



## ANNUAL PROJECT REPORT 2008

### United Nations Development Programme Afghanistan Afghanistan Information Management Services (AIMS)

01-04-2004 - 31-12-2008



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## Executive summary

Afghanistan Information Management Services (AIMS) has successfully accomplished its 2008 Annual Work Plan and in most cases exceeded expectations or achieved additional results.

AIMS central office in Kabul and its five regional offices in Jalalabad, Kandahar, Herat, Mazar and Kunduz trained over 1,804 employees of the Governmental and non-governmental organizations and humanitarian agencies in knowledge management information systems in both technical and non-technical areas including geographical information system, database management, disaster management, global positioning system, technology awareness, project management, web-designing, English language and computer literacy. An AIM has set standards and disseminates data and information to the Government, humanitarian community, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. During this calendar year, AIMS distributed 5,450 thematic maps of Afghanistan including roads, rivers, watersheds, health, counter narcotics, urban development and etc. These data, information and maps are used for the purpose of planning, resources alignment, implementation and decision making at all levels. In 2008 AIMS developed 13 information management systems.

AIMS provides services to the 23 of 25 Government ministries, 6 independent Government directorates such as Afghanistan Geodesy and Cartography Head Office (AGCHO), Central Statistics Office (CSO), Kabul University, Polytechnic University, Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG) and 5 cadastral offices in the regions. Delivery of these services, products and positive results to the Government of Afghanistan and other clients has given AIMS a strong credibility and reputation as a unique organization in producing centre of excellence in Afghanistan.

AIMS stoutly contributed to the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) to include the development of a strategic information management system within ANDS, as required for the overall ANDS Monitoring and Reporting process. AIMS also worked on a management information system in the Government line ministries, as well as conducted the initial steps of several feasibility studies.

Through building the capacity of civil servants, development of cross-cutting information management system, technology awareness and software development, AIMS to some extent has raised the level of competency of the Government employees, increased workflow efficiency, and enhanced planning capacity of key line ministries. However, AIMS' support and programmes which are highly considered as contributing to the improvement of governance, transparency, accountability and efficiency in the development of Afghanistan, need to be continued or/and expanded.

## I. Context

AIMS with over 100 capable Afghan staff and over 12 years of institutional existence provided information management services to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRA), humanitarian community, missions, private sector and NGOs. The following points provide justifications for the value of information management services, the positive impact on the Government and humanitarian assistance operating environments, and a basis for continuity and expansion of AIMS:

Information management is critically needed for the purpose of planning, implementing and monitoring the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) and Compact benchmarks. AIMS has conducted a feasibility study and assessment for ANDS central monitoring and reporting system and yet sets as the technical working group for M & E of the ANDS under the leadership of Ministry of Economy.

In accordance with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), an effective and functioning system for public administration needs to be established at the national and sub national levels, with the capacity to deliver services to areas of greatest need. AIMS' existence and services is deemed necessary to contribute to this area. Therefore, AIMS has developed various information management and M & E systems for the Government of Afghanistan and the humanitarian community.

All stakeholders, whether GIRA, donor, international organisations, or national organisations, agreed that AIMS services have been indispensable contribution during the difficult period of re-establishing the state and developing a viable public sector that provide essential services to the population.

Due to the demand for accountability, efficiency, transparency, and effective public management at all levels, the Government has realised the need to have systematically organised information to respond to the specific requirement of donors and development partners.

The information, which Government ministries and agencies must organise and manage to respond to specific and implied requirements, remains complex and transcends conventional sectorised divisions.

The nature and form of governance is changing as a result of many factors, most notably the rise of new strategies, portfolio, programmes, standards and technologies and their impact on the availability and distribution of information.

Afghanistan's information landscape reveals a fragile and inadequate information infrastructure that is unable to ensure integrity of government-held information or to support deeper levels of development.

AIMS' mission is to serve the Government of Afghanistan, the developing community, and the private sector by building effective information and knowledge management capacity and providing world-class information management services. This mission is elaborated (addressed) by the following strategic objectives:

To deliver information management capacity building service to strategic GIRA institutions, key provincial capitals, and the development community;

To create and institutionalise mission-critical software applications for GoA institutions;

To provide the best practice of standard development of information management guidelines and procedures for the GIRA to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of Government programmes and operations;

To build up AIMS' technical, managerial and leadership capacity to international standards;

To contribute to the development of an information management workforce that meets the needs of Afghanistan;

The primary beneficiary (market) of AIMS is the GIRA in the following areas:

**Afghanistan National Development Strategy:** this area includes the development of strategic information management systems (M&E) within ANDS itself as required for the overall ANDS process with an allocated effort.

