



Quarterly Project Report [First Quarter, 2009]
United Nations Development Programme
Afghanistan
Civil Service Leadership Development Project
01-01-2009 to 31-03-2009



Figure 1 SCLDP Phase I participants at the Certificate Award Ceremony with invited guests: January 2009

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Unfunded:	USD 484,122
Implementing Partners / Responsible parties:	UNDP and Afghanistan Civil Service Institute (ACSI), IARCSC

CSLD Donors



Australia



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I. Implementation progress

OUTPUT 1: TRAINING PROGRAMMES ARE DEVELOPED AND DELIVERED TO THE TARGET GROUP

Design and deliver Senior Leadership Competency Development Programme (SLCDP) to the target group

In August 2008, the CSLD project commenced delivering phase I of the Senior Leadership Competency Development Programme (SLCDP). The design of SLCDP was initiated in response to the development in the implementation of the public administration reform (PAR), specifically it was designed to support the implementation of the new pay and grade scale for the Afghan civil service. The SLCDP is aimed at equipping senior civil servants with the skills and knowledge required to manage complex public sector operations, in line with the competency requirements of the position holders. The implementation of the programme was designed in such a way that it will allow feedback from the training and coaching sessions to be incorporated in the course design and delivery. The target groups of SLCDP are grade 1 and 2 position holders in the civil service as per the pay and grade system. Training delivery implementation and coaching were divided in two phases. Phase I was implemented from August 2008 – January 2009. Phase II is currently under implementation, from February to July 2009.

SLCDP Phase I

The Phase I activities of SLCDP were delivered according to plans. The participants of the programme, who completed all the requirements for the course, were awarded a Certificate of Completion at a graduation ceremony held on January 29, 2009, in the presence of senior government officials and UNDP senior management. Five groups of participants drawn from both the central ministers and provincial offices, successfully completed the required four weeks training sessions. Out of the 130 participants who were registered for the training programmes 114 of the senior civil servants successfully completed the requirements of the course. The proportion of female civil servants who participated in the programme is 5%.

In the first phase of the SLCDP, participants were selected from 23 ministries and agencies both from the central ministries and provincial offices. Over 40% of the participants for the SLCDP phase I came from line ministries offices at provincial level. This is a clear indication of the need for extending capacity building opportunities for the senior leadership echelon of the civil service at sub-national level. A balanced economic and social development will only be achieved if support for the highly demanded capacity building is extended to sub national level, where most services are delivered to the citizens. While provincial participation in the SLCDP phase I training programmes have significantly increased, the participation of female civil servants has been very low. The proportion of female senior civil servants who completed the required training programmes is only 5%. Very few female candidates were introduced by the Independent Appointment Board (IAB) for the SLCDP training programmes in the SLCDP 1st phase. Much is required to be done to encourage and support female civil servants to climb up the ladder to senior decision making positions. This requires policy support and proactive action on the part of IARCSC and other government agencies. CSLD project will work with IARCSC by proposing alternative options to increase the participation of female civil servants in training programmes.

Assessment of SLCDP Phase I implementation

As part of the implementation modality of SLCDP, an assessment session after phase I implementation was built-in during the contract formulation. This helps to monitor the progress of implementation and ensure that the feedbacks from the assessments were incorporated in the delivery of subsequent sessions. The assessment session was conducted at a joint meeting of all stakeholders held in February 2009, which involved the Director General of Civil Service Management Department of IARCSC, the director of ACSI, the managers of CAP and CSLD projects, as well as the representative of the international training provider.

During the assessment session, deliberations were made on the following points and action points to be taken in the implementation of Phase II were proposed:

a. Selection of participants and communication to line ministries

It was observed during Phase 1 of the training programme; some of the participants nominated by the Independent Appointment Board (IAB) did not show up for the training programmes. Furthermore, the officials of some of the ministries and agencies as well as the nominated participants, did not have the required information about the SLCDP training programmes.

