



QUARTERLY PROJECT REPROT

(SECOND QUARTER 2008)

**United Nations Development Programme
Afghanistan**

[Institutional Capacity Building for Gender Equality]

[March-2007 – February 2010]



Hundreds of women and men joined MoWA to commemorate the International Mother's Day

Project ID: 00054320

Duration: March 2007-February 2010, 36 months

Component (MYFF): 1.6 Gender Mainstreaming

Total Budget: US\$10,628,500

Unfunded: US\$ 1,976,451

Implementing Partners/Responsible parties: MoWA, MoEc

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I. IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

In the second quarter (April-June 2008) of the year, the Institutional Capacity Building for Gender Equality (Gender Equality) project made some significant progress in a number of key areas. The following is a full account of the implementation progress made by the Gender Equality project during the second quarter.

Component 1: Modeling gender mainstreaming through selected ministries

Output 1.1. Roles, responsibilities and co-operation for gender mainstreaming among ministries clarified

1.1.5 Set up advisory groups at the sub-national level

A project implementation Advisory Committee was established in Balkh and the first meeting of the committee was organised. Preparation for the establishment of a provincial advisory committee in the province of Herat is underway.

Output 1.2. Capacity of MoWA and selected ministries enhanced

1.2.1 Staff training in gender responsive planning, budgeting and M&E

Management capability had been previously identified through a capacity-building needs assessment survey as a high priority within MoWA and Departments of Women's Affairs (DoWAs). To respond to this need, Training and Advocacy Department (TAD), during the reporting period, designed a curriculum for a six-day training course on gender and management for DoWAs and members from selected provincial departments in Herat and Mazar. TAD was extended technical assistance and advice in the curriculum development, in order to ensure that the content corresponds closely with the principles of gender mainstreaming and is responsive to the needs identified. In addition to the content, TAD was also given support in determining the most useful methods in order to ensure a participative approach and methodology. TAD revised the contents and the training methods. The trainings will be undertaken in early July with the support from the Gender Equality in Herat and Balkh provinces for all female heads and representatives of the provincial government departments.

Support provided to commemoration of Mother's Day

During the reporting period MoWA commemorated the International Mother's Day, which was supported by the Gender Equality project. The celebration of the Mother's Day was an advocacy event for MoWA to highlight the important role mothers play in Afghan society. Through various statements and speeches made by high government representatives and dignitaries including the second Vice President, Minister and Deputy Ministers of Women's Affairs, representatives from other ministries, civil society organizations, UN agencies, and Women's Networks were present in the celebration and gave speeches on the dignity and the important role of mothers in a society. The officials reassured their commitments for the development of the women of Afghanistan. Gender Equality project supported the event with provision of technical inputs and publication of banners, billboards, brochures, posters, slogans and magazine for a public awareness building.

Support provided to final work of ANDS:

Assistance was given to the final work of the Gender Sector Strategy in order to align the same with other sectoral strategy in terms of coordination and design. Photos and their captions were provided to make the strategy more interactive. Also inputs were given to finalize the

acknowledgment section of the strategy.

Assessment on the training and capacity building needs of the MoEc key staff conducted

Two separate questionnaires were developed to assess the training and capacity building needs of the key staff of the MoEc. Interviews were conducted with the heads of the coordination department, directors of the departments of agriculture, education, training, health, culture, media and women affairs, trade and business and human resource department. All staff interviewed expressed need for on the job gender planning training. They also identified need for practical training to link gender with project cycle management.

Support to MoWA website

A national UNV Translator was recruited during the quarter for provision of consistent translation support to MoWA website unit which is one of MoWA's main advocacy tools. The UNV Translator was officially introduced to the Ministry in the reporting period. To help strengthen the MoWA website unit, recruitment of a Web Administrator—a short-term consultant has been initiated in the quarter. The purpose of the post is to help strengthen the MoWA website unit and afford its members an opportunity to learn under close supervision and guidance. A good number of applications have been received and potential candidates were short-listed with the assistance from AIMS team. The short-listed applicants will be interviewed in the first half of July. The individual will assist the MoWA team with the technical aspects of the maintenance of the website, uploading, updating and troubleshooting.

