



Afghanistan

A large graphic element in the center of the page. It features a light blue horizontal bar with a darker blue section on the left. The word 'UNDP' is written vertically in white on the darker section. To the right of this, the text 'STATE-BUILDING & GOVERNMENT SUPPORT PROGRAMME' is written in dark blue. The entire graphic is enclosed within a large, thin blue circle, with thick blue brackets on the left and right sides.

United Nations Development Programme
Afghanistan Country Office
12 May 2005

TABLE OF CONTENTS

UNDP in Afghanistan	3
UNDP Programme	3
State-Building & Government Support Programme.....	4
Strengthening Capacity for Law Enforcement	5
Law and Order Trust Fund project	5
Law and Order Trust Fund project	7
Strengthening Capacity of Public Administration	8
Support to the Civil Service Commission – Training and Development	8
Women’s Advancement and Equal Opportunities in the Afghan Civil Service	11
Afghanistan Information Management Services (AIMS).....	12
Making Budgets Work.....	14
Bridging the Public Information Gap	16
Support to the Diplomatic Institute.....	18
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	19

UNDP in Afghanistan

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 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.

The human development challenge for Afghanistan is enormous. The level of malnutrition in Afghanistan is one of the highest in the world – 70 percent. The percentage of Afghans with access to a sufficient water source is the lowest in the world – 13 percent. The majority of the population is living below the UN-defined poverty line – 56 percent. The depth of poverty in Afghanistan is reflected consistently in all human development indicators, revealing a mosaic of a nation in need of sustained assistance. Not surprisingly, therefore, Afghanistan has been identified as a global priority for addressing the Millennium Development Goals.

UNDP Programme

Within Afghanistan's broad National Development Framework (NDF) are many cross-cutting priorities that address gender equality, security and the rule of law, administrative and financial reforms, human rights, environmental integrity, the return of refugees and internally displaced persons to their communities, and reintegration of former combatants into society. Guided by the requirements set forth in the NDF, UNDP Afghanistan focuses its activities on the following UNDP global practice areas: **poverty reduction, democratic governance, and crisis prevention and recovery.**

All UNDP activities are undertaken in close collaboration with the Government of Afghanistan, UN agencies and donors. All UNDP programme activities aim to consolidate peace, enhance security and promote respect for the rule of law. UNDP projects also enhance government institutional capacity to provide public services and to create an enabling environment for legitimate livelihoods. UNDP works collaboratively with all partners to empower Afghan women and promote gender equality in Afghanistan, ensuring that gender issues are consistently mainstreamed and carefully paced.

The UNDP Afghanistan programme remains responsive to the changing needs of a nation still in transition from conflict to peace. Afghanistan is at a crucial point in moving from state building initiatives to emerging as a newly democratic state, and the opportunity to shift focus to longer term development and government support is at hand. Accordingly, the UNDP Afghanistan programme of activities is organized thematically into three pillars: **State-Building & Government Support, Democratization & Civil Society Empowerment, and Promotion of Sustainable Livelihoods.**

As UNDP develops and implements its regular Country Programme in Afghanistan, a major focus on results-based management will remain. Future activities concentrate on institutionalizing accountability, transparency and integrity in the public service, continuing to strengthen democracy and democratic institutions such as the Constitution of Afghanistan, and further promoting access to and respect for justice and human rights for all Afghan citizens.

State-Building & Government Support Programme

The UNDP's State-Building & Government Support Unit focuses on strengthening institutional capacity to enforce the rule of law and provide public administration services to Afghans. In its support to public administration, UNDP provides public sector management, information management, aid coordination and tracking of resource management.

The State-Building and Government Support Team consists of five country office staff and four programme managers. The head of the programme is Mr. Abdul Bari, Assistant Country Director.

E-mail: abdul.bari@undp.org

Mobile: 070.288.361

Strengthening Capacity for Law Enforcement

Law and Order Trust Fund project

Phases I and II

The Afghan people and international community consider that improved security is a very high priority in the short term for Afghanistan. It is an essential prerequisite for reconstruction, economic development and private investment, as well as being critical for aid effectiveness. The re-establishment of law and order has been called for after decades of conflict that included terrorist activities, feuding warlords, illegal trade in narcotics and weapons and only minimal rights protection for its citizens.