**Central Ministries Offices and Agencies:** This includes the development of integrated information and knowledge management services and programme management capability for central ministries, agencies, and key Government decision-making offices.

**Provincial Capitals (sub-national):** AIMS, with its five regional offices, has positioned itself to provide support to provincial office of GIRA ministries as well as to develop information management centres to service the larger provincial Government.

**National Development Projects:** For the most part, national development projects fall under a single ministry.

## II. Performance review

AIMS has significantly contributed to the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS), UNDAF and CPAP implementation, monitoring and evaluation components through different Government ministries and institutions. This includes development of a central monitoring and reporting system for the Monitoring & Evaluation unit of the ANDS and training their employees in database and Geographic Information System (GIS). Under UNDAF and the CPAP programs, AIMS directly trained over 1,804 Government and non-government employees in information management key areas in 2008. AIMS has established resource partnerships with donors and other organisations to promote IT infrastructure within the GIRA ministries and independent organizations including Afghan Geodesy and Cartography Office and provincial cadastral offices.

Also, AIMS has promoted the adoption of information management standards and policies to improve efficiency in communication, data exchange, information utilisation and knowledge management.

## *Progress review*

### **1. Overall progress towards the CPAP outcome and output(s)**

The AIMS contribution toward the CPAP outputs “public sector capacity strengthened through the development of civil service at the central and sub-national levels, the establishment of accountability mechanisms and the enhancement of information for better service delivery” was remarkable. These services include contribution to the development of 6 software engineering systems and business re-engineering, training over 5,000 Government employees in information management and maintaining and running systems. An AIM has also developed various project tracking and information systems for the humanitarian community and donor organizations which directly or indirectly contribute to the smooth running and operation of their programs and activities in Afghanistan. The Provincial Mapping of UN Activities (PMUNA) is an example of UNDP/AIMS’ contribution towards achieving the CPAP outcome.

### **2. Capacity development**

AIMS through its capacity building programme, trained over 1,804 Government employees in English, computer literacy, database, GIS usage, data management, management information systems, technology awareness, and strategic planning development. AIMS has built capacity of Government employees on various systems including National Skills Development Programme Animal Health Development Programme (AHDP) and Department of Animal Health and Production, Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA), Department of Schedules of the Office of the President, Ministry of Women’s Affairs and Attorney General Office.

### **3. Impact on direct and indirect beneficiaries**

The Government of Afghanistan employees directly benefited from AIMS’ activities. Indirect beneficiaries include the humanitarian community, non-governmental organisations, private sector and the donor community.

## *Implementation strategy review*

AIMS leads all other organizations in Afghanistan in the area of information management and capacity building programmes, ensuring services meet high quality standards. National ownership is paramount to AIMS as it is led almost entirely by qualified nationals and requires only limited international staff. All of AIMS’ projects and services are designed and implemented in compliance with international standards and on a sustainable basis.

### **1. Participatory/consultative processes**

The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan is AIMS’ main stakeholder or partner, while AIMS conducts its services, which include capacity building and information management projects. The Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (MoCIT), USAID, AGCHO, MRRD, and CSO are AIMS’ main partners

### **2. Quality of partnerships**

AIMS’ most projects were awarded through a competitive bidding process. The quality of relationships AIMS has with partners such as the Government of Afghanistan, various UN Agencies, the humanitarian community, and civil society is well handled.

### **3. National ownership**

All AIMS services from higher policy level down to project implementation level was closely discussed and agreed with the national counterpart (Government of Afghanistan). The project was jointly implemented and resulted to the achievement of expected outcomes. The Government has regularly participated and co-chaired the project board meetings at the Minister and Deputy Minister level and continued provision of consultation on project exit strategy.

### **4. Sustainability**

AIMS, along with Government Ministries and institutions grows on the precepts of sustainable national ownership where AIMS continues its programmes as an independent entity and continues stewardship.