Output 1.3. Gender responsive planning and practices in place and use

1.3.1 Assessment of adequacy of current planning exercises;

During this reporting period, an inventory of the existing planning tools and guidelines held by all departments in the Ministry of Economy (MoEc) were compiled for assessment. In addition, gender disaggregated staff data was collected from the Human Resource Department. All collected data were carefully analyzed from a gender perspective. The results suggested that in the current practice little consideration has been given to issues of gender in recruitment and promotion of staff. For example, of 311 professional staff, only 62 are female and the remaining female staff work in support functions. The findings of the assessment have been shared with the ministry, brought to the attention of the Deputy Minister and corrective measures recommended and different scenarios discussed. A report of the assessment is available in English and the translation of the report into Dari is being done. The report (findings and recommendations) will be served as the basis for further actions to promote and institutionalize gender equality. This will also serve as a point of reference and benchmark.

A seminar on planning practices in other countries of similar economic situations is currently being planned for July 2008. The materials for this seminar are developed and being translated. The issues which emerged during the inventory compilation will be discussed at this seminar, in order to help MoEc develop a gender-responsive approach to planning.

1.3.3 Development/ improvement of methodology, guidelines and procedures;

Annual reporting formats/templates of the MoEc were reviewed and issues of gender were incorporated into the templates, in order to ensure gender-sensitivity of those templates. Reporting templates now present information in a gender-disaggregated data. The exercises are being undertaken for the analysis of project progress and finances. This was the first step towards developing personnel profile in all sectoral ministries for the use of gender-responsive reporting templates, so that there is consistency in approach to planning across the public sector. Guidelines

for gender responsive planning and reporting are likewise being developed to provide the ministries with resource materials required to institute a culture of gender responsive planning practices.

Output 1.5. Gender responsive budgeting framework and methodology established and accepted

One of the major contributions of the Gender Equality project to MoWA during the reporting period was the support that was extended to the preparation of the Five Years Development Budget of MoWA for the implementation of the priority projects for the Gender Equity Sector Strategy. Prior to the Paris Conference MoWA required to prepare, submit and get accepted its development budget for the coming five years. The budget needed to be prepared based on the principles of the development budget, within the annual ceiling for each year and focusing on the priority programmes/projects that MoWA submitted to the ANDS Secretariat for the implementation of the ANDS Gender Sector Strategy.

The Gender Equality project assisted MoWA with necessary technical inputs and mobilized human resources (a Budget Officer) from MBAW/MoF to actually undertake the tasks and engaged JICA TA to MoWA to further scrutinize the priority projects in a consultative manner and to ensure that the projects costs are the ones of most critical importance.

The Programme Manager herself devoted her time to work out the budget and ensure that the priorities of MoWA and the critical concerns for gender equality were reflected in the budget. Guidance was given as to what cost elements are involved per project and how to prioritize projects in terms of allocation of years.

The support of the project resulted in an efficient five-year development budget (of above US\$ 100,000,000) of MoWA as per the budget ceilings and MoF guidelines. The budget was appreciated by MoF and was presented to donors in Paris.

The project provided gender technical inputs to MoF to ensure gender responsive of the MoF Budget Circular that was issued in June 2008. Inputs and guidance were given to ensure that the ministries and other agencies are clear of their own responsibilities to respond to the gender gap and take workable measures to reduce the gender inequality in their respective sectors/areas.

In consultation with the MoF/Budget Dept the ToRs for the specialist was finalised and announced. The specialist will be based at MoF, embedded in the budget dept and will be working closely with the MoF Gender Budgeting Unit and other concerned units including BIRU and MBAW project team.

1.5.4 Conducting trainings:

Together with MoF, the content of the post of the Training Co-ordinator (Gender Budgeting) has recently been reviewed and the ToR has been revised with a new element of programme budgeting being incorporated in it. This was done with the objective of ensuring maximum utilization of financial and technical resources. The post holder will be working with MoF and MoWA. This will contribute to the development of MoF budget team's capacity in gender budgeting and retain capacity within and for MoWA to understand and eventually manage their development budget with a programme-based budgeting approach.

An agreement in this respect has been reached with MoF that the Gender Equality project will provide the international expert (Training Co-ordinator) with two distinct yet interlinked areas of expertise to support both gender budgeting capacity as well as the piloting of the programme-based budgeting at MoWA. The specialist will be based at MoWA and will work closely with the

Gender Budgeting specialist at MoF, gender budgeting unit, BIRU, MBAW of MoF. The specialist will also co-ordinate with other Gender Advisors fielded in other ministries by the Gender Equality project and the TAs at MoWA.

