



Afghanistan

**QUARTERLY PROJECT REPORT (THIRD QUARTER, 2008)**  
**UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**  
**AFGHANISTAN**  
**SUPPORT FOR AN EFFECTIVE AFGHAN LEGISLATURE (SEAL II) PROJECT**  
**JULY 1 - SEPTEMBER 30, 2008**



SEAL II first project board meeting on 16 September 2008, Afghanistan National Assembly

**Project ID: 00059607**

**Duration: March 2008 – February 2012 ( Four years)**

**Component (MYFF): Fostering Democratic Governance (2.1)**

**Total Budget: USD 15, 316, 166**

**Unfunded: USD 9,732,833**

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## I. Implementation progress

### **OUTPUT 1: ENHANCED PARLIAMENTARY CAPACITY TO EXERCISE LEGISLATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES.**

As indicated in the project work plan and as discussed with parliamentary leadership over several months, during the Quarter SEAL delivered a discussion paper and a draft Code of Conduct (for elected Members) to the leadership of both Houses (First Deputy Speaker Meshrano Jerga (WJ) Gailani and First Deputy Speaker Wolesi Jerga (WJ) Yasini). The discussion paper and draft Code are steps toward the creation of a Code of Conduct that can help strengthen parliamentary practice (including legislative responsibilities) and culture, can help guide elected Members in avoiding and dealing with conflicts of interest and can help strengthen the credibility and public confidence in parliament as an institution. Produced by SEAL, the paper and draft Code draw on the models and experiences of other parliaments. The discussion paper is designed to help inform elected members about the purposes and value of a Code and the kind of enforcement arrangements that might be usefully put into place. The idea of a Code was discussed with MJ Speaker/President Mojaddedi and other members of the elected Admin Board and was discussed with WJ Deputy Speaker Yasini and MJ Deputy Speaker Gailani in previous months. The SEAL team has now offered to host work shops and to help with public hearing and/or other steps to move the Code forward. Discussions with National Assembly leadership on next steps will follow.

Also in this Quarter, at the request of the leadership of the MJ, SEAL team prepared and presented a workshop for MJ Commission Chairs. The workshop focused on Commission roles (comparative examples), and included a discussion of “best practices” to improve operations. As a result of the workshop SEAL team is now engaged with one-on-one consultations with Commission Chairs to assist in work planning and operations advice. The team is also engaged in producing a draft “handbook” on managing Commission business for discussion with Chairs and others.

### **OUTPUT 2 – PARLIAMENT EFFECTIVELY AND RESPONSIBLY OVERSEES THE ACTIVITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE**

The project team organized logistics and prepared the necessary briefing material for 6 members from both Houses to attend the annual meeting of the United Nations General Assembly in New York in October and November. Parliamentarians will attend the General Assembly and its Committees in pairs for periods of 1 week for each pair. The purpose is to participate in UN business as members of the Afghan delegation and to oversee the work of the delegation.

Parliamentarians will play an active part in delegation, General Assembly and Committee business. They are also expected to network with other parliamentarians attending the General Assembly and to participate in NGO activities such as Inter- Parliamentary Union (IPU) events in the margins of the General Assembly.

The expected results include parliamentary oversight and reporting on the delegation and General Assembly, parliamentary participation in UN affairs, expanded knowledge and experience for MPs, international networking for Afghan MPs, higher visibility for the Afghan parliament.

This Quarter SEAL II project team also began preparation of a “handbook” on oversight, especially on questioning Ministers, for discussions with Commissions and MPs. Project team also continued to work with several Commissions on the development of their mandates and work plans.

**OUTPUT 3 – STRENGTHENED DIALOGUE BETWEEN PARLIAMENT AND CITIZENS**

Throughout the Quarter SEAL II supported radio and TV spots have reached thousands of Afghans in their homes in 5 Regions (Central, Kandahar, Herat, Nungarhar, Balkh) to inform them about parliament. The spots are designed to draw attention to the responsibilities of parliament (especially representation) and to remind citizens that their representatives work for them.