## *Management effectiveness review*

### **1. Quality of monitoring**

The AIMS management and UNDP Programme Officer routinely visited AIMS' central and regional offices (Herat, Kunduz, Mazar), project sites and Government counterparts. Regular project reports were produced and shared with Government and stakeholders and appropriate measures were taken to ensure delivery of quality services. During the year 2008, two project board and six AIMS-NGO Board of Advisory meetings were conducted in which work progress was continuously reviewed.

### **2. Timely delivery of outputs**

The expected outputs of the project were successfully delivered, in few cases even exceeding expectations. The project transition process was successfully done and prepared for further intended support by USAID, UNDP and other stakeholders.

### **3. Resources allocation**

An AIM has spent most of its project resources on development activities of the project and a small portion on its operations. The project directly contributed to the development activities in the country which places AIMS as one of the most efficient programmes.

### **4. Cost-effective use of inputs**

With limited inputs the Project has successfully managed to deliver its expected results. AIMS is a project where most of its expenses are its human capital, therefore it remains a cost-effective organization.

## **III. Project results summary**

The annual targets/deliverables have been successfully achieved during the year, however the future sustainability of the project will depend on donors funding and availability of fund.

### *1. Institutional Information Management Capacity Development*

Enabling Environment Programme for Government Ministries/Departments

Under the enabling environment for information management program, AIMS continued provision of English language and computer literacy programmes to 23 Government ministries and departments. A total of 990 Government and non-government employees were trained in 2008 out of which 927 were trained in basic English and computer literacy (698 male, 229 female), 16 in map reading and 47 in (40 male and 7 female) database. This programme prepares them for further technical trainings including GIS, database, project management, disaster management information system and etc.

Ministry/Department	English Languages	Computer	Map Reading	Database	Status	English & Computer
Office of Administrative Affairs (OAA)	22	54			Completed	76
Office of the President (OoP)	50	63			Completed	113
Ministry of Communication and Information Technology	183	339			Ongoing	552
Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA)	45	59			Completed	104
Ministry of Frontiers	53	0			Ongoing	53
National Security Hospital	59				Ongoing	59
Different Organizations & Ministries			16	47	Completed	63
<b>Total</b>	<b>412</b>	<b>515</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>47</b>		<b>990</b>

**Technology Awareness Workshop:** Under this programme, AIMS conducted 3 technology awareness workshops for three government entities in 2008. The attendees included 30 officials of Kabul Municipality, 33 officials of Ministry of Counter Narcotics, and 32 professors and students of the University of Education.

Advanced Database Courses:

The AIMS Certified Database Assistant programme was initially launched in 2004. However, this programme was further promoted to technician level in 2008 after selection of 32 top scored trainees. These trainees that included 29 male and 3 female employees from various Government and non-government agencies successfully completed the course and were issued with AIMS Certified Database Technician certificates. During the year 2008, a total of 250 Government and non-government employees were trained in both assistant and technician levels.

GIS User Group Meeting (GUG):

Besides various customized GIS projects, AIMS facilitated 8 GIS user group meetings in 2008. The meetings mandates were to bring professionals using Geographical Information System (GIS) together in order to share their knowledge and experience. An average of 30 to 40 representatives from different organizations attended these meetings.

GIS trainings:

The AIMS GIS team has conducted various sessions of training for GIS professionals (ArcGIS 9.x) and new GIS comer (ArcView 3.x). Over 35 government employees trained in ArcGIS 9.x, 65 in ArcView 3.x and 69 staff in GPS.

AIMS and Integrated Mountain Development organization (ICIMOD) jointly conduct 10 days mid level professional GIS training to the 25 (22 male & 3 female) government and non government

organization employees in November 2008. The training covers the characterized and focused analysis, remote sensing, GPS and web-based mapping.

GIS Labs:

The AIMS GIS department has provided on-going technical support to eleven GIS labs located in the ministries and departments as part of its continues capacity development and advisory services. AIMS GIS team has been assigned as focal points for GIS labs in the ministries and departments. These focal points visited the GIS labs at least two times a week and provided both technical and project-related services to ensure the smooth running of the labs and services to their concern departments within the ministries.

AIMS Sub-National Programmes

AIMS with its 5 regional offices in Jalalabad, Kandahar, Mazar, Kunduz, and Herat provided support to both Government and non-governmental organizations. The regional services include capacity development, assessment, GIS services, map production, and MIS advisory services. The AIMS regional team trained staff in basic English/computer, GIS, GPS and databases. The regional offices distributed over 2,233 maps of Afghanistan to government and humanitarian organisations to support the Afghanistan reconstruction and rehabilitation process.