To support the specialist a team of four staff will be set up and fielded at MoWA. In this respect, another agreement has been reached with MoF and CDP—main TA suppliers for the programme-based budgeting, that UNDP will field the international specialist and CDP will do two national advisors. The three advisors will be working in a team and will be accountable to MoF (Budget Dept and BIRU) for the delivery. Despite their different organizational identity they will function in close collaboration with each other and as a team. The ITA and the team will be provided with a Translator (NUNV) by the Gender Equality project. The post of the Training Co-ordinator will be announced shortly.

Output 1.6: Gender mainstreaming monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system in place/use

The following activities were accomplished in regard to the gender mainstreaming monitoring & evaluation system during this reporting period:

1.6.1 Development of M&E system and its implementation mechanism/guidelines;

During this reporting period, consultations were held with MoWA Heads of Departments and technical advisors, in order to collect information on the existing M&E system, practices and its incentives and shortfalls. The consultations included:

An introductory meeting with MoWA Heads of Departments. In this meeting, chaired by MoWA's Deputy Minister (policy), the aims, objectives and methodology for the development of a comprehensive system of gender mainstreaming monitoring and evaluation were presented and the participants' views on the current system were sought. The meeting led to a follow-up action of conducting an internal survey to assess the adequacy of the current M&E system/mechanism in place.

A questionnaire survey was conducted following this meeting, in order to elicit more detailed information from various departments of MoWA on the M&E mechanisms and tools they use and the challenges they presently face in monitoring and evaluation of gender mainstreaming in the public sector.

One-to-one meetings with all MoWA's Heads of Departments and technical advisors, in order to develop further into the issues and to seek their views on what a gender mainstreaming M&E system should cover.

1.6.4 Development of annual status report template and conduct workshops to use the template;

Embarking on a series of stakeholders' consultations for the gender mainstreaming monitoring and evaluation system, a workshop was held on 7 June in Kabul. The participants included MoWA's Heads of Departments and technical advisors and representatives from MoEc, MRRD, MoF, MoHRA and MoJ. In this meeting, the results of MoWA's Heads of Departments questionnaire survey were presented at the plenary session, in addition to the general principles and critical questions to be covered in the outline of the monitoring and evaluation system. Participants were given four critical questions to respond to in breakaway groups. The participants raised critical concerns and made specific recommendations to be addressed in the development of the M&E system. Several other stakeholders consultations will be undertaken in Kabul and in the provinces, the content of the consultations will be enriched by the outcomes of consultations undertaken earlier on. Development of a comprehensive outline of the M&E system is underway.

Component 2: Sustainable knowledge-building and management on gender

Output 2.1: A Gender Studies Institute (GSI) is operational

2.1.3 Curriculum Development for professional training courses, graduate courses and certification Project

Following the appointment of the Gender Curriculum Specialist, work has begun on the development of a gender curriculum for GSI. To this end, the Specialist has organized a curriculum needs assessment survey, identification of stakeholders is being done and consultations have been organized. The collected data will be analyzed and reported in the next quarter. In addition, pertinent organizations have been consulted for the purpose of data collection. Some of these academic institutions/universities in the region have been contacted for further consultation. The Curriculum development specialist has contacted some of the organization based in India. The purpose of this liaison is to build on the curriculum development process and access the resources that will be available at these institutions. An official mission will take place in the first week of July to meet with these institutions. A full-fledged annual plan has been developed to systematically approach the curriculum development exercise.

GSI Design and Physical Infrastructure

During this reporting period, an architectural firm was contracted for the design and construction supervision work of the GSI. The firm concluded the initial work (covering phase I & II) and a presentation was made on the design concept on 5 June 2008. The Deputy Minister (Policy) of MoWA, representative from MoEc, Kabul University (KU), MoHE were present in the briefing. Also were present the renowned architect Jolyon Lesly of AKCT, the Programme Manager of UDG UNDP as peer reviewers and the representative from UNDP CO and the Gender Equality project management. Following this presentation, the GSI physical infrastructure site and design concept were approved by KU and the Gender Equality project. The architectural firm has commenced the work on the 3rd phase.