The re-establishment of a national civilian police force is an essential element for security and the rule of law in Afghanistan. The National Development Framework and National Development Budget envision a professional and disciplined police force that is loyal to the Ministry of Interior (MoI) and widely visible to the public, creating a sense of comfort among the population, enabling the development of civil society and combating the drug trade. Afghan National Police have the potential to contribute to regional and global security and to serve as a symbol of national identity.

UNDP has played an important role in enabling MoI to begin the process of rebuilding the civilian police. In May 2002 UNDP established a Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA) to enable police to return to operation throughout the country, with the following priorities:

- nationwide payment of police staff salaries;
- acquisition of non-lethal equipment;
- rehabilitation of department facilities;
- recruitment and training; and
- institutional development.

This project has been implemented in two phases:

Phase I covered a period from 1 November 2003 through to 31 March 2004.

Phase II covered a period from 1 April 2004 through to 31 March 2005.

The direct beneficiaries are Afghanistan's national police officers and personnel, and MoI as a whole. Indirect beneficiaries include all citizens of Afghanistan who experience improved security and the regional and international community whose security is also increased as a result of peace and stability in Afghanistan

Achievements

Priority 1: Nationwide payment of police staff salaries

Salaries for all police force have been paid up to the end of last quarter of 1383(21 March 05). Priority activity 1 involves four components:

Computerization: The computerization unit has been working for more than five months in development of Electronic Payroll System (EPS) for the police force. Currently the software, prepared by MSU staff is being tested in Kabul and Ghazni provinces. In addition, 34 computers and accessories have been provided by CFC Alfa for roll out to provinces. As of 31 March 2005, around 21,000 personnel files have been entered.

Personnel Records Collection: This component refers to the collection of data from personnel files of the police force at MoI and, to date, data for Kabul and Wardak has been entered into the EPS database. A total six persons from the ministry were trained in data entry.

Budget, Revenue and non Salary Expenditures: This component refers to budgetary issues, incomes and all non-salary expenditures according to budgets. This component is nearly completed.

Attendance, Salary and Allowances: The fourth component of computerization calculates the amount of salaries, allowances and deductions according to the attendance reports and other means that affects the payment of salaries. This component is nearly completed.

Priority 2: Acquisition of non-lethal equipment

While there were allocations for this priority, no physical transfer of money occurred. However, the following items were procured: 4 hulls for helicopters, office furnishings and equipment, 2 vehicles, 34 computers, 490+610 UAZ 4x4 vehicles, 490 Codan communication systems, and 275 police belts.

Priority 3: Rehabilitation of department facilities

- Construction of 69 highway police check posts on Turkham-Kabul-Herat highway ongoing;
- Designs for six police stations have been completed (Ghor, Farah, Maidan Wardak) and contracts have been awarded. Contracting the rehabilitation of police stations in three other provinces (Samanghan, Badghis and Zabul) will be undertaken soon.

Priority 4: Recruitment and training

- A three-month training course was conducted for 47 staff of Finance Department (MoI);
- Six people from Human Resource department (MoI) were trained in computer data entry;
- Facilitation was provided through MoF for a training workshop for Finance Department (MoI) on reducing ineligible expenditure that cannot be paid by LOTFA;
- A two-day training course was conducted in Kabul for the MoI financial officers of 34 provinces. Financial management and financial reporting were the main topics covered.

Priority 5: Institutional development

- In light of the approved Support to Law and Order project document Phase II, a Management System Unit (MSU) was established and staffed with key project personnel including an adviser, a manager and a finance officer.

Special project focus: Gender

There are female officers within the MoI with more than 20 years of service experience. During their service, they have proven leadership qualities at various ranks in provinces as well as with the office of MoI. Currently women are serving as officers and sergeants. The MoI has data available on 11 provinces as well as central office, which indicate the following female presence: 54 officers, 126 sergeants, and 55 academy graduates for a total of 180 females serving.