The followings are services provided by AIMS regional offices in 2008.

**Kunduz office:** The North-Eastern regional office trained 254 Government and non-government employees in 2008. 226 of them were Government employees from Directorates of Agriculture, Rural Rehabilitation and Development, Women's Affairs and Labour and Social Affairs in English/computer, GIS, database and GPS.

**Mazar-e-Sharif office:** Mazar regional office trained 124 employees of Government, UN and NGOs on Disaster Vulnerability Profile Database in 2008. This is a vital system for storing all disaster related information and data from district to village level which after compilation generates maps and reports to enable UN and International community to spend on appropriate development programmes and projects to support the disaster affected people and communities.

In terms of the Enabling Environment Program, a total of 68 Government employees from the Directorates of Urban and Housing Development, Veterinary and Mazar Municipality were trained in Basic English and computer programs.

In a seminar on Disaster Mitigation and Response System organized on October 22-23 2008, AIMS regional office in Mazar presented the following databases:

DMIS (Disaster Management Information System)

ACSP (Afghanistan Country Stability Picture)

DVP (Disaster Vulnerability Profile)

PMUNA (Provincial Mapping of UN Activities)

**Jalalabad office:** In order to create an enabling environment for information management and GIS, Jalalabad regional office provided English Language and computer literacy programs to 96 employees of 4 Government directorates. Moreover, this office provided introductory level database training to 28 employees of the Independent Civil Service Commission, Directorates of Education, Finance, Irrigation, Energy, Counter Narcotics, Environmental Protection, Communication, Information and Culture, Women's Affairs, Labour and Social Affairs, Public Health, Nangarhar University and Afghan Red Crescent.

In 2008 this regional office disseminated 207 maps; 120 to Govt. directorates, 27 to UN agencies and 60 to national/international organizations.

**Kandahar office:** AIMS regional office in Kandahar through its capacity building programme trained 45 Government employees including Afghan Geodesy and Cartography, Central Statistic Office (CSO), Directorates of Veterinary, Education and Urban Development in basic English and

computer. This office also trained 110 Government and non-government employees in database, GPS and PMUNA (26 in primary database, 13 in GPS, 18 in PMUNA data entry).

This office distributed 303 maps of Afghanistan to Government and humanitarian organizations to support Afghanistan reconstruction and development.

**Support to Kandahar Governor's Office:** AIMS Kandahar office supported the Governor's office with planning traffic lights installation in Kandahar city. Ground data was collected, analyzed and customized maps showing all locations of lights installation in the city were developed.

**Herat Office:** Herat regional office trained 124 government employees in English Language, computer literacy, GIS, database and GPS in 2008.

UN agencies working in the Western region were invited to a presentation and practical training on PMUNA (Project Mapping of UN Activities). The PMUNA maps for the Western and Central Highland regions were completed. A total of 23 maps were produced using the retrieved data from PMUNA database in Arc GIS 9.2 environment.

Moreover, this office trained several engineers of the Urban Development and Water Supply Directorates in GIS.

## *2. Cross-Institution and National Information Management Systems*

Support to Afghanistan Spatial Data Infrastructure (ASDI):

AIMS has contributed to the development of Afghanistan Spatial Data Infrastructure (ASDI) in Afghanistan by promoting the adoption of ASDI concepts, identifying required base layers, and assisting in the creation of at least 20 percent of these required base layers. An executive briefing session for 200 Government officials, donors, and other stakeholders was organized. Through this briefing session AIMS presented the information management system and its benefits to the Government of Afghanistan. AIMS has completed over 13 technical and non-technical projects, which strongly contributed to the cross-institution and national information management capacity.

Provincial Development Committees (PDC) Feasibility Study:

In view of Afghanistan's need for effective coordination of reconstruction and development efforts at the national and provincial levels, the cabinet approved the establishment of the Provincial Development Committees (PDCs). The principal goal of these committees is to strengthen development planning, coordination, monitoring, evaluation, and decision-making at the provincial level. The Ministry of Economy (MoEc) will have the lead role in establishing and facilitating PDCs.

The feasibility study was the first phase of the PDC Profile and Assets System development cycle, and as such, the study made an initial assessment of the benefits, risks, and cost of the project, as well as it developed an estimation of the efforts required to follow up the system development. AIMS successfully completed the feasibility study of the PDC Profile and Assets system and based on that a full functioning web-based PDC Profile and Assets System was developed by AIMS and ready for next phase.