Component 3: Towards Women's empowerment: conflict resolution, justice, security and peace at the sub-national level enhanced

Output 3.1: Communities sensitized/equipped for the promotion of women's rights

3.1.1 Selection of NGOs and mobilization of community participants and volunteers

Civil society organizations (CSOs) are considered as key implementing partners in Mazar and Herat. A Terms of Reference is being worked for the CSOs. Following the finalization of the terms of reference for selection, the competitive bidding process will commence through UNDP's Procurement Department.

Output: 3.2 Communities and local institutions capacitated to promote women friendly local level justice system and facilitate women's access to justice in selected provinces

3.2.1 Consensus building workshop of partners:

The first meeting of the Provincial Advisory Committee (PAC) was established in Balkh Province in this reporting period. The membership of this committee comprises the representatives of DoWA, DoHRA, DoJ, DoA, DRRD, DoF, DoEc, and Independent Human Rights Commission and UNDP projects (NABDP, ASGP). At this meeting, the ToRs of the PAC and the frequency of meetings were

agreed upon. The meeting also selected the five districts where the project activities will be implemented. The districts selected are Balkh, Shulgarah, Khulm, Charkent, and Shur Tappa. At the same meeting, the selection of mullahs was discussed and the selection criteria drawn up and approved. The selection process will be finalized in conjunction with DoWA and DoHRA. Also at this meeting, the quarterly work plan for the province was presented, discussed and approved.

3.2.2 Set up co-ordination mechanism with key partners.

In the reporting period, the Gender Equality Project set up its provincial offices in the DoWA in Mazar and Herat. Both Provincial Coordinators in Balkh and Herat were officially introduced to the key stakeholders who included the Heads of provincial directorates for MoWA, MoEc, MoJ, MoHRA, MoF, and MoA. The Provincial Coordinators were also introduced to various UN Agencies and UNDP projects in their relevant provinces.

The two Provincial offices are based at DoWAs.

Output: 3.3 Gender sensitive media established

Gender equality advocacy and campaign in Daikundi and Bamiyan

Given the acceptance of the proposed model for women's rights and development, a possible expansion of the component 3 in Daikundi and Bamiyan was envisaged and discussed with UNAMA Central Highlands Regional Office. During the reporting period a mission was carried out to Daikundi and Bamiyan. Relevant authorities from the government and non-government and international agencies were met and consulted on critical challenges and way forward for women's development in the two provinces.

The findings and recommendations of the assessment mission were presented in a seminar to the representatives of UNAMA, NABDP, ASGP and Gender Equality team. The mission recommendations for a comprehensive approach to women's development and gender equality combining the strengths of gender equality, NABDP and ASGP and UNAMA were well received and appreciated by the participants of the seminar.

One of the actions to follow-up on the recommendations and to move to the next step was to carry out a joint follow-up mission by the Gender Equality and NABDP management members. The mission will share the findings and recommendations of the earlier mission with the relevant authorities in the two provinces. This mission will be undertaken in co-ordination with the UNAMA office in Central Highland Provinces

3.3.1 Selection of partner media agencies

The collection of data and the compilation of provincial media inventory began in this reporting period. In the coming quarter, the data will be analyzed and used for the selection of media institutions.

3.3.4 Production of training and advocacy materials

The Gender Equality project has continued its support to MoWA in the production of *Mirman* and *Ershad-ul-Niswan*, the two monthly publications advocating for gender equality and promoting women's empowerment and rights.

Support strengthening Women's groups/networks

An agreement has been signed and money has been transferred to the Afghan Women's Network to support refurbishment of their damaged office and to equip the new office. Financial resources to support AWN were mobilized from DFID.

II. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

Updated Project Risks and Actions

Security: It remains an on-going risk. This has a bearing on the speed of the implementation of the project. To mitigate this risk, caution has been exercised to avoid any kind of potential incidents as advised by the UN Security Unit

Recruitment: Delays in recruitment of the national and international staff due to difficulty in finding qualified candidates as per the requirements of the position was a major challenge. For the international posts, the specialized nature of the posts coupled with the in-country security concern and has created a major obstruction. In order to mitigate this, the posts have been widely disseminated through various informal and unconventional networks, individuals and institutions for attracting potential candidates.

Updated Project Issues and Actions

Procurement and Logistics: The project suffered another three-month delay in getting the project vehicle running on the road. This was due to intricate systems and number of offices/units involved in getting the vehicles registered and number plates assigned.

