

## QUARTERLY PROJECT REPORT FIRST QUARTER 2008

### United Nations Development Programme Afghanistan Gender Mainstreaming in UNDP Afghanistan Project 22-10-2007 – 31-12-2009



Participants acted out their experiences of gender bias during the Training of Youth Trainers (16 – 18 March 2008, Maple Leaf Inn, Kabul City).

**Project ID:** 00058415  
**Duration:** 27 months (October 2007 – December 2009)  
**Component (MYFF):** 1.6 Gender Mainstreaming  
**Total Budget:** USD 1,328,240  
**Unfunded:** USD 1,037,659  
**Implementing Partners/Responsible parties:** UNDP

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## I. Implementation progress

In addition to wrapping up 2007 transactions, the first quarter was devoted to annual planning and project team organizing. Also carried out were preparatory activities in line with the annual output targets such as establishing a pool of gender trainers in UNDP, increasing the proportion of female staff in UNDP and improving gender responsiveness of UNDP projects.

### Annual planning with project team

The early weeks of 2007 were spent in preparing the annual report for 2007 and formulating the annual work plan for 2008, which had to be coordinated with colleagues in the country office and in projects. It was necessary for the annual work plan to have the ownership of those staff members or managers whose responsibility it is to sustain the project outputs.

For example, the training plan was prepared by the UNDP Learning Manager who is leading the activities for the project result "Improved gender sensitivity of male and female staff in country office and projects," which is in line with *Output 2: UNDP CO and project staff committed and able to apply gender equality principles in their respective work.*

The communication plan, on the other hand, was designed by the UNDP Communications Officer who adopted a good practice from UNDP India to support the work plan of the Learning Manager, in addition to looking at how this UNDP project initiative can support the UNDP "brand name." The Human Resources Manager, on the other hand, was periodically engaged in dialogues to explore ways to improve the recruitment process for the project result "Improve gender ratio in UNDP country office and in project offices" which is in line with *Output 1.*

*Output 1: UNDP Afghanistan policy framework on gender equality covering both operations and programme is in place*

The Gender Mainstreaming Specialist spent time taking stock of gender-related initiatives now being pursued by different UNDP projects at the same time that she made her expertise and time available to project managers and/or gender focal points. This twin approach was deliberately taken as a way of demonstrating country office support to gender initiatives in projects at the same time communicating management commitment to gender mainstreaming in the country programme.

Interactions reveal three types of approaches to gender mainstreaming: (a) women- or gender-focused components such as the Gender Mainstreaming Project within LOTFA; (b) gender sensitivity as an approach used across key components such as how NABDP is doing it; and (c) bringing gender messages in major project activities that could serve as entry points such as, for instance, adding a session on gender budgeting in the MBAW training of trainers in provincial budgeting.

### Programme

Below is a summary of what the projects are already doing in gender and what are evolving as areas for collaboration with the Gender Mainstreaming Project.

- 1.1 Reintegration Support for Ex-Combatants (RSPE) – RSPE supports ten (10) Employment Service Centres (ESC) of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyred and Disables (MOLSAMD), of which the Kabul centre is headed by a female, Ms Khatera Afghan. Agreement has been reached with the Ministry of Women Affairs (MoWA) for a satellite centre to be set up in its premises in order to encourage women to come in and enrol. So far, the Kabul ECS has only about 10 percent females in its data base. Similar proportion attends the training courses in English and in computer skills at the training centre in Wazir

Akhbar Khan. The centre gives preferential attention to women applicants in order to encourage them to use the services. Women are immediately attended to while men wait for their turn in the reception room. All females are accepted in the training courses. Ms Afghan is well informed about the constraints that Afghan women have to hurdle in order to find productive employment. She is also well attuned to the recruitment practices of organizations including international organizations that tend to favour men especially those with social and family networks located in the recruiting organizations.

*Evolving partnership with UNDP Gender Mainstreaming Project:* RSPE adopted the UNDP 2008 calendar design as its promotional material to be distributed during Afghan Nawrooz or New Year. The Gender Mainstreaming Project handled translation to Pashto and Dari and design, while the RSPE Project covered printing of over 2,000 copies. The Kabul centre is now part of the UNDP mailing list for job vacancy announcements and will endeavour to find more female candidates. UNDP Gender Mainstreaming Project will link the centre in Kabul and in other provinces eventually with women's organizations that are providing educational and skills training services to women.



UNDP 2008 calendar adopted and translated for use by RSPE as promotional material on the Employment Service Centers of MOLSAMD.

