



A large graphic element consisting of a thin blue circle. A horizontal bar is superimposed on the circle, divided into a dark blue left section and a light blue right section. The word 'UNDP' is written vertically in white in the dark section. The title 'DEMOCRATIZATION & CIVIL SOCIETY EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME' is written in dark blue in the light section. Large blue brackets are placed on the left and right sides of the bar, extending from the top and bottom edges of the circle.

UNDP

**DEMOCRATIZATION &
CIVIL SOCIETY EMPOWERMENT
PROGRAMME**

**United Nations Development Programme
Afghanistan Country Office
March 2007**

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Foreword

The United Nations must continue to play its central and impartial role in the international efforts to assist the Afghan people in consolidating peace in Afghanistan and rebuilding their country.

Security Council Resolution 1536 (2004)

UNDP in Afghanistan

UNDP has been present in Afghanistan since the 1950s, providing development assistance to the country and helping build the capacity of many national institutions. During the 1990s, while many government institutions were jeopardized by civil war and neglected by the Taliban regime, UNDP continued to assist communities throughout the country. During that decade, UNDP delivered US\$200 million of assistance to Afghanistan, using its own resources as well as those mobilized through bilateral partners and its extensive outreach throughout the country.

Since the Bonn Agreement was signed in December 2001, UNDP has delivered more than US\$1 billion of assistance to Afghanistan. In 2005, UNDP delivered USD 349 million of development assistance, mainly for elections, disarmament, reconstruction and institution building.

Human development indicators are among the lowest in the world. 70% lives under the poverty line of US\$2 a day; life expectancy is 44.5 years¹, some 20 years lower than in all the neighboring countries; Adult literacy rate is 28.7% (43.2% male, 14.1% female)² and the maternal mortality rate is one of the highest in the world. Inadequate basic social services lead to malnutrition and vulnerability to diseases and epidemics. Only 23% of Afghans have access to safe drinking water. The Human Development Index (HDI)³ ranks Afghanistan at 173 out of 178 countries worldwide. Sixty-five percent of the population is under 25 years of age but with little hope of employment. Environmental degradation undermines the future welfare of rural communities. Not surprisingly, therefore, Afghanistan has been identified as a global priority for addressing the Millennium Development Goals.

UNDP Country Programme

UNDP operates within the framework of the integrated United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA) and under the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). In December 2005, UNDP signed a new three-year Country Programme with the Government of Afghanistan focusing on three areas: state-building, democracy and civil society empowerment and sustainable livelihoods. UNDP Programme implementation is driven by capacity development, national ownership and policy dialogue in support of the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals.

The expected results are pursued in line with the Interim Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) objectives and benchmarks. In particular, UNDP supports the Government in achieving a number of development benchmarks in the field of security and the rule of law, administrative reform, transparency and accountability, local governance, political processes (elections and parliament), civil society empowerment, gender equality, human rights, environment and rural energy, the reintegration of former combatants into society, the implementation of the national counter-narcotics strategy, as well as rural development planning and private sector development.

UNDP aims to enhance government institutional capacity to deliver public services in an equitable and sustainable manner, to consolidate a participative democracy and to create an enabling environment for legitimate livelihoods. UNDP works to empower Afghan women and promote gender equality in Afghanistan, ensuring that gender issues are consistently mainstreamed and carefully paced. UNDP activities are undertaken in close collaboration with the Government of Afghanistan, sister UN agencies and other development stakeholders.

¹ Central Statistics Office, 2003

² UNICEF, Best Estimate 2005

³ Afghanistan National Human Development Report, *Security with a human face*, UNDP, 2004

Democracy and Civil Society Empowerment

UNDP is focusing its efforts on deepening democracy and the promotion of sustainable livelihoods, which are closely related to the first, second and fourth priorities of the UNDAF. Its Country Programme Document was approved by the Executive Board in September 2005. On 25 December 2005, UNDP signed a Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) that details the modalities to execute the Country Programme Document. The CPAP is a three-year framework defining mutual cooperation between the Government of Afghanistan and UNDP, covering the period 2006-2008. UNDP will also build on the targets laid out in the Millennium Declaration and its goals. UNDP will focus on building its programme on six cross-cutting principles: developing national capacities; enhancing national ownership; advocating and fostering an enabling policy environment; seeking South–South solutions; promoting gender equality; and forging partnerships.

UNDP Afghanistan assists the Government through programme activities through: (a) State Building and Support to the Government; (b) Democratization and & Civil Society Empowerment; and (c) Promotion of Long-term & Sustainable Livelihoods.

The 'Democratization & Civil Society Empowerment' Unit is supporting programmes to build governance for local recovery and development, focusing on two main areas:

1. Democratisation & Citizens' Participation
2. Promotion of Rights and Equality

The Citizens' Participation cluster supports activities related to elections, parliament, accountability and transparency, civil society empowerment - particularly focusing on youth, provincial councils and sub-national governance. The Promotion of Rights and Equality cluster supports activities related to justice, human rights, gender and disability.

The Democratization & Civil Society Empowerment Unit consists of fifteen country office staff and five programme managers.

Hiroko Takagi,
Officer-in-Charge, DCSE Unit
E-mail: hiroko.takagi@undp.org
Mobile: 0799.025.411

Democratisation & Citizens' Participation

Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow (ELECT)

Background

As a follow up to the Bonn process, UNDP was given a pivotal role in helping establish viable governance structures. Among these efforts was support to the 2004 presidential and 2005 parliamentary elections. Both of these elections were a success with a large voter turnout and nationally accepted results. UNAMA was tasked with the political oversight of the elections process, with UNDP responsible for the execution of the 2004 presidential elections and managing all resource mobilization and donor related activities for the 2005 parliamentary elections. UNOPS was the implementing agent for all electoral activities in 2005.

The 2004 Voter Registration and Elections Project helped establish the Electoral Secretariat of the Joint Electoral Management Body in order to provide Afghan nationals with experience and knowledge on legal and administrative aspects of election planning and delivery. Further capacity was built through the 2005 National Assembly and Provincial Council elections activities. An addendum forming an integral part of the 2004 Afghan Elections Project was signed on 28 March 2005 reflecting the activities to be undertaken to facilitate the Wolesi Jirga (House of People) and Provincial Council Elections on 18 September 2005. The Project facilitated the work of the newly established Independent Afghan Electoral Commission and the Joint Electoral Management Body in the following areas:

- Resource mobilization and management;
- Operational support, including additions and corrections to the register of voters;
- Polling;
- Risk management/security;
- Public outreach;
- Facilitation of international electoral observation.

Nine Afghan Electoral Commissioners were appointed by the President on 24 January 2005. The Independent Election Commission was the governmental authority paving the way for the 2005 Wolesi Jirga and Provincial Council Elections, which were held on 18 September 2005. The 2005 National Assembly elections activities began on 28 March 2005, with two large objectives:

- 1) To comprehensively support the organization and delivery of National Assembly elections (i.e., *Wolesi Jirga* and Provincial Council Elections) in 2005.
- 2) To help create a durable foundation for national management of elections within the overall project, by building human and material capacity for future elections and facilitating the work of the newly established Afghanistan Independent Election Commission.

Throughout the duration of the election project, capacity building and facilitation support was provided to the Joint Electoral Management Body, which was temporarily invested with the electoral management and administration powers of the Independent Election Commission as contemplated under the constitution, up until the inauguration of the National Assembly on 18 December (as per Article 57 of the Electoral Law).

Overall, the 2005 elections were considered a highly successful operation, although it was recognized that the election was costly due to the complex operations that required a high number of international expertise. As with the Voter Registration and Elections 2004, special measures have been taken to cater to women, as in the past they were excluded from Afghanistan's political processes through nationwide civic education activities.

The Post Electoral Strategy Group, established in mid-2005, agreed that the newly Independent Election Commission still requires support in the following areas: 1) Capacity building; 2) Enhancement of legal capacities and 3) Development of a new voter registry.

The Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow (ELECT) project was developed and presented to all stakeholders as early as March 2006 under UNDP's coordination. Due to unforeseeable developments in the transitional period as outlined below, ELECT was only signed in November 2007.

