



Afghanistan

## QUARTERLY PROJECT REPORT

United Nations Development Programme

Afghanistan

Afghanistan Information Management Services (AIMS)

(01/07/2008 – 30/09/2008)

Quarterly Project Report Third Quarter, 2008



English Language and Computer Literacy Programme for the Department of Women's Affairs in Kunduz

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Implementing Partners/Responsible parties: (optional)

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## I. Implementation progress

AIMS has significantly contributed to the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS), the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and the Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) outcome through achieving the following four main project outputs over the past three months.

### **OUTPUT 1: INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION MANAGEMENT CAPACITY OF THE GOVERNMENT IS STRENGTHENED**

The software engineering team continued serving the Afghan government and the international community within the areas of database and management information system training, including the development of software applications, web-sites, web and system design and business re-engineering.

AIMS conducted first level of certified database technician training (database and MIS training courses) to 30 government employees from different ministries and institutions. The purpose of this training was to boost the information management capacity throughout ministries and independent departments of the Government of Afghanistan (GoA). The training took place over a period of 30 days during the third quarter at the AIMS training centre.

AIMS' Geographical Information System (GIS) team provided on-going technical support to eleven GIS labs in various ministries and departments as part of its capacity and advisory services to the GoA. Members of the GIS team have been assigned as focal points for GIS labs within a number of ministries. These focal points visited the GIS labs and provided both technical and project-related services to staff in the respective government organizations. The GIS services and training extended to an additional five regional offices (Jalalabad, Mazar, Kandahar, Kunduz and Hirat).

In order to create an enabling environment for information management and GIS, the Kunduz, Hirat, Jalalabad, and Kandahar Regional Offices initiated English Language and Computer Literacy Programmes. A total number of 410 of government employees are receiving training.

### **OUTPUT 2: CROSS-INSTITUTIONS AND NATIONAL INFORMATION MANAGEMENT CAPACITY IS BUILT**

#### Project Management Professional (PMP) Programme

The Project Management Professional team further enriched and finalized the first level of the new AIMS programme curriculum by providing comments and practicing the exercises. Additionally, supplementary training material, in the form of videos, was added to the curriculum to make it more comprehensive. A training package has been prepared and is ready for distribution among the prospective trainees. To promote the PMP training programme, a proposal for conducting project management training was submitted to The Asia Foundation (TAF). A presentation on project management training was made to the Ministry of Counter Narcotics and the American University of Afghanistan. Brochures with the contents of the course were prepared for distribution among the prospective clients.

#### AIMS Initiated Advanced Database Course

Keeping in mind the planned target to train 250 employees from government ministries and departments, the UN and the humanitarian community in the usage of databases, AIMS initiated a further enhancing course, the "AIMS Certified Database Technician (ACDT)", to ensure the trainees' proficiency development. So far 32 government employees (29 Male – 3 Female) have been trained in ACDT during one session held in June/July 2008.

The AIMS Certified Database Assistant training programme was originally launched in 2004. It was primarily built around Introduction to Information System, Basic Database Concept and Microsoft Access as a tool for development. After gaining knowledge of the basic concept in database development, the trained government employees were tasked with implementing and developing small databases within their respective ministries and departments, however they faced certain limitations and problems in developing fully functional applications. To address this

challenge AIMS conducted interviews with a selected group of the top 40 candidates and initiated the ACDT training. This course includes Advanced Database Concept and Development, SQL Server, Visual Basic and Client Server Application.

#### NSP Monitoring and Evaluation System

Based on a recommendation from the recent Mid Term Review by the World Bank and the previous aid memoir, the National Solidarity Programme (NSP) requested AIMS to design and development of a monitoring and evaluation system. The NSP is a national priority programme of the GoA, executed by the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD). After completion of the requirement analysis phase, the system is now under development and is expected to be implemented in the end of October 2008.

#### Enabling Environment Programme for Government Ministries/Departments

The AIMS capacity building programme, which includes basic and advanced training in English language and computer, is ongoing in the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (MoCIT), the Ministry of Frontier Affairs (MoFA), the Ministry of Education and the National Security Hospital (NSH). The number of trainees is shown in the table below.

Through the provision of capacity building programmes at various government agencies, a total of 22 people were trained in English language and 64 in computer at the regional level.