Actions to be taken: A letter from IARCSC will be issued explaining the importance and purpose of SLCDP, in line with the implementation of the pay and grade system. An expert at the IAB will be delegated to act as a focal point for coordinating and following up with CSLD project.

b. Involvement of IARCSC in the delivery of cross cutting topics

It was suggested that IARCSC should facilitate the availability of resource persons from within the commission and/ or other respective government institutions, for the delivery of topics like, Civil Service Law, Pay and Grade system, and anticorruption laws and regulations.

Action to be taken: CSMD will coordinate with the project to identify competent individuals who will present at the training sessions as resource persons in the above mentioned topics. The project will forward the training schedules to CSMD at the earliest.

c. Coaching component of the SLCDP

It was reported that the planned collaboration with the CAP project to implement the coaching component of the programme was not implemented as planned during Phase one. The reason mainly was due to the unavailability of CAP coaches in all the ministries and agencies, from where SLCDP participants were nominated. It proved to be difficult to move coaches from their existing assignments to implement the SLCDP coaching. Furthermore; it was indicated that the coaching component of SLCDP requires significant amount of time and preparation. Such capacity need to be built in the ACSI to make it sustainable.

Action points agreed: CAP project will assign two of their coaches, who were former CSLD trainers to work on the implementation of the SLCDP coaching, from beginning of March onwards. The two coaches will work with existing CSLD and ACSI trainers to implement the coaching component of SLCDP and also mentor ACSI trainers. CAP project manager has agreed to this proposal.

d. Ownership transfer to ACSI

The effort to involve the ACSI trainers in the delivery of SLCDP during the 1st phase was not successful. Main reasons were workload on the side of the trainers and the fact that some of the trainers had to travel abroad for attending training workshops.

Action points agreed: The Director of ACSI will assign 5 competent trainers to be attached to the SLCDP training and coaching programmes as well as the subject matter ToT. By the end of Phase II, ACSI trainers will be able to deliver the SLCDP independently, in line with the strategic plan of the institute. The ACSI trainers will be evaluated by the International Training Provider as well as other independent professionals.

e. Female participation

The participation of female civil servants in the Phase I of the SLCDP was minimal; just 5%. Although the number of female civil servants at senior level is very low, some mechanisms need to be put in place to attract more women participants.

Action points agreed: CSLD project will forward a proposal to the CSMD on how to increase the participation of female civil servants in the SLCDP. This may involve the nomination of female civil servants who already work in various ministries and agencies, even though they are not candidates whose appointments are to be processed through IAB. It was agreed to give at least 10% of the places to female participants in the next round of the training programmes.

f. Performance of International training provider

The evaluations at the end of each training sessions by participants indicate that, the topics covered during the trainings, as well as the delivery modalities used by the trainers were very good. Over 90% of the participants indicated that they have benefitted from the training programmes and all their expectations were met.

g. Other Matters:

- The international training provider will update and revise the training materials after the ToT sessions are conducted.
- The ToT sessions will be held starting end of March and about 7-9 provincial trainers will also take part in the training. However, those provincial trainers who do not have strong background in the subject matter need to take all the 4 weekly workshops of SLCDP.
- All the CSLD training materials are delivered in Dari language. Translation of materials into Pashto language will be facilitated by an expert in the ASCI, which the Director will assign.
- If budget and procedures permit, the IARCSC requested the addition of two more groups of SLCDP participants in Phase II. This will make the total groups seven. CSLD project will check budget availability and procurement procedures for extending existing contract as per its annual work plan, and will report back to the DG of CSMD.

On the whole, the assessments indicated that Phase I sessions of SLCDP were successful and in line with the intended objectives set at the outset. Phase II training sessions have commenced as planned, with the recommendations of the assessment session incorporated in the implementation process. The planned implementation period for phase II is February – July 2009. It is planned to train 130 senior civil servants in five groups.

Design and deliver adapted Training of Trainers (ToT) course for ACSI and Regional Training Centers (RTC) trainers

As part of the long-term plan of the CSLD project of creating strong and sustainable local capacity, a comprehensive and structured Training of Trainer (ToT) programme is built in the implementation of the SLCDP. The training of trainers (ToT) programme will be delivered for about 18 local trainers of the Afghan Civil Service Institute (ACSI), and trainers drawn from regional training centers. The ToT has the objective of equipping the local trainers with the necessary skills and expertise for delivering the SLCDP and other leadership training programmes, with the same quality and rigor, starting July 2009. The ToT sessions are planned to be conducted in three separate workshops from March – July 2009. Those trainers who need additional support in terms of building their subject matter competency will be required to take part in the full SLCDP sessions.