Female personnel receive the same salary and benefits as male personnel. Issues of women's rights, as well as constitutional and international conventions related to Human Rights, are part of the training program undertaken by the German Police Project.

Partnerships and Resources

Phases I and II

Target Budget: US\$275 846 292
 Received Budget: US\$119 995 564
 Shortfall: US\$136 746 820

Donors: UNDP, USA, EC, Germany, Finland, Belgium, Switzerland, Netherlands, Canada, Norway, Ireland and Norway

Law and Order Trust Fund project

Phase III 21 March 2005 – 20 March 2006

Future Plans

Due to under-budgeting, the LOTFA project was not able to accomplish all the objectives stated in the project document for Support of Law and Order in Afghanistan.

A LOTFA steering committee (SC) comprised of MoI, MoF, EC, the German Embassy and UNDP was held on 31 March 2005. The SC reviewed LOTFA Phase II achievements and the future trend of the project. The SC appreciated LOTFA achievements and unanimously agreed to extend the project into Phase III for one year, until 20 March 2005. The SC agreed on the same priorities in Phase III with the timely police payment of salaries being the highest priority.

LOTFA will apply undesignated contributions to the reimbursement of police remunerations until annual costs are covered. Remaining undesignated contributions will then be applied to the subsequent four priority areas. Other activities will be implemented as needs are identified and funds become available. Two new activities under ‘priority IV’ (Recruitment & training) and ‘priority V’ (Institutional development) will include gender equality, female police recruitment and the development and distribution of national ID cards.

Challenges and Risks

Several of the main activities indicated in this project document assume that donor funding will be provided, that appropriate capacity will be built within the Ministry, and that the required implementing partners are available to carry out specific activities. The key risks to successful implementation are:

- Delays in implementing measures to improve the payment systems for police, which threaten to undermine the reliability of the police force and potentially the achievement of the outcome;
- Insufficient transparency or accountability of expenditures and payment mechanisms under the project, which threaten to undermine donor confidence and further funding support;
- Insufficient ownership of the process by the designated institution and lack of capacity building, which threatens to undermine the sustainability of results and increase dependency of the national institution on external support.

Strict implementation of a realistic work plan with clear timeframes will ensure that the results are achieved. Tight monitoring, verification and regular functioning by the Monitoring Committee should allow for timely corrective measures with regard to payment and expenditures. The overall effectiveness of the above arrangements and their impact on capacity building and long term sustainability will be systematically reviewed during monitoring and evaluation.

Partnerships and Resources

Target Budget: US\$157 239 000

Focal Point (UNDP): Younus Payab, Programme Officer (younus.payab@undp.org)

National Director: (MoI): Shahmahmoud Miakhel (smiakhel@yahoo.com)

Programme Advisor: R Emmelt Hummelen (remmelt.hummelen@undp.org / oestgeest@yahoo.ca)

Strengthening Capacity of Public Administration

Support to the Civil Service Commission – Training and Development

The Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission (IARCSC), foreseen in the Bonn Agreement and set up by presidential decree in May 2002, is the lead body within the government mandated to coordinate the public administration reform process. UNDP has supported the IARCSC since its establishment.

Under the current project UNDP is assisting the Training and Development Department of the IARCSC in conceiving and organizing training and development programs for qualified civil servants and to build capacity within the Department. Based on the immediate priorities identified by the Government, UNDP supports the IARCSC in: (i) formulation of an overall training policy; (ii) the development of a short-term training and development strategy; (iii) the development of a leadership development strategy; and (iv) the development of a training and development strategy for the provincial and district level.

