



PRESS RELEASE



Fostering Public Sector Capacity Development – a Joint IARCSC and UNDP Conference

Kabul, April 1, 2009 - The Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission (IARCSC) and UNDP are jointly hosting a two-day conference on Public Sector Capacity Development on April 1- 2, 2009, in Kabul. The conference will reflect on achievements in civil service capacity development and highlight challenges, as well as good practices.

The Government of Afghanistan (GoA) has taken the lead to ensure the success of the Afghan Public Administration Reform and the enhancement of its civil servants, and the IARCSC has the mandate to lead, regulate, reform, formulate and implement policies on public administration reform.

The GoA has clearly identified low public sector capacity as a main challenge. To address this, the IARCSC aims to develop and sustain the capabilities of ministries and agencies to fulfill their mandate and effectively perform their functions. IARCSC will achieve this by focusing on capacity development in the common functions, assessing the capacity gap, developing capacities at the national and sub-national levels and propose an implementation, monitoring and evaluation plan.

UNDP has been a strong partner in the state-building process. A significant amount of support in the form of financial and human resources have been made available by the international community and the UN to assist GoA to build an efficient and competent public sector.

The conference on Public Sector Capacity Development commenced with the opening remarks of the IARCSC Chairman. "It is a pleasure for the Independent Administrative and Civil Service Commission (IARCSC), as a pioneer of civil service capacity development, to have the opportunity to hold the first conference on public sector development, together with UNDP, and with the participation and cooperation of other stakeholders in civil service reform and public sector capacity building", said Dr. Ahmad Mushahid, Chairman of the IARCSC. "The aim of today's conference is to discuss and share our thoughts on the past decisions and activities and review the lessons learned and the positive experiences, achievements and weaknesses and to discuss on further improvement of our future plans." he added.



In his remarks to the conference Mr. Bo Asplund, the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General to Afghanistan and the UNDP Resident Representative, stressed that though the capacity development is often overlooked by donors, as it is a long-term process that does not lead to quick results or good photo opportunities to showcase achievements, capacity development is essential to the success of all our efforts. In moving forward, Mr. Asplund said, it is important to build on the good work achieved and adjust efforts to the ever-changing context, as capacity development is not a static process. Finally, Mr. Asplund encouraged a more coordinated approach, particularly of our activities at the sub-national level.

“Capacity development support to the Government of Afghanistan and public sector is a long term process and is heavily dependent on support from the international community”, said Mr. Manoj Basnyat, the Country Director of UNDP Afghanistan, in his opening remarks. “UNDP Afghanistan has over the past years implemented several innovative projects with the key aim of strengthening the capacity of the public sector and Afghan civil servants, both at central and sub-national levels.” Mr. Basnyat added.

The conference will capture best practices in capacity building and development and provide valuable guidance on how capacity development initiatives can be better aligned to support the achievement of national set goals and priorities and fulfill the promises made to the Afghan people.