In the reporting period, 12 regional trainers identified by the Provincial Affairs department and sponsored by ASGP project, have started the first of the four weekly workshops of subject matter SLCDP training. Five ASCI trainers have been identified and are attached to each of the five SLCDP training groups. Each of these trainers will work closely with the international training providers in the delivery of the weekly workshops. They will also work with the CSLD training unit in the

coordination and follow up, coaching and necessary training management functions. Such attachment is aimed at enabling the ACSI trainers to master training management and delivery processes. This process is part of the continuous practical ToT programme. All the ToT participants who successfully complete the practical and in-class ToT training sessions will undergo a comprehensive evaluation. Those who successfully satisfy the requirements will be awarded a Master Trainer Certificate.

Top Leadership Competency Development Programme

Upon the request of the Government of Afghanistan, the Civil Service Leadership Development project is using its experience of delivering responsive leadership training programmes for Afghan civil service, to design a structured training programme that will address the training needs of high level political leaders with the rank of deputy ministers, provincial governors and other officials of the similar status. This training programme will be named as the **Top Leadership Competency Development Programme (TLCDP)**. The design of TLCDP training programme will take into account the leadership competency required for officials working at such high level leadership and policy formulation positions.

As the government of Afghanistan is in the process of implementing comprehensive reform in the public sector to bring about efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of service to its citizens, equipping high level government officials with modern leadership and management techniques will be of paramount importance for the success in the implementation of the reform initiatives. The training of these high level officials will directly support the focused capacity building initiatives that are underway for the middle level civil servants in connection with the implementation of the newly introduced Pay and grade system. The TLCDP will be delivered in weeks interactive classroom presentations and activity packed sessions in Malaysia, and includes visits to selected public sector institutions in the host country. It is expected that there will be about 50 high level officials will take part in the training programme. The procurement process was finalized in the reporting period, and contract has been signed with the firm that will be responsible for the course delivery and arranging the exposure visits. The training and exposure visits are scheduled to take place in Malaysia, in the months of May and June 2009.

OUTPUT 2: CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND NETWORKING PROGRAMMES ARE DEVELOPED AND DELIVERED

The CSLD project has planned to implement two main activities under this output.

Alumni meetings: The reporting period was used to plan for the implementation of Alumni Meetings of previous SLCDP participants. Such meetings will be organized in order to strengthen the network and experience sharing among CSLD training participants. Issues of paramount importance in public sector reform and current developments in public administration will be identified and presented by experienced resource persons. The next Alumni meeting is scheduled to be held in April- May 2009, for phase I participants of SLCDP.

Setting up communication and networking capacity for ASCI: The project has finalized the procurement process for installing a videoconference link between ACSI and seven IARCSC regional centers. Such a link will be of significant benefit for timely transfer of information and would be used for implementing the e-learning training delivery that the ACSI is planning to launch in the near future, in line with the strategic goals of the institute.

The project is also supporting ACSI to install a single pipe integrated internet connection. Currently the institute does not have its own internet connection. The trainers and other staff of ACSI get internet services from the different projects that are housed in the institute implementing their own projects. Such arrangements do not allow the institute to manage the use of internet service for different purposes, including the planned e-learning portal, and exercise control over the facilities. The CSLD project is in the process of recruiting a communications and LAN expert who will be responsible for implementing the overall management and coordination of the technical aspect of the network.