The immediate follow up of the election period – The Transitional Phase

Following the successful completion of the Wolesi Jirga and Provincial Council Elections, a number of challenges had to be addressed immediately. Although the Afghan Government expressed its commitment to assume responsibilities for elections by allocating \$665,000 to the Independent Election Commission (IEC) under its 1385 fiscal budget, the transfer of the budget to the IEC posed an issue. Therefore, the IEC requested further support from the international community for a transitional period of six months, (22 March to 21 September 2006) while the administrative arrangements to receive the national budget were being established. During this period, UNDP undertook the responsibility to secure salaries for the IEC Secretariat staff as well as the operational costs, to ensure that the headquarters and provincial offices remained functional with the support of CIDA and USAID. UNDP also supported IEC's negotiations vis-à-vis the salaries of the nine commissioners at a level befitting their status as political appointees. All administrative issues regarding the IEC salary scales and the fiscal budget were successfully dealt with and IEC has now become a truly independent and government supported entity.

The \$15 million funding gap for the 2005 electoral activities continued to be a challenge. Through intensive consultation with the international donor community and a special briefing in New York (12 July 2006), some progress has been made in resource mobilisation with additional contributions expected in mid-2007.

Achievements of the transitional phase from March 21, 2006 to September 21, 2006

- The functionality of the IEC was sustained through financial support as well as through the establishment of consultation mechanism amongst the IEC, UNDP, UNAMA and other stakeholders;
- An international team of advisors to the 9 departments of the IEC secretariat was put in place to support the day-to-day activities and in preparing for the upcoming elections in 2009;
- An evaluation of the 2004-2005 Voter Registrations and Election Project (VREP) was conducted, providing important recommendations for future elections in Afghanistan (eg. a review of the Civil and voter registry, capacity building activities, a review of the Electoral law and related legal processes);
- A comprehensive project document was developed, "Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow" (ELECT), to support the capacity building process of the newly IEC addressing the needs beyond 21 September 2006. Preparations for the Civil and Voter registry pilot project were completed and required funding has been fully mobilised through the receipt of US\$336,000 from the UN Democracy Fund. CVR pilot activities is expected to commence in March 2007;
- An extensive consultation process on electoral processes, laws and systems was conducted in the third quarter of the year engaging all national stakeholders in the capital as well the provinces;
- An inter-organisational agreement to coordinate activities in support of the IEC was reached;
- An audit on Voter Registration and Elections Project (VREP) covering the period 2004-2005 was successfully conducted (it is to be noted that the Voter Registration Project was audited in 2004);
- The ELECT Project Document was signed in November 2006 with activities commencing in January 2007 for all three major components including capacity building of the IEC, Legal reform and a pilot project to restructure the current insufficient civil and voter registration;
- Major challenges faced by the IEC in accessing the national budget were resolved with extensive cooperation from all organisations supporting the IEC.

Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow (ELECT) Project launched in January 2007

- The first stage of the project until January 2008 is fully funded and the second phase of project activities (2008) has been receiving official pledges;
- The Civil and Voter Registration Pilot project in the Provinces of Kabul/ Bamyan and Nangarhar is fully prepared and will start in March 2007 in preparation of the National Project in 2008.

Challenges and Risks

- Due to the relatively low government salaries, the IEC is confronted with pressures in implementing a retention policy while this is financially challenging;
- Changing government procedures endangers the structure of the IEC (i.e. recruitment/payment procedures);
- Although the inter-agency coordination structure enables the use of available resources in the best way possible through different organisations taking responsibilities for different areas of focus, there is a risk that a focus area will be left uncovered if any of the organisations are unable to fulfil its responsibilities.

Future Priorities

- Redistribution of electoral assets to relevant projects and national institutions;
- Financially close down VREP 2004/2005;
- Final reports distributed to the donors;
- A national seminar on lessons learned to be held in April 2007;
- Finalization of the Civil and Voter Registration Pilot Project in June 2007;
- Training of Commissioners and secretariat staff through study tours, exchange programmes and conferences.

Partnerships and Resources

Voter Registration and Elections Project 2004/2005 (donors):

USA, EC, UK, Japan, Canada, Netherlands, Italy, Germany, Norway, Denmark, Australia, Switzerland, Finland, Sweden, Belgium, New Zealand, Ireland, Spain, France, China, Greece, Korea, Austria, Luxembourg, India, South Africa.

<p>Voter Registration and 2004 Presidential Elections</p> <p>Total funds received: US\$176.8 million Total expenditure VREP 2003/2004: US\$161.8m Registration in-country: US\$ 79m Polling in-country: US\$54.4m Out-of-Country (registration & voting): US\$24.7m Transitional Costs (Dec 04-Mar 05): US\$3.7m</p>	<p><i>Elections Project 2005 (Wolesi Jirga and Provincial Council Elections)</i></p> <p>Final cost of 2005 National Assembly and Provincial Council elections: \$172m Carry-over from VRP and Elections Project (Presidential Elections 2004): US\$15m Total funds received and committed: US\$157m Total shortfall for 2005 National Assembly Elections*: US\$15m</p>
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**Does not include value of sellable assets worth US\$2m that could reduce the shortfall*

Transitional Phase from 21 March to 21 September

- IEC Secretariat Staff Salaries (HQ and provinces) and HQ operational costs: US\$454,000 (CIDA)
- Operational costs for the Provinces: USAID through the Asia Foundation US\$ 100,000

The ELECT Project

Total funds required for a two year project period US\$4.9m (funding raised as of 28 February 2007):

Italy US\$ 700,000

UNDEF US\$ 336,576
UNDP core funds US\$ 530,000

UNDP Country Office Focal Points

Hiroko Takagi, Programme Specialist (hiroko.takagi@undp.org)

Tanja Hollstein, Programme Officer (tanja.hollstein@undp.org)

Geanino Popovici, Electoral Records and Assets Officer (geanino.popovici@undp.org)

Support to the Establishment of the Afghan Legislature (SEAL) project

UNDP has experience in providing capacity building assistance for the strengthening of legislative systems in a number of countries emerging from conflict. UNDP's involvement in this area emphasizes the potentially close relationship between its involvement in governance and the broader political functions of the United Nations in establishing a basis for lasting peace.

To ensure the timely establishment of the Afghan National Assembly and provide strategic support to its functioning, UNDP Afghanistan, in close collaboration with the Government has launched 'Support to the Establishment of the Afghan Legislature' Project (SEAL Project). The initial two year project duration was extended in February 2007 for another year. The 2005-2008 project budget is US\$15,501,906.

Under the terms of the constitution of January 2004, parliamentary elections were held in Afghanistan in September 2005 to elect Members to the National Assembly consisting of two Houses: House of People (Wolesi Jirga) with 249 members and House of Elders (Meshrano Jirga) with 102 members. The elections were conducted peacefully and the National Assembly was successfully inaugurated on Dec 19, 2005, substantially supported by SEAL project.

Since, the internal legal environment and structures of both Houses are put in place: Rules of Procedures, parliamentary groups (Meshrano Jirga) and Standing Committees. The presidential appointments of the cabinet and Supreme Court members were debated and partially approved and the State budget passed before the parliamentary summer recess 6 June – 22 July 2006.

While maintaining its support to the National Assembly Secretariat, SEAL has established close relationship with the members of the National Assembly. Furthermore, SEAL enjoys privileged working relationship with the senior management of both houses: The President of the Upper house has been personally supporting the SEAL activities by his presence during the major project activities and his 1st Deputy is the best interlocutor of SEAL. Similarly the president of the Wolesi Jirga has appointed his 2nd Deputy the focal point for SEAL. The former is fully appreciating the project activities and the latter engaged in all SEAL project capacity building activities for the Wolesi Jirag.