A comic-book style parliamentary primer for school children was also produced this Quarter to provide a resource for teachers to introduce parliament and its responsibilities to the classroom.

In this Quarter SEAL also continued to support essential parliamentary publications including the official Gazette of each House. These publications inform government and others about the official business and decisions of parliament.

**OUTPUT 4 – STRENGTHENED CAPACITY FOR EFFECTIVE DECISION/POLICY MAKING**

SEAL II organized and supported the participation of members from both Houses to a parliamentary meeting at the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Geneva. The participation of the MPs will help them to understand the WTO and its agreements and will provide them information and tools for oversight of trade and economic policy. The meeting was also an opportunity for networking with MPs from other countries.

**OUTPUT 5 – EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES ARE IN PLACE**

SEAL II organized and hosted a workshop with the senior leadership of the Secretariats, including WJ Secretary General Gran and Directors of both Houses, to further elaborate a strategic development plan for all Parliament staff. The workshop focused on generating a longer term vision for the Secretariats and on articulating strengths, weakness and opportunities for staff and their professional development.

In this Quarter both Secretaries General Mr. Falah and Mr. Gran were sponsored by SEAL project to attend a specially designed one week professional development course for Secretaries General (Clerks) hosted by the Parliament of India.

SEAL team delivered two workshops/ trainings to the Hansard Departments of both Houses. Training focused on improving the minutes from plenary sessions, standardizing report structures, editing and approval procedures. SEAL also promoted the importance of Hansard indexing for research and for retrieving information and trained Hansard staff for this task.

During the Quarter SEAL team assisted the Finance and Budget Departments of both Houses in negotiations with the Ministry of Finance to improve on-line information tracking and records keeping via the Afghan Financial Management and Information System (AFMIS). The new system enables parliament staff to share information on-line with the Ministry of Finance, saving paper and time and bringing transparency and great accuracy to budgets and expenditure records.

SEAL team also conducted a three - day training for the ICT Department of the Secretariat. The training focused on installation and operation of a wireless simultaneous interpretation system that can serve up to 200 conference participants. The system was purchased earlier by SEAL. As

well, in cooperation with the ICT Director, a draft Standard Operational procedure comprehensive guide for ICT use and maintenance has also been completed.

Computer and internet training for 15 MPs and Senators also continued this Quarter.

## II Project implementation challenges

### *Updated project risks and actions*

#### **Security environment – immediate risks to parliament and project**

As in previous quarters, the security situation in the country and the security situation in Kabul remain the sharpest and most immediate challenges to the implementation of the project. During the Quarter all UN and UNDP offices and projects were shut down for a total period of 1 week due to high security concerns. Closure of the office affected project delivery.

Violence and the threat of violence to Afghan civilians, to foreigners and to symbols of State authority (e.g. police, army) continue to challenge the project goal of helping to establish a well functioning parliament, well connected to and respected by citizens in every region. The security situation prevents some in-country planning and potential outreach visits by Members and Committees.

To help address security risks, SEAL continues to assist the National Assembly Security Department and continues to provide and install security equipment, in this Quarter concrete barriers for the road entrance to the new Annex buildings.

#### **Donor funding Update**

The lack of delivered donor funding for SEAL II became a critical issue during the previous Quarter (see Quarterly Report 2, 2008).

In June Denmark and Sweden in partnership confirmed immediate and on going funding of around \$6 million to enable the project to carry out the operations and the activities outlined in a mid-year revised funding proposal. The initial portion of this funding was provided during the Quarter, enabling full work planning and activities increase starting in mid July.

### **Updated project issues and actions**

#### **Parliamentary recess**

Parliament was in recess through July, limiting engagement with MPs and their Commissions. SEALL II team during this period focused more on resource mobilization and planning activities for the rest of the year.