OUTPUT 3: EXTERNAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES ARE DEVELOPED AND DELIVERED TO THE TARGET GROUP

Skill upgrading and exposure visits for the leadership of ASCI and IARCSC

The project has implemented the second skill upgrading and exposure visit to India. Six officials and trainers of IARCSC and ACSI have visited Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA). Based on the discussions held with the Department of Personnel and Training of the Government of India and the Indian Embassy here in Kabul, IIPA was selected to act as the lead institution in organizing the visits to other institutions in India. The team visited several institutions and held discussions with the officials on modality of collaborations with ACSI in the future. Based on the visit report of the team, a draft Memorandum of Understanding has been prepared and forwarded to all parties. Once the terms of the MoU are agreed by all parties, it is expected to be signed by IARCSC and IIPA and will form the basis of the twinning arrangements between ACSI and IIPA.

OUTPUT 4: EFFECTIVE COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT SUPPORT TO PROJECT ACTIVITIES

In the reporting period the project office has provided the necessary support for the implementation of the different project activities including several recruitment, procurement and financial management functions. As the project will come to an end during the current fiscal year, prior to closure of the project, preparatory activities for conducting a comprehensive evaluation have been completed. An international consultant has been identified to carry out the evaluation, which is scheduled to be held in May – June, 2009. The assignment will involve evaluation of the implementation of the CSLD project so far, and identification of focus areas and modality of future interventions to support the Public Administration Reform of the Government of Afghanistan.

OUTPUT 5: SUPPORT TO THE OPERATION AND SET-UP OF THE AFGHAN CIVIL SERVICE INSTITUTE (ACSI)

The activities and sub-activities under this output relate to the support for the overall capacity development of the ACSI, in terms of designing and installing efficient institutional management and administrative structure and provision of responsive training programmes for Afghan civil servants. The CSLD project has been focusing on four areas of support for the implementation of output 5.

Implementation of ACSI Strategic Plan

The ACSI strategic plan which has been under formulation for past several months is now formally approved by the leadership of IARCSC. Implementation of the components of the strategic plan is underway. A detailed action plan has been developed which will be the basis to guide at the implementation of the strategic plan in a sequenced and integrated manner. Currently, the CSLD project is assisting ACSI in the design of a new organizational structure in line with the mission of the institute. Staffing and manpower plans are also under review. Once the new structure and the staffing plans are approved by the leadership of IARCSC, implementation will commence with adapted manuals of operations. As the major components of the strategic plan are now identified, this will be used as a road map for all future support and implementing development plans of ACSI.

Building the Training Management and Delivery capacity of ACSI

The planned activities in this component are geared towards assisting the ACSI trainers to acquire the skills and knowledge required for independently delivering required training programmes, and the development and adaptation of the CSLD training modules and other materials to come up with ACSI specific standard training materials. In line with the agreements reached with the leadership of the ACSI and IARCSC, the primary focus is to build the capability of the ACSI trainers to enable them deliver some of the leadership training programmes by July 2009. This involves assisting the trainers to grasp the subject matter components of the leadership training modules, assisting the trainers in the designing standard training materials, and setting up of a system for coordinating and managing training functions.

One important component of the support for the training management function of the ACSI is the assignment of a dedicated National Training Coordinator, who would be instrumental in coordinating and following up the implementations of recommendations as per the strategic goals of the institute. CSLD project had recruited an expert to fill this position. However, the person resigned due to personal reasons and the post is vacant at the moment. Prior to recruiting a replacement for the position, agreement on the need for such a position holder and its utilization need to be discussed with IARCSC and ACSI, in line with the proposed organizational structure of the institute.

Building the Capacity of the ACSI Library

Preparatory activities for the procurement of necessary materials and equipments are in the process. Expression of Interest for the supply of books and other documentations for the ACSI library has been floated. Although the recruitment of an international library specialist was finalized months ago, for some technical reasons the selected candidates were not able to take up the position. The position has been re-advertised and recruitment process is expected to be finalized soon.

Setting up a Learning and Training Materials Production Centre

CSLD is also supporting the setting up of a well-equipped and functioning learning materials production unit at the ACSI. Such a facility will enhance the institute's capacity to produce standardized and high quality training materials in both paper based and electronic form. This task will be coordinated and facilitated by an international expert, who is on the ground at present. Procurement of necessary materials and equipments is underway. The expert is also in the process of reviewing the draft training materials already designed, in the light of producing required training modules at the required quality and quantity.