Achievements

With the support of UNDP technical assistance, the T&D Department has recently:

- Drafted a first outline of a training policy that will create the framework for the IARCSC to plan, develop, establish, implement, evaluate and fund training and development programs designed to improve the quality and performance of the Afghan Civil service.
- Formulated a new approach to leadership development. This has involved:
 - Identifying the target group of senior leaders who should be developed;
 - Researching and formulating a detailed framework of the leadership and management competencies that are required in their work;
 - Assessing the current level of competency and thus identifying the precise needs for development of the target group;
 - Establishing a strategy to provide, over time, access to new development opportunities for the target group;
 - Determining on an action plan to implement the Strategy.
- Completed draft competency models for the higher/middle management and operational/administrative staff of the Afghan Civil Service. These will form the basis for the delivery of training programmes in the future.
- Conducted a Performance Discrepancy Assessment (PDA) in Kabul, Balkh, Herat, Wardak and Parwan including a total of eleven districts with 400 civil servants respondents.

Future Priorities

- Adopt the draft training policy by the Ministerial Advisory Committee (MAC)
- Strengthen the capacity within the Training and Development Department of the IARCSC;
- Develop a competency-based short-term training and development strategy and an associated action plan;
- Conduct a Training Needs Assessment (TNA) at the subnational level;
- Develop a competency-based training and development strategy as well as an associated action plan for the subnational level;
- Assist the Training and Development Department in the implementation of the Civil Service Leadership Development Strategy; this requires the design and delivery of a number of competency-based development programs.

Challenges and Risks

- An effective civil service training system requires that a technical regulation of the civil service is in place. A new Civil Service Law is currently being prepared for promulgation in the form of a Presidential Decree, but it has not yet been signed.
- One immediate challenge is increasing the absorptive capacity in the IARCSC to manage change. The IARCSC is starting with a low level of capacity relative to the number of tasks it faces, particularly in overall strategic guidance at the political level, providing the goals of the civil service training system and how it relates to and supports the type of civil service that is required.
- As the development and implementation of a capacity and training strategy focuses on the short-term needs of the Afghan civil service until a proposed Government Training Academy is functional, proper timing and good coordination are of great importance.
- Security problems in some of the provinces and districts might affect the implementation and delivery of the training and development strategy at the subnational level.

Partnerships and Resources

Target Budget: US\$376,000

Received Budget: US\$376,000

Shortfall: US\$ 0

Donors: UNDP core funds.

Focal Point: Stephan Massing, Programme Officer (stephan.massing@undp.org)

Support to Public Administration Internship Programme

Jointly with the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission (IARCSC), UNDP is implementing an Internship Programme for a small group of outstanding graduate and post graduate-level students. The Programme offers 24 young graduates the opportunity to acquire direct exposure to the work of Technical Ministries of the Afghan Government, relevant to their field of study.

It is intended to help them to complement their theoretical knowledge with practical experience through on the job training and learning by doing. At the same time it will provide the Afghan civil service with highly qualified young professionals specialized in various technical fields.

It is envisaged that successful participants of the Programme will continue working with the Government upon completion of the Programme. The programme is especially supporting women and, therefore, aims to contribute to the advancement of women in the Afghan civil service.

Achievements

- Following a broad advertisement of the Programme at Universities and through the media and local television 16 female and 8 male interns were selected in a joint process between the IARCSC and UNDP.
- The interns were assigned to work in a wide range of ministries and government agencies such as MoFA, MoEdu, MoHE, MoWA, MoC, MoF, MoJ, Parliament, High Court and IARCSC.
- The first experience sharing workshop was organized for interns at the end of February 2005.
- Interns submitted first activity reports to UNDP & IARCSC covering the first two months of their internship period.
- Monitoring visits of interns have been conducted at the relevant ministries and government agencies.

Future Priorities

- Monitor interns through regular visits to the ministries and discussions with supervisors;
- Organize experience sharing and networking workshops every two months;
- Evaluate the project and make recommendations on a continuation of the project.

Partnership and Resources

Target Budget: US\$34 021
 Received Budget: US\$34 021
 Shortfall: US\$0

Donors: French Trust Fund (FTF)

Focal Points: Soraya Sofiezada, Programme Assistant (soraya.sofiezada@undp.org)
 Stephan Massing, Programme Officer (stephan.massing@undp.org)

Women's Advancement and Equal Opportunities in the Afghan Civil Service

Decades of war and armed conflict in Afghanistan have destroyed much of the infrastructure and human capital of the country. Women, in particular, were targeted by systematic discrimination and exclusion from public, communal and political life during this period. Under the Taliban rule, women were subjected to violence, banned from education and literally removed from public life.