- 1.2 Law and Order Trust Fund (LOTFA) – The Gender Mainstreaming component is engaged in recruitment of women police officers (targeting about 300 by middle of 2009) and in supporting the capacity of the Gender Mainstreaming Unit. It is yet to be officially established but two female police officers have been appointed to the unit and their gender awareness raising and skills training are being facilitated by LOTFA with the support of the Mol Senior Adviser from CANADEM. Under this LOTFA component, a large scale training and advocacy strategy was to be launched targeting the full Afghanistan police force of about 70,000 personnel, almost all males, and aiming for their gender sensitization or gender awareness. Other LOTFA activities under this components includes equipping of the family violence response stations of the police and the construction of toilets in Mol for use of female Mol police and staff.

*Evolving partnership with UNDP Gender Mainstreaming Project:* The Gender Mainstreaming Specialist helped the LOTFA Gender Mainstreaming Coordinator to develop the Terms of Reference of the Gender Adviser (International) and assisted in recruitment. A highly competent gender expert with work experience in Afghanistan, Ms Nisha, was selected and she is now serving LOTFA under a six-month contract.

- 1.3 Making Budgets and Aid Work (MBAW) - The first Trainer's Training (ToT) on Provincial Budgeting Systems and Processes took place in March 2008. Targeting heads of the provincial departments of ministries, it included a session on Gender Budgeting with a resource person from the GTZ project in the Ministry of Finance. Representatives from the Department of Women's Affairs in the participating provinces were invited to the ToT.

*Evolving partnership with UNDP Gender Mainstreaming Project:* Copy of the draft manual for provincial budgeting was shared with the Gender Mainstreaming Specialist for comments.

- 1.4 Greening Afghanistan Initiative (GAIN) – GAIN assisted women to set up nurseries for tree saplings in 4 districts of Balkh province namely Nahrishahi (at vicinity of Mazar city), Dehdadi (20 km), Balkh (22 km) and Khulm (50 km). Nurseries are in villages and community women are working in the field taking care of their saplings.  
*Evolving partnership with UNDP Gender Mainstreaming Project:* Site visit is being planned for second quarter for gender assessment and to provide technical assistance based on findings.
- 1.5 National Area-Based Development Programme (NABDP) – Notable for its clear gender strategy, NABDP is systematically addressing gender issues particularly under its community empowerment unit. Crucial is the presence of a Gender Advisor (Nika Saeedi) within the unit and the gender consultant. Among the approaches employed by the unit were hiring of female community development advisers (2 females to 3 males) and supporting *mehrams* for community women who attended the sub-national consultations (SNC's). High representation of females in the ANDS sub-national consultations and 70 district development assemblies with mixed male and female members are among the concrete results of the project's gender sensitivity.  
*Evolving partnership with UNDP Gender Mainstreaming Project:* Gender Mainstreaming Specialist wrote an article about mobilizing females for the SNC's for the UNAMA magazine. She is also participating in the Gender Audit being led by the NABDP Gender Advisor – recently upgraded/promoted from being only under the Community Empowerment to being in charge of gender mainstreaming across all units in NABDP. As good practice example in gender mainstreaming, NABDP approach should be documented and lessons applied to programming policy and programme/project management.

#### Operations

Engagement also was pursued with operations, in particular, in the process of recruitment as a way of addressing the serious problem of low female representation in UNDP Afghanistan, both in the country office and in the project offices. In an attempt to identify intervention points, the Gender Mainstreaming Specialist did not only participate in interview panels. She also spoke in detail with the UNDP Human Resources Manager and took her to speak with the Director of the Employment Service Centre (ESC) in Kabul. It was agreed that UNDP will copy the ESC with every single vacancy announcement and the latter will endeavour to provide CVs of male and female applicants who meet the minimum qualification requirements.

A major challenge is finding qualified female applicants. The labour market has low supply of females with the work experience and educational attainment required for formal employment. On the other hand, information on job availability does not reach women who face constraints in information access. In this regard, other ways and means to increase UNDP access to qualified female labour has to be explored and tested.

A related challenge has to do with internal UNDP policy. Some project managers created internship schemes for fresh college graduates or supported further schooling of female staff members. They had to do these, however, at risk of breaking organizational policies and guidelines.

*Output 2: UNDP CO and project staff committed and able to apply gender equality principles in their respective work*

A major result envisaged under this component is the raising of gender awareness of all staff in UNDP Afghanistan. The main approach is to establish a pool of UNDP in-house trainers who sustain gender awareness raising sessions for their peers. In addition, awareness raising and other learning activities or modalities are being carried out, like the live performance or play on the theme gender issues in elections.

#### Training of Trainers

The first quarter was spent in identifying trainers and in designing a programme that meets the training needs of trainees. Target participants are CO and project staff – especially from the pilot

projects – who will be (a) trainers and coaches for colleagues, and (b) coordinators or focal points for units or projects. This pool of trainers needs to build not only their understanding of gender issues but also their commitment to gender equality. In addition, the trainers will have to develop their skills in designing and facilitating such sessions, as well as in inspiring and leading colleagues in gender mainstreaming.