II. Project implementation challenges

Updated project issues and actions

Security Related Issues

In the last one year and half, the security situation in Kabul deteriorated dramatically, and the numbers of IEDs, abductions, and other attacks in parts of the city have increased. Although there was no significant incident that had seriously disrupted the training programmes and other project activities, in the second half of 2008 and early in 2009, the project was forced to reduce the presence of its international staff at the project site. Two of the international experts had to work from the country office for most of the time. This required additional effort on the part of the project to secure office space and arrange suitable transportation for the experts. Because of the reduced presence of the international experts at the project site, the usual day to day communications and interactions with the ACSI counterparts were minimized. If things do not improve the potential to affect training programmes and implementation of other project activities is very high.

To mitigate the risk of threats the project, based on the advise of the UNDP security unit, is taking actions to beef up security at the project site and also acquire suitable transportation facility for its staff.

Translation of Training Materials into other languages of Afghanistan

Although Afghanistan has two official languages, the practice that has been followed by the CSLD project until now is to translate training material to Dari language for delivering training programmes to civil servants. There were no significant questions raised in the past in connection with request for translation into Pashto language. However, participants of the SLCDP training have repeatedly requested why we are not providing them training materials that have Pashto translation. The questions were raised mainly by participant from provincial offices. At times, the questions would also turn into political nature. The project was not ready both in terms of manpower and other logistics to translate voluminous technical training documents to Pashto language in a short period of time.

The issue was discussed at the assessment meeting of the SLCDP with the officials of IARCSC and the leadership of ACSI. It was suggested that ACSI experts will be assigned for such services. However, the quality of the translation and the time required to translate bulky training materials are issues of concern for the project.

III. Financial status and utilization

Financial status

Table 1: Contribution overview [May 2005 – September 2009]

DONOR NAME	Committed	Received	Contribution Balance
Australia	2,011,835	2,011,835	
Democratic Governance Thematic Trust Fund	100,000	100,000	
UNDP Core	525,181	525,181	
Germany	1,722,494	1,722,494	
Norway	3,300,117	2,795,365	504,752
Switzerland	1,314,035	1,138,596	175,439
Total	8,973,662	8,293,471	680,191

Financial utilization

Table 2: Quarterly expenditure by activity

Activity	Budget	Expenditure	Balance	Delivery %
Activity1: Training Programme	1315000	865865	441959	66%
Activity2: Career Development Programme	353000	300380	52620	85%
Activity3: External Development Programme	50000	4826	45174	10%
Activity4: Management & Administration	514839	152339	362500	30%
Activity5: Support to the Operation of ACSI	1104000	48803	1055197	4%
GMS 5% Australia	0	-377.68	377	0%
GMS 7% Ger, Swiss, Norway	251160	103825	147335	41%
Total	3587999	1475661	2112338	41%

Table 3: Quarterly expenditure by donor [January 1, 2009 – March 31, 2009]

Donor	Activity	Budget 2009	Expenses	Remianing	Delivery %
Australia	ACTIVITY1		-7176	7176	0%
	GMS 5%		-378	378	0%
00055 Total			-7554	7554	0%
Germany	ACTIVITY1	700000	794239	-94239	113%
	ACTIVITY2	305000	307553	-2553	101%
	ACTIVITY4	241200	143892	97308	60%
	GMS 7%	93800	93761	39	100%
00117 Total		1340000	1339445	555	100%
Norway	ACTIVITY1		3200	-3200	0%
	ACTIVITY2	48000	-7173	55173	-15%
	ACTIVITY3	45000	3084	41916	7%
	ACTIVITY4	205000	8447	196553	4%
	ACTIVITY5	1104000	48803	1055197	4%
	GMS 7%	105527	4242	101285	4%
00187 Total		1507527	60603	1446924	4%
Switzerland	ACTIVITY1	615000	75603	539397	12%
	ACTIVITY3	5000	1742	3258	35%
	ACTIVITY4	68639	0	68639	0%
	GMS 7%	51833	5822	46011	11%
00232 Total		740472	83166	657306	11%
Grand Total		3587999	1475661	2112338	41%