Not surprisingly, these developments did not spare the Afghan civil service, where women were forced to withdraw from their positions. As a consequence, women's share of employment in the civil service and especially the number of women employed in higher positions is extremely low. Today, even skilled and qualified women who were working with the Government in the past are often unable to reestablish their careers.

At the same time, there is evidence that the civil service, particularly at the individual ministry level, is not always representative of the population of Afghanistan. The extent to which public institutions as employers provide equal opportunities to all individuals regardless of language, religion, ethnicity or disability is an important issue in public administration reform.

The Government of Afghanistan, which is committed to rebuilding a competent and efficient civil service, has recognized the importance of establishing a civil service that fully reflects Afghan society and provides every group with equal-opportunity access to employment. On request of the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission (IARCSC), this Preparatory Assistance project will assist the Commission in initiating activities related to gender and equal opportunities in the Afghan civil service.

Achievements

- The project document has recently been signed.
- Shortlisting of the consultants for a mission has been completed.

Future Priorities

The PA aims to provide initial support to the IARCSC in developing and launching a multi-dimensional long-term strategy to increase gender balance and promote equal opportunities in the Afghan civil service. This will be achieved by deploying a short-term mission to Afghanistan, which will:

- analyse gender disparities and obstacles to equal opportunity in the Afghan civil service;
- develop a comprehensive approach to address these disparities;
- build the necessary capacity within the Commission to support and implement related activities and initiatives; and
- assist UNDP in the development of a project document.

The mission will closely consult with all Government bodies involved in affirmative action and gender issues.

Partnerships and Resources

Target Budget: US\$ 91,000

Received Budget: US\$ 91,000

Shortfall: US\$ 0

Donors: UNDP core funds

Focal Point: Stephan Massing, Programme Officer (stephan.massing@undp.org)

Afghanistan Information Management Services (AIMS)

AIMS sits at the forefront of attempts to develop and harmonize disparate approaches to information management. AIMS has a mandate, firstly, to build *information management capacity* in the government of Afghanistan, and, secondly, to provide *information management services* to the government and the broader humanitarian community.

AIMS promotes common data and technology standards and the free flow of information. It achieves this through focused customer service, product delivery, capacity building and supporting information policy development. Currently, AIMS is directly serving over ten government departments, and has regional offices in five cities managed by Afghans and a main office in Kabul – 15% of AIMS staff are women, and most of them work in technical roles.

Achievements

Customer Services

- Product services: the provision of data and map products over Internet, in soft and hard copy:
 - 2004 – Kabul office sold over 4 000 maps and cds, raising over US\$35 000. The income generated is invested in training programs for government staff.
- Training services: a suite of specialist and general training in GIS and database courses following international certification standards:
 - 2004 – Provided 646 trainings to Ministry staff from 24 government departments. 36% of these were in the regions. 98 were trained in GIS and 22 in databases.
- Advisory services: information standards, data collection, database design, data management:
 - 2004 – Provided advisory services to over 100 organizations nationwide, supported 106 projects in NGOs and UN including the electoral process (45% in regions), 32 in government.
- Government services: building skills and systems in cooperation with development organizations:
 - 2004 – Numerous ongoing and completed training courses around the country. Raised nearly US\$400 000 from regional donors, including PRTs, to support regional ministries. Provided web services support to three departments.