#### Customer Services

During the third quarter of 2008, a total of 570 maps in hard copy and 16 in soft copy (on CDs)

No	Ministry/ Department	Male Trainees	Female Trainees	Total Trainees
1	Ministry of Communication (MoC)	72	13	85
2	Ministry of Frontier Affairs (MoFA)	17	3	20
3	National Security Hospital (NSH)	30	-	30

were sold. Advisory information was also provided to clients visiting AIMS. Aside from distribution of maps, the major services provided by the unit include oral and online advisory information and printing and scanning of maps. In additional, the regional offices distributed 305 maps.

#### Evaluation of GIS Labs

During this quarter, a number of government ministries and departments were visited to ensure their GIS labs were well-functioning and the GIS software provided was utilized appropriately. The result of the evaluation indicated that the majority of the staff trained by AIMS were performing well, while few were replaced by new recruits. Recommendations from evaluation team were provided to government staff members in order to enhance their knowledge of the latest software versions and improvements within the GIS resources. The agencies visited included the Department of Land Reform at the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, MRRD, the Ministry of Education, the University of Polytechnic and the Kabul University.

#### Application Maintenance

The product development section has developed a number of applications and websites, which are operational and need to be maintained. During the third quarter of 2008 the team provided technical support to the focal points for a number of these applications which included training, on the job support, advisory, application troubleshooting and special purpose maps/reports development.

### **OUTPUT 3: IMPROVED DECISION MAKING BY GOA THROUGH BETTER ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

#### Disaster Information Management System

In 2006 AIMS developed a static website in English for the Department of Disaster Preparedness (DDP), which is now called Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authorities (ANDMA). The

UNDP Comprehensive Disaster Risk Reduction project secured a new agreement with AIMS to upgrade the ANDMA website to a dynamic format, which will support all three of the primary languages in Afghanistan, (Pashto, Dari and English). This change will enable better assistance in promoting information regarding internal and external activities through the Internet.

#### Kabul Municipality Scans Maps and Official Documents

Part of the technical support AIMS has traditionally provided to the GoA include introduction of new technologies and resources. Recently a high-resolution scanner (A0 size) was provided to the Kabul Municipality to scan old maps, documents and vital records for security and permanent retention purposes. Additionally, training on scanning standards and methods was given to their employees and the municipality was assured of AIMS' full future technical support in regards to the scanner.

#### Ministry of Economy Website

The UNDP Institutional Capacity Building for Gender Equality project requested support from AIMS to upgrade the Ministry of Economy's website from static to dynamic. Following that, AIMS submitted a proposal to the Gender Equality project taking into consideration the Ministry of Economy's needs and requirements. The proposal has been accepted and implementation now awaits the signature of the contract. Under this agreement, AIMS will provide a one year free of charge hosting service, including the initial set up on AIMS' dedicated server.

#### Ministry of Education Computerization of Certificates Project

The main goal of the project is to automate the archival, retrieval and tracking of grade 10, 11, and 12 student transcripts and to develop a computerized solution enabling the automated generation of secondary certificates. 80% of the development of the system has been done and the remaining part is scheduled to be completed by the end of October 2008. The data entry template has been developed and so far up to 25,000 students have been recorded in the system. The data entry will continue till end of 2009. Aside from the Computerization of Certificates Project (CCP), another database is also being developed for the Ministry of Education under the name of "Text Book Distribution Database". This system can be used at the national, provincial, district and school level to track book distribution processes and stock availability. The system is expected to be handed over to the Ministry of Education in the last quarter of 2008.

#### Mapping Services

AIMS' GIS team developed customized maps based on requests received from GoA, UN, national and international organizations. The products are provided for the purpose of planning, decision making and increased effectiveness of humanitarian support to the government. These maps include a Chaghcharan District Topographic Map for the Catholic Relief Services (CRS), a Ghoryan District Shelters Map for the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC/ECHO), an Activity Map for the Afghanistan Rural Micro Credit Programme (ARMCP), a Sectoral Activity Maps for the Afghanistan Country Stabilization Picture (ACSP) Project, a UN Sectoral Activities Map for the PMUNA Project, a Provincial Activities Maps for the USAID - Geobase Project, Day Kundi Districts Maps, a Beacons of Economic Growth Map for Bearing Point/USAID, a UN Location Map for the UN Department of Security Services (UNDSS), a Road Distance Map for Supreme DOD (American Company), a School Map for UNICEF, a Seed Project Map for FAO, a Kabul Physical and Satellite Image Map for UN-Habitat and a UN Regional Projects Maps for UNDP Electoral.

#### Afghanistan Country Stabilization Picture Transition and Re-engineering

One of the central goals of ANDS is to enable the GoA to oversee and manage the development efforts within the country. Furthermore, the ANDS provides a unified strategy for planning, prioritization and direction of development activities nationwide. The key player in this process is the Central Monitoring and Reporting System, which handles the monitoring, evaluation and reporting of the development process on the strategic benchmarks under Afghanistan Compact.

