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Success Story

Empowering the Disabled in Afghanistan

Anaar Multimedia Centers offer free internet and computer access, along with digital technology and media tools training.



Ms. Najiba is more confident and enjoys the social interaction offered through the MMC multimedia training.

“Every citizen can be a journalist. I can discuss topics on social media... these skills make me feel less isolated from society and has increased my confidence to express my opinions.”

- Abdul Sattar

Hundreds of thousands of persons with disabilities (PwD) in Afghanistan face daily challenges to access basic services, while employment opportunities are extremely limited. An area providing encouragement across a range of ages are the Anaar Multimedia Centers (MMCs), that operate in Herat, Kandahar, Helmand and Nangarhar provinces. Offering multimedia skills training and free internet access to local residents, MMCs are supported under the USAID funded Afghan Civic Engagement Program (ACEP).

Similar to other MMCs, the Herat centre operates a series of training sessions designed to educate, promote self-expression and increased civic engagement, through teaching blogging, citizen journalism, MS Word, digital photography and basic portable video editing. ACEP’s collaborative partnership with local CSO, Pir-e-Heart, enabled seventy-two (56 men; 16 women) PwD participants undertake training in five intensive sessions during April and May.

Prior to attending photography training, 18-years old Ms. Najiba had minimal understanding of how to operate digital equipment. The MMC provided social interaction and she found the training stimulating in terms of skills learning. Najiba explained: “I was bored and depressed with my situation, but attending MMC training has been interesting and definitely enriched my life and my knowledge. I now take many photos of scenes and people. Where before I hated having my photo taken, I now don’t mind it so much.”

Also benefiting from being able to return regularly to access the free internet and MMC computers is Ms Roqia, also 18-years old, who is enthusiastic about future opportunities. “This training was educational and I believe it will be useful to me. Before this I was not confident about using a camera, but I am told my photography is very good. I hope to be able to earn money by photographing events and ceremonies,” she said.

MMC training attendee, Abdul Sattar, commented: “Every citizen can be a journalist. Now I discuss topics on social media, record and post video clips. These skills make me feel less isolated from society and has increased my confidence to express my opinions.

For more information, contact Fawad Barakzai at fbarakzai@internews.org