Technical Services

- GIS (Geographic Information Systems) services: digital mapping, project support, system set-up, distribution of technical files:
 - 2004 - Ongoing and completed GIS projects include: New Kabul City map, provincial donor mapping, updated settlements, rivers, roads and city maps; soil mapping, Badakhshan earthquake mapping and analysis, map scanning and cataloging for government, and the National Human Development Report.
- Database and MIS (Management Information Systems) services: supporting development of standards for ministries and developing shareable systems for development organizations:
 - 2004 – Developed and/or hosted new websites for the Central Statistics Office and the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development. Developed data standards and metrics for project tracking. Developed nine original databases, including: Political Rights Complaints, Activity Tracking, AIMS MIS, ‘Who is Doing What and Where for MRRD,’ and the Corporate Register. Convened third meeting of Afghanistan Database Developers Network.
- Standards and Quality: Strong focus on promoting standards for the sharing of data between databases and on maps, coupled with a commitment to developing skills internally to deliver more advanced databases and maps for analysis.

Future and Ongoing Projects

- Information management for disasters (early stage): A pilot project is planned to build capacity in the Department of Disaster Preparedness combining extensive training, provision of hardware, in-kind donations of remote sensing data, and the development of a prototype system to collect and manage information in the event of a natural disaster.
- ‘Who is Doing What and Where’ for Kunduz: Enabling the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development in Kunduz to collect and manage data on development projects in the northeast region.
- GIS capacity building in seven ministries and Kabul University (ongoing): A project that will build and train “geo-units” in targeted ministries to allow the government to manage spatial data, create maps and provide GIS services to a range of clients and donors.
- GeoBase: A database and reporting system that will enable the government to have a visibility and comparison of activities, allow government to track development projects, avoid multiplication of activities, and build common ground between different organizations and government departments through the creation and use of data standards.

Partnerships and Resources

Target budget: US\$ 6.8 million

Committed budget: US\$ 6.8 million

Donors: USAID, EC, UNDP

Focal Points: Dinara Rakhmanova, Sr. Programme Officer (dinara.rakhmanova@undp.org)

Project Manager: vacant

Making Budgets Work

In April 2004 the former *Aid Coordination and Management* project was transformed into *Making Budgets Work* project. This reorientation focused on the core business of the project on the National Budget, superseding its original aid coordination function. Making Budgets Works promotes the national budget as a pivotal coordination mechanism and an instrument of policy prioritization and implementation.

The major project objective is to provide an efficient and professional budget development and budget tracking services that in turn contribute to the reconstruction of Afghanistan. Since around 90% of the budget is dependent on donor assistance there is clearly a persuasive reason to involve donors closely in the preparation, implementation and review of the national budget.

Achievements

- The establishment and review of a Consultative Group (CG) mechanism.
- Recruitment and training of an Afghan national team of over 33 young professionals.
- Recruitment of national senior Budget Directorate staff to replace the existing international manager.
- Training of senior officers for management roles.
- Steps taken towards the progressive integration of UNDP and civil service staff.
- Enhancement of the Donor Assistance Database (DAD) to support the preparation of the National Development Budget, with over 85% of total aid to Afghanistan currently tracked; high-level training of national Database Manager and Assistant.
- Production of the National Budget showing achievements, financing gaps, implementation constraints and actions across the 16 national programmes.
- Report of National Account of the Transitional Republic of Afghanistan for the period of January 2002 – October 2004.
- National Conference on Budget Preparation and Implementation conducted.
- Portfolio Management/Monitoring and Budget Co-Ordination unit established.
- The National Development Framework (NDF) and the reform of the Consultative Group Mechanism.
- The establishment of six National Priority Programmes of Government (NPPs).
- National and Provincial Coordination.
- Capacity development of national staff.
- Development of the Ministry of Finance guidelines on the preparation and format of the Public Investment Programmes.
- National government website (www.af) established, along with much of its content, including the budget, aid flows, and international and national aid conferences.

Future Priorities

- More focus should be given to strengthen the capacity development of the Government in aid management and dissemination of information about it;
- Organization of Afghanistan Development Forum (ADF) on 4 – 6 April 2005;
- Preparation of National Development Budget for the year 1384 (2005 – 2006);
- CGs and AGs should remain empowered and their role strengthened within the line ministries, the aid agencies and donors.

Partnerships and Resources

Target Budget: US\$6.4 million

Received Budget: US\$5.4 million

Shortfall: US\$1 million

Donors: Netherlands, Italy, USA and CIDA.