Expected Outputs of SEAL project:

1. Effective coordination and programming mechanism of support to the parliament established
2. Administrative and technical staff, as well as members of the parliament fully trained and functional
3. Necessary legal and institutional environment is in place to enable the first session of the parliament
4. Information services and ICT set-up to provide timely assistance to members, staff, the media and the public
5. Effective public information, awareness, and parliament outreach strategy designed and implemented
6. Parliament setting-up and basic running cost met during first year of activity
7. Management Team Fully operational throughout the activity

Achievements:

1. Efficient coordination mechanisms established:

- Parliament Support Taskforce
- Parliament Support Working Group coordinating all parliament support
- Recruitment of SEAL Project Management Team
- Use of the room dedicated to SEAL in National Assembly and running a system of "SEAL Advisor of the day"

2. Technical support provided to Staff members and Members of the Afghan National Assembly

2.1. Training Activities

For Staff:

- Intensive 4 week training of 123 newly recruited staff completed (11 June - 6 July 2005)
- Computer training (17-31 July)
- English training by British Council
- Attachments for 152 members of the Secretariat to different parliaments: Italy, Sri Lanka, India, Indonesia, Morocco, Netherlands, Turkey, Germany, France, Australia. (July-September 2005)
- National Seminar on Parliamentary Processes and Best Practices (23-25 September 2005)
- Basic computer training for the Staffers and Members
- Training programmes for members personal assistants
- Specialized training on Protocol for International Relations Department
- Specialized training on working in standing committees
- Specialized training on relations with media for Public Information department
- Specialized training on servers and network management and configuration for ICT department
- Specialized training on legislative processes: rules and flowcharts
- Specialized training program in Digital Congress Network (DCN) for ICT Determent in Netherlands and London (10 June-30 June 2006)
- Specialized training on troubleshooting PABX phone system for ICT department. Specialized study
Tour of 11 staffers to the U.K on work of Budget, Finance and Public Accounts Committees
- Specialized study tour to Canada on legislative processes (organized by Canada with SEAL's input
In programme)
- Specialized study tour of 5 staffers to E-Governance Academy, Estonia (10-17 June)
- Provision of comparative research paper on roles and responsibilities of Secretary General
- Intensive in-house training presentations for the staff of the Meshrano Jirga on Committee System and other Parliamentary Procedural matters
- Specialized training on
- A delegation of ten committee assistants was supported by SEAL in a two-week study tour of the National Assembly of France
- training of committee assistants for both Houses
- training in the Belgian parliament of 10 operators in the Hansard Departments of both Houses
- Secretariat staff were participants in a special training on "Principles of Impartiality of Parliamentary Civil Servants
- Legislative Tracking Program software developed

For Members:

- Orientation Programme and needs assessment of capacity building for members organized with USAID (12-18 December 2005)
- Preparatory meeting for and rehearsal of the Inauguration of the Afghan National Assembly (13 and 15 December)
- Training on Parliamentary system for all members of Meshrano Jirga

- Study tour / Training on “Globalization” in Dubai for all members of Meshrano Jirga
- Budget Process and approval of state budget in Parliament: interactive working session with
- Members Of the Budget, Finance and Public Accounts committee of Meshrano Jirga
- Chairmanship of plenary and committees meetings: dinner working session with members of
- Administrative Board and Presidents of all Standing committees of Meshrano Jirga
- Specialized study tour of 8 parliamentarians to E-Governance Academy, Estonia (10-17 June),
- Study tour of 5 member delegation to Japan, headed by the 1st deputy of Meshrano Jirga
- Study tour of 8 member delegation to Lithuania, headed by 2nd Secretary of Wolesi Jirga (Invitation of Lithuanian Parliament and SEAL financial contribution)
- Participation of 1st Deputy President of Meshrano Jirga in Working sessions on Parliamentary Support for Iraq (coordinated with UNDP Iraq and IPU and held in Jordan -10-11 July)
- Implementation of the comprehensive training programme of Wolesi Jirga (ongoing)
- Initiation of “Energizing Committees” programme
- In-house training for committee members on parliamentary oversight, by being given detail grounding on the subject of ministry portfolios and on the procedural modalities
- Participation of 6 Afghan Parliamentarians in the GOPAC 2nd Global Conference
- Provision of basic Internet program for MPs
- The members of both Houses belonging to particular committees – 4 committees in the Meshrano Jirga and 7 in the Wolesi Jirga, attended seminars on Rule Making; Investigations in Aid of Legislation; Exercising the Oversight Function; Constitution and the Rules; and, Budgetary Process
- Regional consultations – by one committee each for the Wolesi Jirga and the Meshrano Jirga,
- The foreign consultants and Afghan nationals-experts of the SEAL Project continued their interlocutor ship to 10 committees in the Wolesi Jirga and 8 in the Meshrano Jirga [Training on Budget Support](#)
- [Training on Budget Support](#)
- [Committee Assistants Training](#)
- [Professional training for civil servants](#)
- [Budget Process Training](#)
- [Budget work plan training](#)
- [Training on Budget Support](#)
- [Rule Making](#)
- [Inquiries in aid of legislation by the committees](#)
- [Exercising the Oversight Function](#)
- [Budget Training](#)

For Ministries and other UNDP projects:

- Presentations on the “New legal system and the relationship between the National Assembly and the Government therein” for groups of high ranking official in different ministries (Ministry of Education, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Anti Narcotics, Ministry of Rural Habilitation and Development, Control and Audit Office),
- Presentation on “Decision making process within the Government” “Governance and democracy”, to UNDP NPAD and presentation on “New legal system and the relationship between the National Assembly and the Government therein” to UNDP ANBP
- Legislative process in National Assembly, informative meeting with UNMACA
- Guided tour of National Assembly for colleagues of UNDP and UNAMA

2.2 Production of and Assistance for regulatory documents research and drafting:

- Rules of Procedure
- Staff Regulations
- Security regulations
- Research support/background information on “MPs’ privileges and immunities”
- Regular legal advice to Parliamentary affairs department
- Mainstreaming human rights in training plan for MPs

- Convening of an International conference on Effective Executive- Legislative Relations for all members of the Upper House and 35 representatives of the Executive (15-17th April)
- Preparations for “International Conference on Effective Executive Legislative Relations” for all member of the Lower House
- Development of Handbook for Afghan Parliamentarians and Glossary of Afghan specific parliamentary terms
- Development of a policy paper outlining duties and responsibilities, values, mission, and policies of the Department of information and public information
- Development of long-term policies for use and maintenance of ICT facilities and management of the official email addresses by the members and staff

2.3 Support the Parliamentary Public Outreach:

- Support publication of the National Assembly directory and calendar
- Establishment of National Assembly radio station broadcasting the parliamentary proceedings
- Partnership with civil society organizations to facilitate interactions between parliamentarians and their constituents in provinces
- The Official web site of the National Assembly developed
- 1200 books given to the Library of the National Assembly
- Organization of public outreach opportunities for members of parliament to interact with their constituents in their electoral bases 9 provinces
- Planning the second journalism training for accredited parliamentary journalists
- School kits about the role of the parliament (learning and exercise book)
- Printing of the 1st issue of each House’s magazine
- Parliament Diary featuring all the female parliamentarians
- "Who’s Who Book” of the MJ (under work)
- Finalization of three radio programs. Two more productions are being conceived
- printed the gazettes and magazines for both houses of the National Assembly
- The fifth meeting of the Parliament-Civil Society Forum was established
- The studio of the Parliament radio was partitioned

2.4 Support to the Security Department of the National Assembly Secretariat

- Assessment of the current security situation and remedial actions:
- Development of internal plans and regulations
- Establishment of direct coordination interfaces with Afghan and International partners
- Assessment of needs, suggestion and negotiation for delivery of purchased / donated security items:
- Provision of technical assistance organization of training sessions
- In the end of January the training course in German Bundestag took place
- the Security Advisor together with the Head of NA Security Dept. have organized and conducted small arms shooting exercise in order to enhance the troops’ self confidents while dealing with the weapons
- The Security Advisor (SEAL) coordinated the passage of relevant security related information to the Security Department of the Parliament, UNDSS, other UN agencies, NATO led ISAF, and Afghan National Department of Security, Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Defense
- Procurement wise, the Security Department was equipped with police equipment including Riot Control gears for 100 troops, explosive detectors, antenna and solar power system for the VHF repeater placed on the top of TV hill, control key board for the CCTV, Satellite phones, and Electrical Stabilizers

3. Material support of the Afghan National Assembly:

3.1 ICT and electronic equipment:

- Modern Audio-Video System, Simultaneous Interpretation facilities; 200 computers; laptops and printers; Complete LAN system and 10 powerful servers; VSAT Internet connection; PABX Phones; VHF Radio communication System; 10 Photocopy machines; 3 ID card printing

machines; Audio Equipments for Meeting Room of Afghan National Assembly; Software for Bilingual voice recording of parliamentary proceedings for Hansard Departments of both houses Afghan National Assembly; Installation, configuration and training of the Diva software; 50KVA Electricity Generator; Organization of ICT staff and services; Security of IT infrastructure Provision of Audio equipment for the Meeting room of the committees; Purchasing of Computer and other IT equipment for the committees and new staff of the Secretariat.