**Human resources**

During the Quarter three new international technical advisors were successfully recruited and took up post in Kabul. This has been a significant step in addressing on-going staff shortages (due to the security situation, lack of national capacity, long recruitment times, other). Two additional international advisors are now being recruited along with two additional national officers to support them. This will significantly assist in addressing the project’s ability to deliver the wide range of expert advice sought by parliament.

The vacant national head of capacity building was also filled during the quarter.

Affirmative action to recruit women candidates is underway, including for Deputy Project Manager.

**III. FINANCIAL STATUS AND UTILISATION**

**FINANCIAL STATUS**

**Table 1: Contribution Overview (March 2008 to February 2012)**

Donor	Contributions		Contribution Balance
	Committed	Received	
UNDP	650,000	650,000	-
Denmark	1,600,000	1,600,000	
Sweden	3,333,333	0	3,333,333
	<b>5,583,333</b>	<b>2,250,000</b>	<b>3,333,333</b>

Note: Sweden commitment of 20,000,000 SEK has been converted to USD at the rate of 6 SEK to a dollar as of 30 June 2008)

Financial Utilization

Table 2: Quarterly Expenditure by Activity (March 2008 – 30 Sep 2008)

Donor	Activity	Budget 2008	Expenditures (Jan-Sep 08)	Balance (30 Sep 08)	Delivery Rate %
UNDP	ACTIVITY01 Enhancing Parliamentary Capacity	265,000	282,544	(17,544)	107%
	ACTIVITY02 Strengthening Parliament Oversight	38,400	80,774	(42,374)	210%
	ACTIVITY03 Strengthening Dialogues between People and Parliament	82,900	68,540	14,360	83%
	ACTIVITY04 Strengthening Capacity for effective Decision/ Policy Making	8,000	19,401	(11,401)	243%
	ACTIVITY05 Supporting to Administrative Structure	91,500	4,233	87,267	5%
	ACTIVITY06 Project Management	164,200	237,536	(73,336)	145%
<b>UNDP Total</b>		<b>650,000</b>	<b>693,028</b>	<b>(43,028)</b>	<b>107%</b>
Denmark	ACTIVITY01 Enhancing Parliamentary Capacity	272,000	67,367	204,633	25%
	ACTIVITY02 Strengthening Parliament Oversight	385,000	28,858	356,142	7%
	ACTIVITY03 Strengthening Dialogues between People and Parliament	192,000	7,287	184,713	4%
	ACTIVITY04 Strengthening Capacity for effective Decision/ Policy Making	225,000	2,493	222,507	1%
	ACTIVITY05 Supporting to Administrative Structure	194,000	16,740	177,260	9%
	ACTIVITY06 Project Management	220,001	82,856	137,145	38%
	UNDP GMS 7%	112,000	15,475	96,525	14%
<b>Denmark Total</b>		<b>1,600,000</b>	<b>221,076</b>	<b>1,378,924</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>2,250,000</b>	<b>914,104</b>	<b>1,335,896</b>	<b>41%</b>

Table 3: Quarterly Expenditure by Donor (March 2008 – 30 Sep 2008)

Activity	Budget 2008	Expenditures (Jan-Sep 08)	Balance ( 30 Sep 08)	Delivery Rate %
ACTIVITY01 Enhancing Parliamentary Capacity	537,000	349,911	187,089	65%
ACTIVITY02 Strengthening Parliament Oversight	423,400	109,632	313,768	26%
ACTIVITY03 Strengthening Dialogues between People and Parliament	274,900	75,828	199,072	28%
ACTIVITY04 Strengthening Capacity for effective Decision/ Policy Making	233,000	21,894	211,106	9%
ACTIVITY05 Supporting to Administrative Structure	285,500	20,973	264,527	7%
ACTIVITY06 Project Management	384,201	320,392	63,809	83%
UNDP GMS 7%	112,000	15,475	96,525	14%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2,250,000</b>	<b>914,104</b>	<b>1,335,896</b>	<b>41%</b>

**Annexes**

Annual Work Plan 2008