Number of Project Staff: 37

Focal Points: Ezzatullah Saeedi, Senior Programme Associate (ezzattullah.saeedi@undp.org)
Nematullah Bizhan, Project Manager (nematullah.bizhan@undp.org)

Bridging the Public Information Gap

The Office of the President (OoP) has limited capacity to provide information on the political and reconstruction and recovery processes to the Afghan people. Enhancing this capacity to communicate to Afghan citizens is essential in order to address frustration with the perceived lack of benefits from the reconstruction process so far. Public awareness of the positive achievements of the Government and its partners is very low. International media coverage also tends to present a negative and pessimistic analysis.

The Office of the President of the Islamic State of Afghanistan through its media and communication arm – the Office of the Spokesperson to the President – attempts to bridge the public information gap between the government and the people, within a UNDP project.

The project enhances the central government’s ability to obtain information from provinces, districts and villages and facilitate the dissemination of information to those levels. The OoP has developed a comprehensive public information and communication strategy to ensure that the policies, messages and achievements of the Government are heard by both Afghan audiences in particular as well as the broader international community.

The capacity of the Office of the Spokesperson (OSP) within the OoP has been reinforced through UNDP support delivered through this project. However, a step-change in support is required, and the OoP itself must set the framework and direction.

Achievements

- Based on OSP strategy and project document, a public information policy has been established and implemented.
- Daily and weekly monitoring and analytical reports disseminated within the OoP and to other key Government stakeholders.
- Quality production of public information has been achieved.
- Establishment of six units: news and media relations unit; media monitoring unit; media production unit; publications unit; strategic communication planning unit; and provincial public information unit.
- Establishment of archive system within the Office of the Spokesperson.
- Strategic Communication system established that includes six desks: Military and defence desk; Reconstruction desk; Political desk; Diplomatic Relations desk; Religious desk; and Social Affairs desk.
- Designed and established a functional presidential press website (www.afghanistan.org)
- A Steering Committee for the project was established to ensure the effective, efficient and transparent management of inputs made available to the project by different agencies, coordination and consultation mechanisms. The objective of the Steering Committee is to monitor further project implementation in line with the government and UNDP policies, administrative and operational procedures, as well as to ensure broad participation and transparency in decision-making.

Future Priorities

- Establish a press suit for Office of the Spokesperson to the President.
- Gain access to ATLAS and training for Senior Admin Finance Associate of the project.
- Continue capacity building of Media Production, Media Monitoring, Media Relations, Administration and Strategic Planning unit staff members.

Partnerships and Resources

Target Budget: US\$2 628 544

Received Budget: US\$1 848 428

Committed budget: US\$780 116

Shortfall: US\$0

Donors: United Kingdom (DFID), USAID (through IOM).

Number of Project Staff: 56

Focal Points: Ezzatullah Saedi, Senior Programme Associate (ezzatullah.saedi@undp.org)

Support to the Diplomatic Institute

In 2003, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs undertook a major step to reinitialize the training of Afghan Diplomats by reopening its Diplomatic Institute. The Diplomatic Institute is responsible for initial and in-service trainings, and aims to maintain Afghan Diplomats at a level of Diplomatic service required by international standards.

Achievements

- A high level advisor has been recruited to perform the functions of the Director of the Institute.
- A list of literatures has been prepared to be procured for improvement of the capacity of the Institute's library.

Future Priorities

- Build the capacity of the library within the Institute through the procurement of literature.

Partnership and Resources

Targeted Budget: US\$38 000
Received Budget: US\$38 000
Shortfall: US\$0

Donors: French Trust Fund (FTF)

Focal Points: Soraya Sofiezada, Programme Assistant (soraya.sofiezada@undp.org)
Stephan Massing, Programme Officer (stephan.massing@undp.org)

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

Phases I and II

Phase I

In collaboration with the Ministry of Communication, UNDP executed and implemented the first phase of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) capacity development project from July 2002 – July 2004.