- Provision of all ICT and Multimedia equipment to UNIFEM in establishing the Training Center for Women Parliamentarians; Parliament official emailing system and servers; International training course in the Parliament of Belgium was conducted for the proceedings and recording departments of both the houses of Parliament – Meshrano and Wolesi Jirgas. The training was specialized on the software systems that were installed in both the departments for automating the work on the Hansards preparation, storage, and publishing;
- Training on the new parliamentary e-mail system for all the secretariat staff. The official e-mails of all the staff were reconfigured and officially set to use the @nationalassembly.af e-mails that are configured and hosted within the Afghan National Assembly systems;
- Training on the VSAT equipment and services that are newly installed or refreshed in the parliament;
- Different kind of specialised trainings related to the newly installed services and software servers within the Parliament premises;
- Training for the Members of Parliament on basic computer skills and software systems that are available in the Parliament was ongoing on daily basis.

3.2 Furniture, equipment, vehicles:

- Provision of all necessary furniture (table, chairs) for office space of Secretariat and Committee rooms
- Delivery of 10 mini vans and 8 Toyota Corolla, in addition to 48 Jeeps provided through UNDP Election Project
- Facilitate reception of Security Equipment form China
- Assets and equipment for approx. \$ 30 000 have been received and delivered to the Security Department;
- Purchasing of Security Lightening System for the NA;
- Purchasing of security equipment for the Security department – riot control and police gear;

3.3 Rental of Houses

Three houses rented for secretariat staff temporary office

Challenges and Risks:

The following factors will determine whether the ongoing SEAL initiatives prove effective and successful in sustaining efficient support to Wolesi and Meshrano Jirga:

- Funding gap is fully met by the donors and funding is received in time;
- An appropriate level of security prevails;
- Lack of experience of the members of the National Assembly and its Secretariat, to respectively play their role as effective members of a legislative body and to properly serve and run the new institution
- Effective legal framework and procedures, including mechanisms for interaction between the executive and the legislature are in place, so that the parliament can be fully functional to discharge efficiently its constitutionally mandated roles;
- State of legislation not favorable to full parliamentary autonomy;
- Low level of salaries paid to parliament staff and consequent brain-drain of trained and skilled staff

Future Priorities:

- Effective coordination with national and international stakeholders on the additional needs of parliament including constructive input and feedback for the building and equipment of the permanent National Assembly and mobilization of support required
- putting in place an efficient mechanism for organization of capacity building activities, particularly, the study tours abroad for parliamentarians and support in streamlining the executive-legislature relationship mechanisms
- Effective implementation of newly included project activities: security, anti-corruption, raising awareness of the involved executive departments on executive-legislature interactions
- Positively respond to the request of Wolesi Jirga as to permanently provide support on technical, legal procedural and policy areas
- Timely quarterly reporting to the donors and identification of potential needs for the legislators beyond SEAL Project period
- Provision of effective daily technical and advisory services to Standing Committees of Lower House

Partnerships and Resources:

SEAL Budget: US\$ 15,501,906
 Total Commitment US\$ 15,141,272
 Total Received: US\$ 14,211,926
 Funding gap: US\$ 360,634

DONOR	AMOUNT in USD
UNDP Core	643,000
EC	2,895,054
France	2,884,923
Italy	1,204,819
SIDA	1,277,139
Germany (GTZ)	2,147,359
Denmark	2,000,000
CIDA	1,052,631
Total received	US\$ 13,829,273

Revised :

DONOR	AMOUNT in USD
UNDP Core	750,000
EC	2,895,054
France	2,884,923
Italy	1,204,819
SIDA	1,277,139
Germany (GTZ)	2,147,359
Denmark	2,000,000
CIDA	1,052,632
Total received	US\$ 14,211,926

UNDP Focal Points

John Patterson, SEAL Project Manager, patterson.john@undp.org
 Abdel-Ellah Sediqi, SEAL Deputy Project Manager, abdel-ellah.sediqi@undp.org
 Hiroko Takagi, Programme Specialist (hiroko.takagi@undp.org)
 Masood Amer, Programme Officer (masood.amer@undp.org)

Civil Society participation in National Policy Formulation preparatory assistance project

Background

UNDP is providing support to civil society implementing partners, who were selected through a competitive bidding process, to do the following:

1. Raise awareness and conduct consultations on the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) in 8 pilot provinces – a process that will bring the concerns and priorities of civil society into policy dialogue and inclusion into the development of the final ANDS by 2007;
2. Conduct Anti-corruption focus group discussions (FGDS) – raise awareness on corruption, its forms and begin process of formation of policy analysis on how to deal with corruption;
3. Analysis and reporting back on Pre-London Conference questionnaire conducted by civil society.

UNDP supported delegates from civil society and Ministry of Youth to participate in the following conferences:

1. Three- member delegation participation in a three-day “*Asian Civil Society Forum for Democracy*” in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, 28 – 30 July 2006;
2. Three-member delegation participation in a two-day workshop on “*Promoting Transparency and Accountability of Local Governance and Deterring Corruption in Public Contracting and Procurement*” in Bali, Indonesia, 29 – 30 July 2006;
3. Support the Director of Youth Affairs in the Ministry of Youth and Culture and 1 UNDP National Officer to participate at the International World Youth Forum in Romania, 16 – 25 August 2006 to mark the International day of the Youth. The theme for this conference was on *development and implementation of National Youth Policies and Strategies*.

Future UNDP – CSO Partnership - Mainstreaming Civil Society Engagement

UNDP plans to shift from project-driven engagement with the civil society to strategic partnerships with a UNDP-CSO dialogue and debate on policy directions. This can be facilitated through the development of a UNDP-CSO Advisory Committee. UNDP will also move towards adoption of a mainstreaming approach to engagement of civil society in all current and future projects in UNDP Afghanistan. There is great potential for the country office to strengthen relations and engage more with civil society in implementing Country Office projects. This approach calls for genuine CSO engagement in the development, implementation and monitoring of development processes.

UNDP Projects will form partnerships and engage CSOs around a broad range of issues, including research, advocacy, institutional capacity building to support engagement in dialogue with grassroots constituencies and policy-makers. Through such partnerships and engagement at various levels by UNDP Projects, UNDP Afghanistan can contribute to the emergence of CSOs in Afghanistan as a strong and cohesive constituency, able to engage in development, governance, democratic processes as well as perform a development oversight function.

UNDP Country Office Focal Points

Nils Taxell, Programme Officer (nils.taxell@undp.org)

Muhammad Khabir, National Programme Associate (muhammad.khabir@undp.org)

National Joint Youth Programme

Background

Young Afghans – demographics and indicators

68% of the population of Afghanistan is below 25 years of age. This majority segment of the population is generally disfranchised, lacks educational and employment opportunities, and rarely participates in decision-making at community, province or national level. The situation of Afghan girls is of particular concern - under traditional pressures they enter early marriage and early pregnancy, contributing to Afghanistan's dire MMR and IMR. Youth literacy rates are low; 50% for boys and 18% for girls; secondary school enrolments are respectively 23% and 7%, and less than 1% of the Afghan population reaches higher education.

Risks and Opportunities

Faced with these challenges, Afghan youth are at a major risk of oppression, unemployment, low wages and therefore to induction into the narcotics industry, illegally armed groups, insurgents and terrorist organizations. This generation of youth, having experience of conflict and exile, needs to now be empowered and provided with alternative opportunities. Their fresh perspectives, their prejudice-free minds, their energy, enthusiasm and determination must to be channelled for promoting peace and development in Afghanistan. This enormous reservoir of human capital will provide the future leaders of the country's political, business and civil arena.

UN - Joint Programme

In order to better address these youth development goals to be addressed in the programme, the seven UN agencies (UNAMA, UNICEF, UNDP, UN-HABITAT, UNESCO, UNV and UNFPA) and eight Government Ministries have decided to develop a joint programme. This is the 5th joint programme of Afghanistan, and it is aligned with the ongoing UN reform process. The joint programme was signed by all parties in the end of 2006.

Objective of the UN Joint Programme

The National Youth Programme will primarily focus on the dual objectives of insuring that:

1. Afghan Youth participate effectively in socio-political process, with emphasis on national and local governance, democracy, reconstruction and peace building
2. Afghan young women and men have access to, and participate in, the socio-economic development, with emphasis on education, skills development and employment opportunities.

To achieve the programme outcomes of meaningful participation of Afghan youth in socio-political processes and socio-economic development four main components are envisioned:

1. Strengthening the capacity of the Government to respond to the needs of the youth of the country.
2. Promoting non-formal education, increasing awareness and developing skills (literacy, leadership, strategic planning, conflict resolution, peace-building, etc.) in young people so to provide better quality of life and livelihood opportunities.
3. Engaging youth in governance, development and social-political processes at local, district, municipal, provincial and national level, ensuring the participation of young women and men in democracy and advocacy.
4. Promoting volunteerism for peace and development and establishing a youth volunteer corps for Afghanistan.