As part of its activities to support the government in the implementation and oversight of the ANDS, the AIMS Product Development Department studied the ACSP, which was developed by ISAF, and developed a new version of the application considering objectives such as development of set of standard fields that would require all the key data providers to submit their data

accordingly, agreement on common standard to be used and adopted by all data providers, this include the list of contractors, locations, activities, sectors and web based data entry interface with mass upload capabilities. The application now provides a better general overview of collected data. The application was successfully reengineered and transferred to ANDS in September.

Information Management Services (software engineering)

The Disaster Vulnerability Profile database is a vital system to store all disaster related information and data from district to village level and then compile and generate maps and reports to enable the UN and the international community to develop programmes and projects to support the disaster affected people and communities. AIMS’ regional office in Mazar played a significant role in conducting the Disaster Vulnerability Profile database training for UN agencies, international NGO’s and government departments. The table below provides more detail:

Ministry/Department	Training Type	Province	Status	Number of Participants
UN agencies, NGOs and governmental stakeholders	Disaster Vulnerability Profile online Database	Mazar	Completed	32
UN agencies, NGOs and governmental stakeholders	Disaster Vulnerability Profile online Database	Samangan	Completed	16
UN agencies, NGOs and governmental stakeholders	Disaster Vulnerability Profile online Database	Saripul	Completed	8
UN agencies, NGOs and Governmental stakeholders	Disaster Vulnerability Profile online Database	Jawzjan	Completed	12
UN agencies, NGOs and Governmental stakeholders	Disaster Vulnerability Profile online Database	Faryab	Completed	15
UN agencies, NGOs and Governmental stakeholders	Disaster Vulnerability Profile online Database	Kundus	Completed	7
NGOs and Governmental stakeholders	Disaster Vulnerability Profile online Database	Takhar	Completed	22
NGOs and Governmental stakeholders	Disaster Vulnerability Profile online Database	Baghlan	Completed	12
Total number of participants				124

Provincial Mapping of the UN Activities (PMUNA)

A Provincial Mapping of UN Activities (PMUNA) presentation and data entry training was provided to 15 staff of UN agencies at AIMS southern regional office in Kandahar, 38 staff in Mazar, 22 staff in Jalalabad, 15 staff in Kunduz and 3 in Kabul (total 120 UN staff). As a result of this training the participants learned how to enter data into the system and how to identify sectors, as well as how to use all other interfaces used in the systems. After the training the trainees were able to capture the data and produce reports. Through this system the UN staff will be able to disseminate information on UB activities throughout the regions and Kabul.

By ensuring clean and precise data into the PMUNA system the AIMS team, in central and regional offices, are able to produce timely quarterly sector maps and share data and information. For this purpose, UN agencies have been continuously urged to introduce their focal points to the training programme and carry out the data entry at their earliest.

The final narrative report, self-evaluation report and the financial report were submitted to UNAMA on 22nd July, 2008, reporting the successful completion of the project and producing the online application. The reports were sent through UNDP.

#### **OUTPUT 4: AIMS TRANSITION TO A SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL NGO**

The AIMS NGO Board of Director has selected a Executive Director through a recruitment process and he will commence working with AIMS effective 1<sup>st</sup> November 2008. AIMS Project staff are given termination notice as of 31<sup>st</sup> October 2008 and they will be issued the NGO contract as of 1<sup>st</sup> November 2008. A Project Cooperation Agreement between UNDP and AIMS has been prepared and is ready for approval of UNDP and AIMS NGO. Under the agreement, funds will be transferred from UNDP to the NGO so that the NGO will be provided with a period of time during which it will managed all its own affairs to ensure that the output four objective of a sustainable NGO is achieved. Furthermore, UNDP is planning to extend the AIMS project period until 30 September to allow for the project to continue running until this date should additional funding be made available. USAID has given some indications that the may be willing to provide additional funding to the NGO via the abovementioned agreement by which UNDP will continue to ensure a proper transition and oversight.

The organization staffing, budget plan and intended outputs for the year 2009 have been prepared and is ready for Board review and approval.