It provided an opportunity for the government and Afghan people to enter the digital era. The project aimed to support national ICT policy development, to enable civil servants to apply effective ICTs in meeting the challenges of the transitional government, and to expand ICT skills and access among the general population, particularly women, youth and returnees.

It also provided income-generating opportunities via a proposed implementation/roll-out model, designed to directly involve Afghan nationals at all stages of planning, design and implementation while ensuring that policy and institutional frameworks were comprehensively in place. The project had six components:

- establishing ICT training centers
- establishing Tele-kiosks
- developing ICT policy
- establishing a CISCO Networking Academy Programme
- establishing a country-code top-level domain (.af)
- providing technical and managerial support to the Ministry of Communications

Achievements

- ICT policy development: ICT policy book developed.
- Training of ICT specialists through the establishment of Cisco Networking Academy Program (CNAP) in Kabul University, Telecommunications Training Centre (TTC) of MoC and Ministry of Women Affairs (MoWA).
- 14 trainees, of whom five were women, graduated as of the end of July 2004; 255 trainees are currently enrolled in Cisco training centres.
- The Local CNAP has been promoted to a Regional CNAP.
- Establishment of three ICT training centres in Kabul and eight in the provincial capitals. 3 000 people, including women and children, have been trained as of May 2004.
- 1 338 trainees (1 184 men and 154 women) have graduated from the private sectors, assisted by the ICT project.
- Establishment of nine telekiosks in eight post offices and the Kabul Airport to serve as a model for private Internet and e-mail services.
- Government acquired the country code top level domain “.af” and operation of the domain is ongoing.
- Technical and management support to the Ministry of Communication, including staff, training, advisors and logistics, is ongoing.

Phase II

The first phase of the project was completed on 15 July 2004. Plans were developed to exit from the Telekiosks and ICT training components of the project by the end of December 2004, in view of the expanding private-sector activities in these areas. UNDP continues to fund the remaining four activities. The second phase of the project emphasizes capacity building for the Government and advanced ICT training.

Achievements

- Project Document signed by UNDP and the MoC on 5 of September 2004.
- The fundraising meeting of donors was held in close collaboration with MoC.
- US\$1 million was allocated and budgeted from the core resources of UNDP for the implementation of the project Phase II.
- Another US\$1 million was allocated from the core resources of UNDP to support the District Communications Network (DCN) project. This contribution by UNDP represents an additional component to the project document as a NEX modality of execution by the MoC.
- A subcontractor was selected for conducting the first ICT Conference and an MoU was signed between UNDP and Afghanistan Computer Science Association (ACSA)

Future Priorities

- Build capacity of MoC as a policymaker and regulator through:
 - Supporting the National Information and Communication Technology Council of Afghanistan (NICTCA).
 - Supporting the restructuring of and management of MoC.
 - Supporting the establishment of a mechanism for coordination of ICT related international assistance.
 - Supporting the updating of ICT Policy and to the development of a concrete action plan to implement the policy.
- Enhance government efficiency through:
 - Developing a policy on implementation of e-governance.
 - Supporting the establishment of the National Data Centre and building capacity of its staff.
 - Providing secure Internet access, including the establishment of NIRA, IXP, SERT and ISP Associations of Afghanistan.
- Build advanced ICT capacity through:
 - Training specialists (men & women) in networking and hardware; developing databases and free and open-source software.
 - Training demobilized ex-combatants in ICT basic skills.
- Handover of the ICT training centre component of the project to the MoC in April 2005.
- Hold an ICT conference, with appointment of ICT Council members.

Partnerships and Resources

Phase I

Target Budget: US\$2 292 150
 Received Budget: US\$2 292 150
 Shortfall: US\$0
 Donors: UNDP, EC, France (FTF), Cisco and Microsoft

Phase II

Target Budget: US\$5 470 336
 Received Budget: US\$3 975 372
 Shortfall: US\$1 494 964

Donors: EC, Microsoft, Cisco, France, UNDP and USAID

Focal Points: Faqir Kohistani, Programme Officer, faqir.kohistani@undp.org
 Gopi Pradhan, International Project Manager, gopi.pradhan@undp.org