The four component outputs are linked technically and operationally by joint programming mechanisms between the various partners of the programme.

National Ownership, Coordination and Leadership

In order to maintain strong national ownership, the programme will be led by the Government and become a national programme. By engaging several Ministries and UN agencies in a joint programme more leverage, political support and resources can be secured from the Government and from the UN system in support to

the youth sector. The National Youth Programme will provide a strong platform for coordination of youth programming and youth policy-making in Afghanistan.

It will also allow ministries, agencies and other youth stakeholders to share expertise and resources, promote learning, avoid duplication of efforts, reduce competition over limited funds, and maximize impact of Government/UN youth interventions in Afghanistan. Furthermore, a joint programme approach will reduce confusion and burdensome transaction costs experienced by Government and donors when disparate policies and programme are undertaken by different entities. By planning, implementing and monitoring youth initiatives collectively, the National Youth Programme is aimed at adding value to existing youth initiatives.

Management and Reporting

A Joint Committee of Government, UN agencies and donors has been established to launch the joint programme, raise funds for the component parts and ensure co-ordinated implementation and reporting.

Duration

The joint programme will be for the period 2007 – 2008.

Partnerships and Resources

Target Budget (total National Youth Programme): US\$ 21,443,000

Target Budget (UNDP component): US\$ 8,114,880

Received Budget: US\$ 1,060,000

Donors: UNDP Core Resources

UNDP Country Office Focal Points

Nils Taxell, Programme Officer (nils.taxell@undp.org)

Muhammad Khabir, National Programme Associate (muhammad.khabir@undp.org)

Accountability and Transparency (ACT) Project

Corruption, both petty and grand, constitutes a serious and growing problem in Afghanistan. According to a survey conducted by Transparency International in 2004 it even outranks the security problem in terms of the biggest challenges for the government to tackle in the near future. Internationally Afghanistan is near the bottom in terms of indicators of corruption and governance. According to the World Bank Institute's Control of Corruption indicator Afghanistan is in the bottom 2nd or 3rd percentile. In 2005 the country ranked 117th out of 159 in Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index.

The high level of corruption has multiple adverse effects, in particular on the development and state-building agendas. It undermines the public's confidence in and support of the Government as well as casts doubt on the effective use of donor funds intended to contribute towards the improvement of the lives of Afghans – essential in terms of addressing the deteriorating security situation.

The threat that corruption poses is recognized by the government and some steps have been taken to address the issue. These include:

- Consistent public recognition by the Government of the challenges faced due to corruption (also as part of the Afghanistan Compact and the i-ANDS);
- An Inter-Institutional Committee has been established to assess the extent of corruption within the public sector which will form the basis of recommendations to the President on how to address the problem;
- The legislative and institutional foundation for a functioning public administration has been established;
- Initial steps to put in place checks and balances (External Audit, Parliament, etc.); and
- Visible efforts to investigate and prosecute individual corruption cases (notably by the Attorney-General's Office).

While these efforts are certainly commendable it is clear that the Government still faces a daunting task in addressing corruption. In addition lack of clarity on institutional arrangements for combating corruption and recent appointments by the Government has cast doubts, amongst the international community, on the Government's leadership and commitment to resolutely deal with corruption.

However, with corruption threatening the progress made to date in Afghanistan, the international community cannot afford to stand idly by. Support to the Government and other sectors in society (civil society, media etc.) must be stepped up.

The Government requires support in developing the institutional, legislative and policy frameworks needed to effectively address corruption, also allowing for emphasizing the importance of prevention of corruption rather than focusing narrowly on punitive measures after the crime has already been committed. Without sectoral strategies that address the root causes of corruption, also focusing on prevention, any attempt at addressing corruption is likely to remain ineffectual.

A further important element in providing an enabling environment for combating corruption in awareness-raising, i.e. changing the public's perception of corruption as well as supporting civil society and media to develop the necessary capacity to act as 'watch-dogs'.

Therefore it is crucial that the international community provides support within the institutions and sectors where there is the highest probability of achieving success. The support given will also indicate to the Government the international community's commitment to support the fight against corruption, something which needs to be combined with political pressure to ensure that corruption is at the top of the Government's agenda.

It should be noted that a strong call for support has been made by the Government of Afghanistan for further support from the international community – in particular support to the development of a national anti-

corruption strategy – voiced during recent Cross-cutting Technical Group and the ANDS Working Group on Anti-Corruption meetings.

UNDP's ACT project, designed to support the development of the critical areas mentioned above, was finalized and signed in January 2007. During the design phase of the project there were extensive consultations with government counterparts, the international community and other relevant stakeholders. In particular the project was developed in close consultation with the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank in order to ensure close coordination and synergies, and to avoid overlap in support to the Government.

The objective of the ACT project is to support the Government, in view of achieving the Compact Benchmarks and developing a broader anti-corruption strategy within the ANDS, in laying the foundation for strategic anti-corruption policies and programmes by testing pilots in key public institutions (Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Justice), providing an integrity monitoring system including the necessary diagnostics and surveys, and by raising awareness and educating the public at large, as well as the civil service, on corruption. The gradual development of a culture of non-tolerance for corruption in the public and private sector is a key element of this approach.

The ACT project consists of three components:

1. Improved institutional, legal and policy environment to support the implementation of anti-corruption policies and programs in line with the Afghanistan Compact and the ANDS;
2. Enhanced integrity and accountability in pilot ministries and aid management; and
3. Increased awareness and understanding of corruption in Afghanistan – including the establishment of a grants facility for civil society organizations active in the field of anti-corruption.

The ACT project is also seeking to link up with other UNDP initiatives, acknowledging the cross-cutting nature of corruption. In particular the ACT project aims to collaborate with:

- UNDP's Afghanistan Sub-national Governance Programme (ASGP) in providing support to Provincial Councils to fulfil their mandate in terms of oversight and anti-corruption;
- UNDP's Support to Establishment of the Afghan Legislature (SEAL) Project in raising awareness on the issue of corruption as well as strengthening the capacity of parliamentarians in key areas relevant to the fight against corruption; and
- UNDP's projects and programmes in the justice sector, the justice sector being crucial to any successful attempts at coming to terms with corruption in Afghanistan.

The ACT project will also seek to establish collaboration with other donor's initiatives in the area of anti-corruption – something which, as mentioned above, is already being done with the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank. The ACT project will be housed in the Ministry of Finance in order to benefit from the ministry's political leadership, strong relationship with other public entities and interest in promoting a broad-based approach to the development of anti-corruption policies and programmes. Other key partners include the Ministry of Justice as well as other government institutions, the ANDS secretariat, the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank and Afghan civil society organizations.

Partnerships and Resources

Target Budget: US\$2,380,000 (January 2007 – June 2008)

Received Budget: US\$ US\$550,000

Pledge: €300,000 (EC)

Donors: UNDP Core Resources

UNDP Country Office Focal Points

Nils Taxell, Programme Officer (nils.taxell@undp.org)

Basir Stanikzai, Programme Associate, basir.stanikzai@undp.org

Promotion of Rights & Equality

Strengthening the Justice System of Afghanistan (SJSA)

Desiring to build on the successes of the project *Rebuilding the Justice Sector of Afghanistan* (RJSA), which was generously funded by the governments of Canada, Italy, and the United Kingdom, and to address the challenges still faced by the justice sector, the three permanent justice institutions of Afghanistan and UNDP concluded a new project document in November 2005 entitled “*Strengthening the Justice System of Afghanistan*” (SJSA). This follow-on programme which began on 1 January 2006 and has a three-year duration, is designed to assist the Government of Afghanistan in achieving the priorities and benchmarks for the rule of law and justice highlighted in the Interim Afghan National Development Strategy (I-ANDS). The programme consists of the following key components: (1) support to the Government of Afghanistan for the development and implementation of a detailed strategy based on the “*Justice for All*” framework; (2) strengthening institutional capacity of the Ministry of Justice; (3) strengthening institutional capacity of the Office of the Attorney General; (4) strengthening institutional capacity of the Supreme Court; (5) strengthening institutional capacity of the legal education institutions; and (6) rehabilitation of physical facilities for the justice sector. This broad scope of project activities enables SJSA to address the multi-faceted needs of justice sector reform and provides the project with the flexibility required to meet ever-evolving short-term challenges, while supporting development of long-term sustainable strategies.