The objectives of the Training of Trainers (ToT) course are:

- To build common understanding among the 30 UNDP gender trainers of the conceptual framework of gender inequality and the link between gender equality and women’s human rights in the context of Afghanistan.
- To enhance their skills in facilitation of group learning processes on gender issues.
- To sharpen their skills in developing, conducting and assessing gender training modules for their particular constituencies.

The ToT will be implemented in three-phases.

PHASE	FOCUS	DATES*
Phase I	Conceptual framework of gender, implications in the context of Afghanistan	28 – 30 April 2008
Phase II	Trainer skills – group dynamics, group facilitation, training design, use of methods	May 2008 (dates to be fixed with participants)
Phase III	Online clinic for designing training modules and preparing training materials	Up to 30 June 2008

International Women’s Day (IWD)

Commemorated annually on 8<sup>th</sup> of March, the IWD was tapped as an opportunity for raising staff awareness on gender issues. The project organized a performance in Dari by a local artist group on the theme of Gender and Elections.



*Hope for the future (امیدی به آینده)* presents arguments for or against participation in elections.



At the play, the actors perform and the audience discusses the merits of women’s participation during elections.

\* The first phase was eventually reset to June 9 – 11, 2008 and the subsequent phases will be completed within June and July 2008.

*Output 3: Guidelines and tools for gender mainstreaming in programme/projects and in operations developed and applied*

This component deals with specific interventions to implement gender mainstreaming in a unit within the country office as well as in six (6) projects in order to demonstrate what is gender mainstreaming and how it is to be carried out – whether in operations or in programming.

Programme/projects

The Gender Mainstreaming Specialist assisted the six pilot projects in defining their gender activities or outputs. Some of the concrete activities undertaken per project and the next steps are as follows:

1. ELECT: Met the Public Outreach Department (POD) of the Independent Elections Commission which hosts the Gender Focal Point, Jamila. Helped the unit design the workshops for raising awareness on gender and elections at the district level. Suggested to the Project Manager for the voter registration to take on board a Gender Advisor who will work with Jamila to design and implement a public outreach campaign to encourage and enable women to register and have their photos taken for the voter ID's. *Follow up ELECT with Terms of Reference of Gender Adviser and continue coordination with POD as it plans and implements its campaign for women's participation in the election.*
2. JNYP: Joined the technical working group for the sub-national youth consultations on ANDS as well as its resource mobilization team. Conducted training for youth trainers on 16 – 18 March 2008, which was attended by 29 participants including members of youth parliament (4 females and 12 males -- organized by SEAL and being tapped by JNYP to co-facilitate the SNC's), staff of the Deputy Minister's Office for Youth Affairs (4 females and 5 males) and other youth groups (1 male and 1 female). Two (2) staff members of the JNYP also attended (males). *Dialogue with project management on next steps on gender mainstreaming with the cancellation of the SNC's.*
3. SEAL: Agreed with the SEAL Project Manager for Gender Mainstreaming Specialist to join the Capacity Development technical advisory team as it assesses the capacity building needs of the Secretariat to Parliament and designs the capacity development plan. *Follow up meeting with the SEAL team upon the return of the Project Manager from home leave.*
4. Other projects, namely ASGP, CAP and CDRRP will be attended during the second quarter of the year.

Operations

Support to women at work in UNDP was the main issue pursued under this component. Subsidy for the crèche was continued while meetings with women staff members (national and international) were organized.

The crèche is claimed by staff members to be critical to their continued employment in UNDP (and UNAMA). Without a reliable facility where they can leave their infant or toddler children, mothers will not be able to concentrate on their work or worse, they will be forced to resign from work. Some of the women in the staff do not live with extended family members who are the traditional care givers in place of working parents.

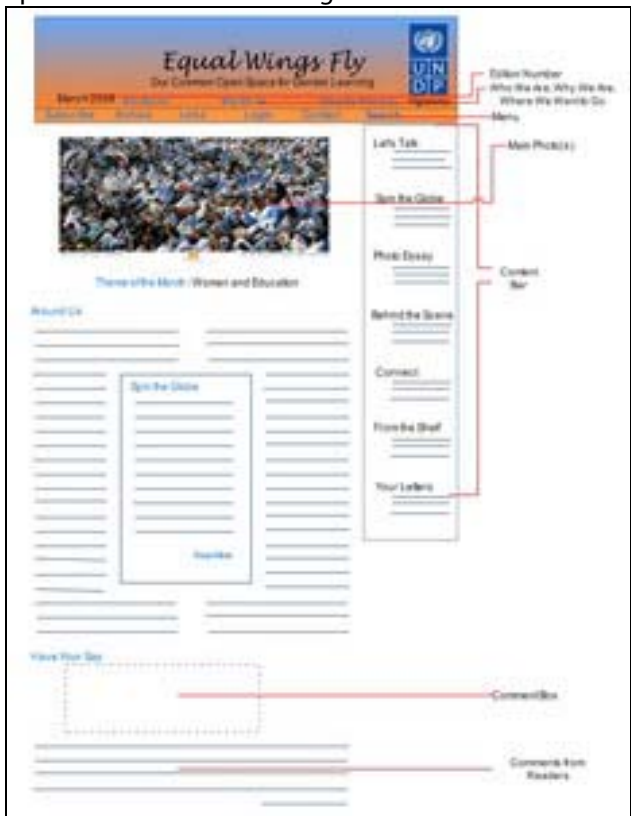
Office support to transportation is another important element to women's continued employment in UNDP. It gave them much cause to worry, therefore, when word got around that management has been discussing suspension of transportation services due to security risks.

