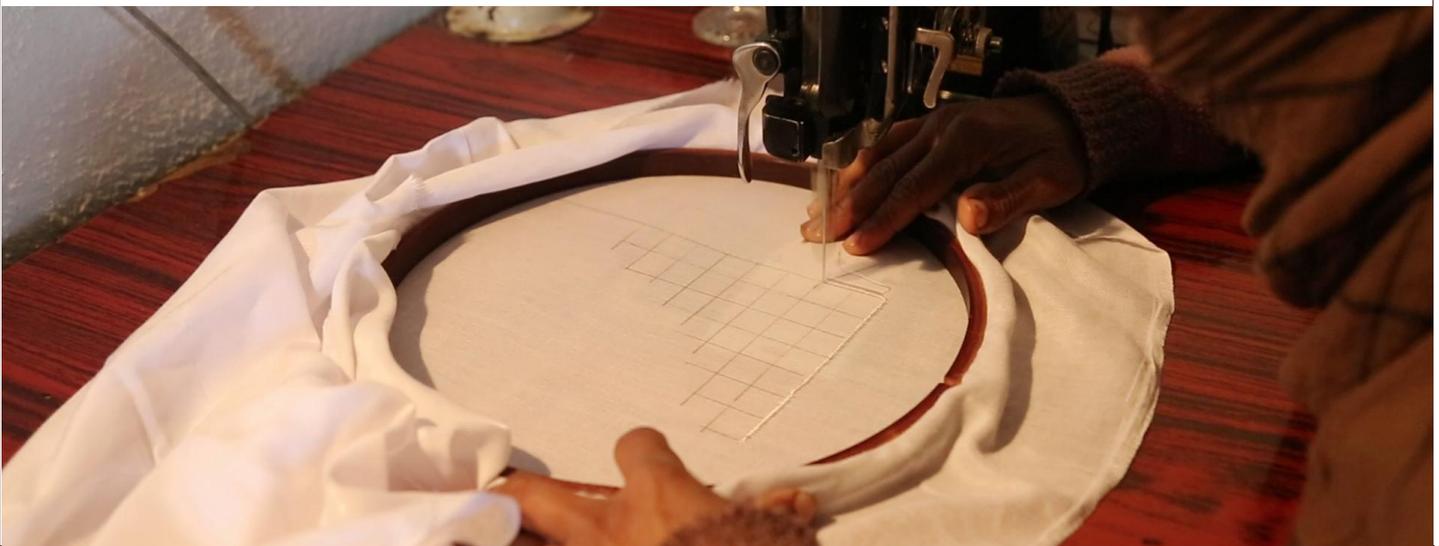
out. They all make good income and are able to contribute to the wellbeing of their families.” Shamayel is also able to pay her loan obligations to FINCA on the due dates.

With her first loan from FINCA, she was able to purchase some zigzag and sewing machines. Shamayel already has a clear vision on her next steps.

"With the blessing of God, I have this precious talent," she said. "I want to share all my work with everyone, who can enjoy it in their pillows, cushions, bed sheets, and curtains. I want all of them in my showroom so

people could appreciate my abilities."

Shamayel has many regular customers, which makes her confident that her ambitions are strongly backed by the artistry and craftsmanship she brings to her products. She plans to apply for a second loan cycle to further expand her business. Her future goals include opening a shop in the city center to expand her client base to include urban dwellers, and to increase her profit margin. In the long term, she is determined to make her business a big success so she could move her family from their rental house to their own home someday.



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