Achievements

I-ANDS: The SJSA programme has been active in providing technical support and assistance to the Ministry of Justice in the preparation of detailed work plans and in setting priorities for the justice sector under the Interim Afghanistan National Development Strategy (I-ANDS) process. The support provided by the SJSA programme has resulted in the justice sector achieving a high level of donor coordination and cooperation and has benefited the I-ANDS process generally by increasing awareness and capacity of I-ANDS staff to undertake national planning across sectors. Further, the SJSA programme participated with other development partners in the design of an implementation framework for the “*Justice for All*” policy document with the intent that the output would be linked to the I-ANDS process. UNDP through its project provided technical support for the development of the Justice Permanent Institution strategy papers to I-ANDS.

Institutional Reform & Development: The SJSA project continues to support the permanent justice institutions with institutional reform and development. Technical experts, assigned by UNDP to justice institutions assist on a daily basis with a number of institutional development related tasks. In addition, with support from SJSA, the permanent justice institutions are continuing the implementation of the Priority Reform and Restructuring (PRR) programme within the justice sector.

Law Curriculum: UNDP has provided support to the Faculty of Law and Political Science of Kabul University in designing a new curriculum. Following adoption of the new curriculum, the SJSA project will assist with its nationwide implementation.

Access to Justice at the District Level: In November 2005, the three permanent justice institutions of Afghanistan and UNDP concluded a project document entitled “*Access to Justice at the District Level*” (AJDL). The AJDL project focuses on the following activities: (1) refurbishment of district judicial centers; (2) training of justice officials together with their communities in human rights; and (3) public awareness raising on issues of law and fundamental rights.

- The new Project Manager started his work with the project in January 2007.
- AJDL activities will now be implemented through sub-contracting the NGOs/CSOs as agreed by the Steering Committee.

- The RFP (Request for Proposals) for the NGO implementation of AJDL activities in the provinces of Herat and Mazar-i-Sharif was announced, and a number of NGO applied. The selection of NGOs is now under process.

Future Priorities

- Project: Strengthening the Justice System of Afghanistan
 - Development of the policy and planning capacity within the Ministry of Justice
 - Build the capacity of the permanent justice institutions at the provincial and district levels.
 - Resource mobilization
- Project: Access to Justice at the District Level
 - Material development for training and public awareness activities.
 - Implementation of project activities in provinces of Herat & Mazar-i-Sherif

Partnerships and Resources

	Overall Budget	Received Budget	Shortfall
AJDL	US\$ 7,200,000	US\$ 7,200,000	US\$ 0
SJSA	US\$ 9,890,000	US\$ 2,603,522	US\$ 7,286,478

UNDP Country Office Focal Points

Najim Animashaun, SJSA Officer-in-Charge (najim.animashaun@undp.org)
 Eltayeb Hamid, Project Manager (eltayeb.hamid@undp.org)
 Nasrat Aslam, Programme Officer (nasrat.aslam@undp.org)

Building Sustainable Capacity on Human Rights Treaty Reporting

Background

The project aims to build sustainable capacity within the Government of Afghanistan to allow it to meet its implementation and reporting obligations, under the six international human rights treaties to which Afghanistan is party, in a timely and coordinated manner. Afghanistan is party to the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination; the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women; the Convention against Torture; and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Government is obliged to submit regular reports to the United Nations' international monitoring committees on the progress it has made in implementing the rights set out in the treaties. The report preparation process provides a valuable opportunity for national-level assessment of the state of human rights implementation as a first step towards developing policies and programmes to further the promotion and protection of human rights within a development context.

The main components of the project are capacity-building of governmental staff and non-governmental stakeholders, cooperation with AIHRC on training activities and shadow reporting, the creation of an institutional mechanism to participate in and support the reporting process and the establishment of a database to support the data gathering and report drafting process.

An international technical advisor will work with national staff within the Department of Human Rights and International Women's Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and will provide advice to the Government on the treaty reporting process. The advisor will also contribute to capacity building programmes for ministerial focal points as well as civil society actors.

The project duration is 15 months with a budget of USD 297,619 and there was also a no-cost extension for six months. Now the project will continue until end of June 2007.

Expected Outputs of Building Sustainable Capacity on Human Rights Treaty Reporting

- Strengthened technical expertise and capacity throughout Government;
- Institutional mechanism/framework established with full participation of all line ministries to ensure sustained reporting and effective follow-up to treaty body recommendations;
- Strengthened capacity of non-governmental stakeholders, in particular the AIHRC;
- Information system established (incl. maintenance) providing updated information and statistics relevant to human rights treaty reporting;
- First Report finalized and submitted to the relevant treaty bodies using the new format of a common core document and treaty-specific documents by the end of the project duration, with planning already underway for subsequent rounds of reporting;
- Improved implementation and observance of international human rights norms as set out in the treaties to which Afghanistan is a party.

Achievements

- A donor agreement was signed with CIDA on 19 June 2005 and the official launch of the project took place on 27 November 2005;
- The Project office within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was established;
- International technical advisor came to Kabul for a period of 6 weeks to start-up the project;
- Introductory meeting held with human rights focal points in various ministries to present the process of treaty reporting and establish a common working mechanism;
- Treaty Reporting Consultant visited Kabul for 12 days (9-21 March 2006) and provided advice on the project, consulted all relevant stakeholders and contributed to capacity-building activities for ministerial focal points and the treaty reporting project team in MoFA;
- Workshop was organized for ministry focal points on 15, 16, and 18 March 2006 in the MoFA. It was conducted by two Iranian Consultants and the Treaty Reporting Consultant;
- The new Minister of Foreign Affairs has been briefed on the project to assure his support;

- A Project Manager was recruited in August 2006 to provide managerial support to the project;
- A second workshop was undertaken from 2 to 6 August 2006 and aimed to explain the technical processes of report writing, data collection and data analysis to ministerial focal points and the staff of the HR&WIA Unit at the MoFA. It focused on the format of the common core document and the treaty specific elements of the reports.
- An International Technical Advisor was recruited on 16 October 2006 to take the project forward and start the preparation of the first treaty report.
- A follow up meeting was organized on 14 September 2006 with all the focal points to assess their needs, evaluate their preparedness for providing data and explain the future programmes.
- Follow up letters with exercise questions were sent to all focal points
- Work plan was finalized in November 2006.
- The Minister of Foreign Affairs and his senior Ministry officials have been briefed on project activities, output and progress in November 2006.
- A Ministerial Submission authorising the project's objective of using the new Treaty Reporting Format and drafting the first report on the ICESCR has been signed.
- Cabinet members have been briefed by Minister of Foreign Affairs on project activities and the importance of inter-ministerial coordination to the treaty reporting process;
- The Project Team has established a working relationship with the ANDS Secretariat;
- Recruitment of a Treaty Reporting Associate and a Treaty Reporting Desk Officer for the project has been evaluated and commenced;
- Individual meetings with the relevant ministers to emphasize on the importance of project and to evaluate ministerial focal points is under way
- Assessment of the need for a stand-alone database in the MoFA has commenced.
- The Treaty Reporting Associate was selected and joined the project in January 2007.
- All the relevant Ministers have been briefed individually about the treaty reporting project and the importance of inter-ministerial coordination for this project.
- A film on treaty bodies have been displayed and translated for the focal points in order to raise their awareness on the treaty reporting and build their capacities.
- A list of permanent Ministerial Focal Points has been finalized, and as a result, 7 new more competent ones have been introduced by some Ministers to replace the old ones after the individual ministerial meetings.
- Rights of the ICESCR have been allocated to different members of OHR&WIA staff to be responsible for their relevant ministries and agencies.
- The first phase of data gathering (preparation of a common core document and one treaty-specific report) has already started.
- Drafting the report has already started.

Future Priorities

- Finalize the report and start working on translation
- Provide necessary training programmes for the focal points and Directorate of HR&WIA;
- Conduct training for the Civil Society
- Finalise analysis of existing and planned Government databases.

Partnerships and Resources (Donor: Canada)

Target Budget: US\$ 311,010

Committed Budget: US\$ 311,010

Shortfall: US\$ 0

UNDP Country Office Focal Points

Nasrat Aslam, Programme Officer (nasrat.aslam@undp.org)

Mir Zarif Waez, Project Manager (zarif.waez@undp.org)

Institutional Capacity Building for Gender Equality (Gender Equality)

➤ *Finalisation of the Gender Equality Project Document*

The new Institutional Capacity Building for Gender Equality project (Gender Equality) was finalised and approved in December 2006. The project has been signed in the 1st quarter of 2007.