The project will continue to support the efforts of staff members to address shared concerns. The Crèche Committee and the women's staff network should be further encouraged to explore solutions to these issues.

*Output 4: Information materials on gender mainstreaming in UNDP Afghanistan published and disseminated to target users/audiences*

This component serves to support the above three outputs, in particular, raising the awareness of UNDP staff on gender. At the same time, the component is the means for communicating to UNDP stakeholders its commitment to gender mainstreaming as well as country programme results.

To support the internal capacity building, the project spent about one month designing a web-based learning space for UNDP staff on gender. It will be an online component of *Equal Wings Fly* which is the slogan being promoted as UNDP’s gender brand. Other tasks carried out were research, interviews, photography and writing for the first and second editions, which are on “Women in Workplace” and on “Job Training for Women.” The basic design is below.



To communicate UNDP’s gender related activities, the project contributed to PPSU outputs, namely the monthly newsletter and the annual report. A photo essay from the project was featured in the March newsletter. Stories and photographs of gender activities in projects were also contributed to the annual report.

Agustinus Wibowo, a photo journalist has been contracted for two months as managing editor for the first three editions. He was also assigned to cover the learning activities and other training sessions under the other components of this project. In addition, he is training the project staff, notably the project assistant, in research and writing as well as in managing the online learning space.



Photo essay on Employment Service Center, featuring the jobseekers of Kabul and enthusiasm of women participating in labor market

## II. Project implementation challenges

### *Updated project risks and actions*

There are no updated project risks, only project issues.

### *Updated project issues and actions*

There are two major project issues that slowed down progress: low level of dialogue between Senior Management and the Gender Mainstreaming Specialist on expectations and needs; and lack of clarity about UNDP commitment of resources – both staff time and core funds.

The Project Board meeting has not taken place so that the 2008 Annual Work Plan remains in limbo thereby slowing down preparations for activities including procurement.

It is noteworthy that the ACD for DCSE addressed the staffing issue by (a) designating one National Programme Officer as Deputy Project Manager (Yama Helaman replacement for Hasina Safi) even if only part time basis.

Current core allocations leave the project with budget only up to July 2008 when the contracts of two full time project staff (Project Manager and Project Assistant) are ending.

### III. Financial status and utilization

#### Financial status

**Table 1: Contribution overview [October 2007 – December 2009]**

DONOR NAME	CONTRIBUTIONS		CONTRIBUTION BALANCE
	Committed	Received	
UNDP	511,000	311,000	200,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>511,000</b>	<b>311,000</b>	<b>200,000</b>

#### Financial utilization

**Table 2: Quarterly expenditure by activity [1 January – 31 March 2008]**

Activity	Budget 2008	Q1 Expenditures	Balance	Delivery
ACTIVITY02: Technical/ Practical Workshops	14,935	6,667	8,268	45%
ACTIVITY03: Modeling doc. Progr. & Results	9,000	9,600	- 600	107%
ACTIVITY04: Print of Gender Equality Fact sheet	28,415	4,355	24,060	15%
ACTIVITY05: Project Management	47,650	2,772	44,878	6%
UNDP Total	100,000	23,394	76,606	23%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>23,394</b>	<b>76,606</b>	<b>23%</b>

**Table 3: Quarterly expenditure by donor [1 January – 31 March 2008]**

Donor	Activity	Budget 2008	Q1 Expenditures	Balance	Delivery
UNDP	ACTIVITY02: Technical/ Practical Workshops	14,935	6,667	8,268	45%
	ACTIVITY03: Modeling doc. Progr. & Results	9,000	9,600	- 600	107%
	ACTIVITY04: Print of Gender Equality Fact sheet	28,415	4,355	24,060	15%
	ACTIVITY05: Project Management	47,650	2,772	44,878	6%
UNDP Total		100,000	23,394	76,606	23%
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>100,000</b>	<b>23,394</b>	<b>76,606</b>	<b>23%</b>

## Annexes

### Annual Work Plan - 2008