III. FINANCIAL STATUS AND UTILISATION

Financial Status

Table 1: Contribution Overview [2007 – 2010]

Donors Name	CONTRIBUTIONS		CONTRIBUTION BALANCE
	Committed	Received	
CIDA	4,787,486.05	2,824,777.51	1,962,708.54
UNDP	500,000.00	411,609.00	88,391.00
Italy	3,200,000.00	1,820,155.37	1,379,844.63
DFID	100,715.71	100,715.71	0.00
Total	8,588,201.76	5,157,257.59	3,430,944.17

Financial Utilization

Table 2: Quarterly expenditure by activity (Jan – June 2008)

Activity	2008 Budget	Expenditures Jan - 30 June 2008	Balance as June 2008	Delivery Rate %
ACTIVITY01: Roles/Responsibilities for GM	-	-	-	
ACTIVITY02: Capacity MoWA & selected Ministries	137,826	28,569	109,257	21%
ACTIVITY03: Gender Responsive planning/practice	85,840	28,967	56,873	34%
ACTIVITY04: GM Strategy for MoA	-	14,789	(14,789)	
ACTIVITY 6: Gender mainstreaming M&E	-	33,020	(33,020)	
ACTIVITY07: Gender Studies Institute	-	202,533	(202,533)	
ACTIVITY09: Sensitization on women's rights	904,671	20,727	883,944	2%
ACTIVITY10: Women's access	376,413	-	376,413	0%
ACTIVITY11: Gender Sensitive Media	223,277	-	223,277	0%
ACTIVITY12: Project Management	188,383	615,296	(426,913)	327%
GMS 7%	134,461	70,983	63,478	53%
Grand Total	2,050,871	1,014,883	1,035,988	49%

Table 3: Quarterly expenditures by donor (Jan – June 2008)

Donor	Activity	2008 Budget	Expenditures Jan - 30 June 2008	Balance as June 2008	Delivery Rate %
UNDP	ACTIVITY02: Capacity MoWA & selected Ministries	44,160	19	44,141	
	ACTIVITY03: Gender Responsive planning/practice	85,840	16	85,824	
	ACTIVITY04: GM Strategy for MoA		8	(8)	
	ACTIVITY12: Project Management		800	(800)	
	GMS 0%				
UNDP Total		130,000	843	129,157	1%
Italy	ACTIVITY02: Capacity MoWA & selected Ministries		28,550	(28,550)	47%
	ACTIVITY03: Gender Responsive planning/practice		916	(916)	
	ACTIVITY04: GM Strategy for MoA		14,781	(14,781)	
	ACTIVITY07: Gender Studies Institute		202,522	(202,522)	
	ACTIVITY09: Sensitization on women's rights	904,671	20,705	883,966	
	ACTIVITY10: Women's access	376,413	-	376,413	
	ACTIVITY11: Gender Sensitive Media	223,277	-	223,277	
	ACTIVITY12: Project Management	188,383	528,801	(340,418)	
	GMS 7%	127,411	59,935	67,476	
Italy Total		1,820,155	856,210	963,945	
CIDA	ACTIVITY01: Roles/Responsibilities for GM		-	-	0%
	ACTIVITY02: Capacity MoWA & selected Ministries		-	-	
	ACTIVITY03: Gender Responsive planning/practice		28,035	(28,035)	
	ACTIVITY04: GM Strategy for MoA		-	-	
	ACTIVITY 6: Gender mainstreaming M&E		33,020	(33,020)	
	ACTIVITY07: Gender Studies Institute		11	(11)	
	ACTIVITY09: Sensitization on women's rights		22	(22)	
	ACTIVITY10: Women's access		-	-	
	ACTIVITY11: Gender Sensitive Media		-	-	
	ACTIVITY12: Project Management		85,695	(85,695)	
	GMS 7%		11,048	(11,048)	
CIDA Total			157,831	(157,831)	
DFID	ACTIVITY02: Capacity MoWA & selected Ministries	93,666	-	93,666	0%
	GMS 7%	7,050	-	7,050	
DFID Total		100,716	-	100,716	
Grand Total		2,050,871	1,014,883	1,035,988	49%

Annexes

Annex 1. Annual Work Plan 2008