The new Gender Equality project has received encouraging response from donor community; number of agencies including CIDA, Italian Co-operation have made commitments of their support and several others have pledged to fund the implementation of the project. The project budget totals to US 10,628,500.

Forthcoming agenda

For gender mainstreaming the programme aims to further enhance capacity of MoWA and other oversight and line ministries at national level and civil society institutions, NGOs, media institutions and local authorities at sub-national level. To give effect to the project the following actions have been planned to be undertaken immediately: development of the implementation strategy and plan, undertake national consensus building workshop, recruitment of staff.

Partnerships and Resources

Target Budget: US\$ 10,628,500
 Funded Budget: US\$ 500,000 UNDP Core
 Donors Committed: CIDA, Italian

Institutional Capacity Development Support Programme for the Ministry of Women's Affairs

Background

The Institutional Capacity Development Support for the Ministry of Women's Affairs programme (ICB) aims at providing technical assistance to the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA) for the promotion of gender mainstreaming across the government machinery. The support from the programme is mainly focused on building MoWA's institutional capacity for the advancement of women's empowerment. In its day-to-day operations the programme functions in close collaboration with the Training and Advocacy department (TAD) of MoWA.

Objective

The overarching objective of the programme is to help enhance capacity of MoWA to deliver on its mandate including assisting other ministries in support of its strategic goal to institutionalise the mainstreaming of gender and strengthen inter-ministerial collaboration for the promotion of gender equality. The main areas of interventions of the programme include:

- ❖ Institutional capacity building at central and provincial levels;
- ❖ Institutionalising gender mainstreaming in line/oversight ministries and provinces;
- ❖ Capacity building for gender advocacy;
- ❖ Establishment of a Gender Studies Institute;
- ❖ Technical Guidance to the minister/ministry;

Key Features and Achievements

Since its inception, the programme has been providing TAD/MoWA with support of different nature including technical institutional capacity assistance, development of infrastructure, instruments for giving effect to policies and transfer of knowledge and expertise. In concrete, the support and assistance over time resulted

in MoWA's enhanced capacity in terms of the skills of its staff, availability of instruments, intellectual resources, infrastructure, etc.

Within its current framework of co-operation, certain strategic support has been provided to TAD/MoWA. A highlight of the actions undertaken during **January-March 2007** under the current programme is provided below.

➤ ***Training, Advocacy Strategies:***

The two key strategies—Training and Advocacy—that were developed in the 4th quarter of 2006, were presented to wider audience in January 2007. Inputs and feedback from the presentations were incorporated in finalising the strategies. Currently the translation of the strategies in local languages is underway. Once the translation is completed, the strategies will be published and shared with the 34 MoWA provincial departments and other ministerial departments for implementation.

➤ ***Gender Training Manual***

The three Gender Training Manuals (Gender Awareness, Gender and Development, and Gender Analysis) that were completed in December 2006 are currently being translated in Dari and Pashto. The manuals have contributed to enhance TAD/MoWA's internal resources. It is envisaged that the manuals will serve as resource tools for the certificate programmes of the Gender Studies Institute (GSI) as well.

➤ ***Support to MoWA Publications (Mirman Magazine and Ershad-ul-Naswan Newspaper):***

UNDP through ICB supports the Training and Advocacy Department (TAD) of MoWA in delivering on its mandate to promote and advocate in favour of women's rights and interests. Print media has been the means of communication that TAD has primarily been using in this respect. In addition to two periodicals **Ershad-ul-Naswan and Mirman Magazine**, TAD undertakes occasional activities and releases advocacy material/messages. On the occasion of the International Women's day 2007, TAD/MoWA released one **TV and two radio spots** to create awareness against violence against women and girls. The production of the spots was supported under ICB. The spots covered messages on ending violence against women and girls in different aspects of their lives including access to education, health care services, child and forced marriages, etc. The three spots were broadcasted on Radio and TVs for a number of days starting from the eve of the International Women's Day.

➤ ***International Women's Day***

ICB facilitated UNDP's participation in IWD events organised by the UN. Several activities including film show, photo exhibition, health, education and social counselling for women and girls were part of the programme. Number of UN agencies including UNAMA, UNDP, UNICEF, UNIFEM and UNFPA had taken part in the event and shared their work with ordinary women in Afghanistan.

➤ ***Gender Studies Institute (GSI)***

In the current quarter, full operationalisation of GSI was given further importance. GSI has been incorporated as a key activity in the new gender project. Preparatory work related to the curriculum development for graduate as well as certificate courses has commenced. It is envisioned that GSI will start offering certificate courses in the 3rd quarter of the year and graduate course in the 2nd year.

➤ ***Financial Audit***

The only task remaining before ICB could be brought to a full closure is the Financial Audit. Preparation related to the audit was launched in the 4th quarter of 2006. It is expected to bring the project to an official closure within the 2nd quarter of 2007 upon completion of the financial audit.

Partnerships and Resources for Institutional Capacity Building Support Programme for the Ministry of Women's Affairs

Target Budget: US\$ 2,920,056
Received Budget: US\$ 2,920,056
Donors: Belgian, France, Luxemburg and UNDP Core Resources

UNDP Focal Points

Shipra Bose, Programme Manager (shipra.bose@undp.org)
Nasrat Aslam, Programme Officer (nasrat.aslam@undp.org)

National Programme for Action on Disability (NPAD)

Background

The National Programme for Action on Disability (NPAD) is a three-year project formally launched in March 2005 in agreement with two ministries – Ministry of Martyrs and Disabled (MMD) and Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MOLSA). The primary objective of NPAD is to raise awareness and capacity, and to develop government structures for policy development, implementation and coordination of disability-focused efforts in Afghanistan. The emphasis of the Programme is to ensure the rightful inclusion of disabled people through addressing and breaking down social, political and economic barriers faced by disabled people in Afghanistan.

The Programme is delivering a twin-tracked approach to disability, both by specific disability-focused initiatives and through inclusion in mainstream government and civil society strategies. The focus is on disability awareness and education, policy and legislative definition, coordination and service delivery. The primary actors are: relevant government ministries, organizations delivering services and those organizations representing disabled people.

NPAD works towards the following outcomes

1. Raised awareness and commitment to disability as a rights-based, inclusive issue by government, civil society groups and the international community in Afghanistan.
2. Quality programmes and relevant services are reaching more disabled people (women, children, men, people with sensory, intellectual and mental impairments) in key sectors of health, education, livelihood and education and in four geographical areas currently not reached by services
3. A government-led new representative organizational body has been formed which is responsible for the coordination, management and leadership in disability policy and practice. This body brings together key line ministries, relevant local and international NGOs and agencies and provides leadership and legitimate representation of the disabled peoples' movement in Afghanistan
4. The formation of an accessible national knowledge bank based on in-country disability information and international information gained from surveys and research as well as lessons learnt from programme implementation.

Achievements

- **Rights and Advocacy:** The Rights and Advocacy Unit of NPAD continued to work with Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs) to build their capacity to advocate effectively for their rights. Disability mainstreaming has been strongly advocated and is seen as a fundamental process to enable the realization of the rights of people with disabilities (PwDs).

NPAD rights and advocacy department's main focus was the development of mainstreaming tools and during this quarter, comprehensive and useful mainstreaming tools were pre-tested, finalized, printed and shared with the DPOs and other organizations active in the disability sector.

Community awareness through civic education and advocacy activities were intensified using print and mass media. A total of 12 radio programmes and dramas highlighting various themes on education, rehabilitation services, profiles of disabled people and parent's/family experiences were produced and aired across Afghanistan. The UNDP global bulletin and UNDP Afghanistan newsletter featured articles on interventions and accomplishments in all aspects related to disability on national/ sub-national levels.

- **Education:** The NPAD national and international disability and education advisors moved to the Ministry of Education and began to operate from the new office.

Disability is now included in the five year strategic plan of the Ministry of Education. The development of the strategy was actively supported by NPAD. Under the guidance of NPAD, the special education section has been accepted as a department.

Needs assessment of the government blind school through Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) which is one of the donors of the blind School of Kabul. NPAD facilitated the consultancy of the CBR Consultant who identified the general needs of the School for the next three years including the capacity building of the teacher, how to work with children with weak low vision children and etc.