## II. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

### UPDATED PROJECT RISKS AND ACTIONS

The AIMS Project is registered as an independent self-sustained national entity under the structure of the Ministry of Economy as a Non Governmental Organization (NGO). The risks in this regard remain the same. The organizational transition presents significant risks and operational challenges even under the best of circumstances. Without access to operating reserves or access to capital funding sources, the necessity of a comprehensive business strategy is unquestionably critical for the viability of AIMS. In order to mitigate the risks associated with exiting the UNDP system, AIMS has to hire additional experts to assist in the areas of operational management (Human Resources, Finance and administration), marketing and business re-engineering.

Since May 2008 the departure of four international staff, including the Project Manager, and three key national staff has affected the work load of existing staff. The Executive Director is selected and the recruitment of required staff under NGO has been initiated. The post of Finance/Admin Director is advertised and ready for short listing and interview.

In order to address the weaknesses presented by limited capital resources, AIMS established an initiative for resource mobilization with the goal of securing operational funding for the coming three years. The management team has developed a core capability proposal, which would cover the operational costs of AIMS for the next three to five years. The proposal is submitted to USAID for their review and discussion. To ensure its immediate funding for 2009 AIMS has requested USAID for six months immediate funding under the current USAID/UNDP grant and USAID has shown their interests and has requested AIMS to submit a brief proposal on the additional activities it intends to carry out under this extended funding period. AIMS has submitted the proposal and is following up with USAID.

### UPDATED PROJECT ISSUES AND ACTIONS

An increased demand for AIMS' services and a number of client supported projects resulted in the need for AIMS to invest additional resources in the realm of project management and organization efficiency. These resources have included additional Afghan technical staff members and a new international consultant with NGO and private sector experience in the area of business re-engineering and programme management. Following the exit from UNDP AIMS has to train its staff in new programme and operations policy, procedures and processes.

Infrastructure and physical resources issues will also contribute to the challenges facing AIMS. While the majority of the equipment is planned to be transferred from AIMS (UNDP) to AIMS (NGO) it will be losing value in one to two years. A substantial investment in rapidly depreciating fixed assets is an issue AIMS must quickly address. The emphasis on technology places a substantial fiscal burden on organizations within the information management sector. As also mentioned in the last quarterly report, AIMS will therefore need to secure the necessary capital to upgrade existing technology and establish a reasonable cycle for alternating replacement in order to meet market demands.

### III. FINANCIAL STATUS AND UTILISATION

#### FINANCIAL STATUS:

Table 1: Contribution Overview April 2004– 31 December 2008

DONOR NAME	CONTRIBUTIONS	
	Committed	Received
USAID	6,211,641	6,211,641
EC	2,577,588	2,577,588
UNOCHA	1,935	1,935
FAO	49,817	49,817
UNAMA	470,893	470,893
UNDP	1,500,000	1,500,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10,811,874</b>	<b>10,811,874</b>

#### FINANCIAL UTILIZATION:

Table 2: Quarterly Expenditure by Activity [1, January, – 30, September, 2008]

Activity	BUDGET [2008]	QUARTERLY EXPENDITURE	BALANCE	DELIVERY (%)
Activity1: Project Management	581,030	807,580	-226,550	139%
Activity13: Exit Strategy Development	1,569,688	1,216,325	353,363	77%
UNDP GMS 5%	88,632	85,576	3,056	97%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,239,350</b>	<b>2,109,481</b>	<b>129,869</b>	<b>94%</b>

Table 3: Quarterly Expenditure by Donor [1, January, – 30, September, 2008]

DONORS	ACTIVITY (as per approved budget)	2008 Budget	Q2 EXPENDITURES 01/01/08 - 30/09/08	BALANCE as of 30/09/08	DELIVERY RATE %
USAID	Activity 1: Project Management	581,972	604,731	-22,759	96%
	Activity 13: Exit Strategy Develop	1,014,353	935,636	78,717	
	GMS 5%	88,632	85,576	3,056	
<b>Subtotal USAID</b>		<b>1,684,957</b>	<b>1,625,943</b>	<b>59,014</b>	
UNDP	Activity 13: Exit Strategy Develop	200,000	116,212	83,788	58%
	GMS 0%	0	0	0	
	<b>Subtotal UNDP</b>	<b>200,000</b>	<b>116,212</b>	<b>83,788</b>	
AIMS Income	Activity 1: Project Management		202,849	-202,849	104%
	Activity 13: Exit Strategy Develop	354,393	164,477	189,916	
	GMS 0%	0	0	0	
<b>Subtotal AIMS Income</b>		<b>354,393</b>	<b>367,326</b>	<b>-12,933</b>	
<b>Total</b>		<b>2,239,350</b>	<b>2,109,481</b>	<b>129,869</b>	<b>94%</b>

**ANNEX**