- **Health:** The Health Section of NPAD was successful in developing the disability guideline for the inclusion of disability services into Basic Package of Health Services (BPHS) and Essential Package of Hospital Services (EPHS). This guideline is essential in the development and paving the way for the inclusion of disability into the BPHS and the EPHS. The Disability Taskforce in the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) had regular meetings and most of the key issues including the finalization of the guideline, recognition of Physiotherapist and Orthopedic technicians by the HR Department of MoPH, the development of a strategy for the Disability Department was discussed and a plan was developed to follow-up and finalize these issues.

The upgrading Physiotherapy Curriculum was finalized by the working group with technical support from NPAD and advisors guided the process forward and to a satisfactory conclusion. With the finalization of the three year Physiotherapy Curriculum and the upgrading Curriculum to incorporate the latest development in this field, efforts are now being concentrated on developing criteria for the selection of candidates for the upcoming physiotherapy upgrading training course. Participants in the first upgrading course will be selected from those teachers who are already teaching at the Physiotherapy Training Institute of Kabul and Jalalabad.

NPAD organized 2 consultative meeting with the partners working in the Community Base Rehabilitation (CBR) in the country and during these sessions the issue of the establishment of the Afghanistan National CBR net work was discussed and it was agreed the National Network will be formally establish during a National CBR workshop scheduled for 13-14 November 2006.

- **Livelihoods:** Self employment and developing and promoting traditional handicraft activities are an important initiative has proved to be effective in mainstreaming people with disabilities. In conjunction with the Country Office a handicraft fair and sale by people with disabilities was held at the UNDP compound. Participants were delighted with the results and have requested NPAD to make this a regular event. An important lesson learned by participants was that only quality products sell. Therefore future concentration will be on improving skills and techniques and ensuring that all merchandise made is of the highest quality.

In order to further create employment opportunities for of PwDs, a private sector initiative was developed and implemented providing an efficient a courier Messenger Services for the delivery of mail and goods in Kabul. As an example 100 magazines was distributed by amputees using specially constructed bicycles to various addresses in the city. This service has now been expanded and the client base expanded because of the efficiency of the operation. Discussions are now ongoing with Afghan Telecom for a contract to deliver 20,000 monthly phone bills to customers.

- **NGO Contracts:** Due to the prevailing funding status of NPAD, during this Quarter none of the present NGO contracts for service provision were extended and the scope of many were reduced because of lack of funds. With the fresh injection of funds by USAID contracts will be reviewed and renewed depending on past performance. In addition non-traditional donors are being approached to fund disability services in parts of the country that at present are not being reached.

Payment on some contracts was withheld because of non-performance, non-compliance to the exact terms and conditions of the contract and for poor service delivery. Four contracts were amended and the NPAD team is now working closely with these contractors to ensure effective implementation and quality service delivery.

- **MMDSA:** There vision continues to be a blurred and the leadership and indecisiveness and this has hindered the smooth and effective merging of the two Ministries. In March 2006 the President announced the restructuring of ministries and this proposal was later endorsed by Parliament. MoLSA was to be amalgamated with MMD to form a new Ministry called MMD&SA. The labor component of MoLSA was to come under the MoC. To ensure a smooth transition, the NPAD Support Unit at MMD, worked out various options for the joining of the two ministries including, revising the Mandate to better represent the new role and responsibilities of the enlarged Ministry. A plan for streamlining staffing tables in accordance with the PRR processes was drawn up in an open and inclusive way and discussed in detail with Senior Management. The main hindrance to the processes was the refusal of line managers at MoLSA to accept the need for change and become actively engaged in drawing up blueprints for the reform. This stalled the processes and there was lack of political will to restart the procedure and see it to a satisfactory conclusion. This generated uncertainty among the Directors who worried about their future. As a result they have adopted a wait and see attitude. There continues to be intense politicking for the position of Deputy Ministers and this further aggravated the sense of uncertainty.

The construction of the Disability Resource Centre funded by the FTF (French Trust Fund) is now complete and talks are ongoing with the French Embassy to obtain additional funds for the purchase of furniture and equipment. The Ministry will meet all operating cost for the first year and a Steering Committee made up of NGO's/DPO have been formed to manage and advise the Ministry on issues relating to operations and management.

The 3 year National Disability Policy Framework was translated into Dari and Pashto after extensive consultations with all principle stakeholders including DPOs/CSO's. The Minister will now table the document as soon as Parliament returns from its summer recess. The draft legislation on Disability was widely circulated to relevant line ministries, NGO's, DPO's and other UN agencies and programs. All feedback was evaluated by the Drafting Committee chaired by H.E. Mr. Fahem Deputy Minister decided on what to incorporate in the draft document. The MoJ will table the legislation in Parliament for review, discussion and ratification.

- **Provincial Offices:** The Disability Coordination Body has steadily extended its reach to address some of the issues and the challenges faced by PwDs at the provincial level during the second quarter of 2006. This body meets regularly once a month under the and Chairmanship of the MMD Provincial Director. Technical support is provided by UNDP/NPAD.

The establishment of a Provincial Disability Donation Box in Mazar-eSharif is another initiative of NPAD at the provincial level. As a result of various meetings with the Governor, provincial council members and official request of MMD, the box has been established in De Afghanistan Bank and 500,000 AFs have been donated by local business people.

Challenges and Risks

Resource mobilization presented a major constraint during the reporting period. Because of lack of funds the Program was downsized and a number of International and National staff let go. At the very last moment USAID made a formal commitment for \$1.2 Million to NPAD. A proposed NPAD Mid Term Adjustment Document has now been drafted and once approved by the CO will be circulated to Donors.

Other activities that were affected because of lack of resources was Government participation in the final 8th Ad Hoc Committee meeting on the UN Convention for People with Disabilities, and our inability to support the joint venture between DPOs and HAFO (a local NGO on vocational training and skills development for PwDs in Kandahar province). All contracts for the provision of disability services are now being reviewed and the capacity of NGO's to deliver is being assessed.

Insecurity, especially in the southern part of Afghanistan remains a huge constraint. Some key activities such as Disability Mainstreaming Workshop, monitoring and evaluation missions to implementing partners in

Kandahar province have been cancelled for security reasons. Focused technical support to DPOs in the same province has equally been affected.

Lesson learned

- There is still a large need for awareness that accessibility is about removing the barriers to the same things that people without disabilities have unobstructed access to. It is not about providing something separate and different. In relation to education, it is not about a different curriculum or teaching tools, but about accessing them using a different communication method, or at a different rate. Also, because accessibility requires drawing further on budgets and on specialized techniques, there is an ongoing tendency to prioritize other concerns first before considering accessibility, without the understanding that this actually increases the costs in the long run.
- Although the higher level of MOPH is committed to disability, there is lethargy among ministry staff at the lower level on implementing directives.
- Disability is regarded as a specific and specialized issue, hence little understanding on how it fits in Primary Health Care (PHC.)
- Involvement of stakeholders and civil society will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the works. For example participation of civil society group in the management of disability resource centre creates a sense of ownership with the disability community.
- A twin track approach to contracting is needed whereby disability specific services are continued and new programs which focus on inclusion and mainstreaming are piloted.

Future Priorities

- Organizing 2 days workshop to finalize the draft amended guideline for the inclusion of disability service in to Basic Package of Health Service (BPHS) and Essential Package of Hospital Service (EPHS).
- Working with the Grant and Contracting Management Unit of MoPH to include disability in the Request for Proposal (RFP) of MoPH.
- Disability awareness workshop for the Ministry of Education key stakeholder.
- Drafting of disability legislation with the full contribution of the working group which is already established.
- Conducting mainstream workshop for Ministry of Women affair.
- Consultant to assist and facilitate in the assessment of CBRs.
- Pilot inclusive education in five schools in kabul to start in the next quarter.
- Disability and psycho social materials compiled and disseminated.
- Disability guidelines to be endorsed by MoPH.
- Working with HR of MoPH for physiotherapy curriculum recognition.
- Working with HMIS of MoPH to include disability.
- Disability permanent department in MoPH to start functioning.
- Supporting the strategy paper for MoPH on disability.
- Disability department organigram in MoPH.
- Establishment of disability and inclusive Task Force in MoE.
- Working to develop a mechanism for better functioning of NCU and Resource Center.
- Continue monitoring of on-going NGOs' contracts.

Partnerships and Resources

Estimated Budget (2005 – 7): US \$ 1,200,000

Donors: USAID, UNDP, JAPAN and French Trust Fund

Number of Project Staff: 13 (1 international and 12 Nationals)

UNDP Focal Points

Nasrat Aslam, Programme Officer (nasrat.aslam@undp.org)

Rudy Rodrigues, NPAD Officer-in-Charge (rudyr@disability.gov.af)