National Skills Development Programme (NSDP):

The development of a GIS-based structured database for the National Skills Development Programme (NSDP) completed late Feb 2008. The main objective of the project focused on a systematic approach to managing spatial and non-spatial information about vocational training providers in Afghanistan.

Provincial Mapping of United Nations Activities (PMUNA):

The Provincial Mapping of UN Activities Project (PMUNA) was successfully piloted in Kunduz. The main objective of the project was to establish an MIS that could be used to track and maintain information on all reconstruction and development activities funded and implemented by the UN organizations. The system is operational and all UN agencies in the capital and regions utilize it as a tool for planning, developing, implementing, monitoring, reporting and coordinating projects and programs throughout Afghanistan.

**National Solidarity Programme (NSP) Monitoring and Evaluation System:**

The National Solidarity Program (NSP) is a national priority program of the Government of Afghanistan, executed by Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), with the financial support of the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank Group, the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF), and other bilateral donors.

NSP Phase II (2007-2010) is a continuation of NSP Phase I (2003-2007) addressing key development issues such as strengthening of local governance and rural infrastructure reconstruction.

The Government of Afghanistan intends to roll out this phase of the programme to reach 90% of all rural villages and communities in Afghanistan. The NSP has mobilized so far over 20,000 communities in all 34 provinces and has disbursed over US\$ 400 million as grants to communities.

In accordance and based on recommendation from the recent Mid Term Review by the World Bank and the previous aid memoir the NSP/MIS department requested AIMS for design and development of the M&E reporting system. The system was deployed and the sign off is expected in February 2009.

**The Emergency Needs Assessment (ENA):**

AIMS' has contributed to the emergency needs assessment in the north of Afghanistan, after preparing vulnerability assessment questionnaire and considering UNAMA and the international development community urgent need for an online tool for storing the survey questionnaires and producing vulnerability reports and maps products, AIMS has developed an online database application to serve the client's needs.

**Ministry of Education, Certificate Computerization Project:**

The main goal of the project was to automate the archival, retrieval and tracking of grade 10, 11, and 12 students' transcripts and to develop a computerized solution enabling the automated generation of secondary certificates. The system developed for this purpose is web based and can be rolled out to provincial offices, and once the capacity and infrastructure is built at school level, the system can be used directly for entry and report generation from the schools. The data fed into the system is highly confidential so advanced security measures are implemented for security, confidentiality and protection of information. The data entry template has been developed and backlog data processing is started, so far up to 34,000 students have been registered into the system and the data entry will continue till end of 2009.

Beside the CCP project AIMS is also developing a **Text Books Distribution Database**. The system can be used on national, provincial, district and school level for tracking the distribution process and stock availability. The system will bring in an efficient, transparent and effective management of the stock for text book distribution unit. Considering the changes required by the MoE, the application development was delayed and a new deadline for completion of the project was set as of February 2009. This system is fully contributed by AIMS.

**Geobase Project:**

AIMS' software engineering department completed the spatially enabling phase of Geobase and successfully implemented the ArcGIS server. The spatial-enabled Geobase provides on-line mapping production for USAID and other stakeholders. This technology can be adopted for similar Government software projects.

The operational Geobase 2.0 has been maintained on a regular basis, and new functions as requested by USAID have been added leading to further system improvement. Certain trainings have also been provided to data providers that directly contribute to updating the system content.

Afghanistan Country Stabilization Picture (ACSP) Transition and Re-engineering:

The Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) aim is to enable the Government of Afghanistan to oversee and manage the development efforts within the country. Furthermore, it provides a unified strategy for the planning, prioritization and direction of development activities nationwide. In addition, the key player in this process is the ANDS M & E System, which handles the monitoring, evaluation and reporting of the development process of the strategic benchmarks and indicators under Afghanistan Compact. After studying the current ACSP application which was developed by ISAF, AIMS re-developed a new version of the application considering the following objectives:

Information Management Assessment Tool (IMCAT)

AIMS developed a methodology (Information Management Assessment Tool) to assess the Government information management capacity. AIMS has trained over 1,804 Government employees in Basic English, Computer Programming, GIS, Database, Technology Awareness, website development, GPS and other Information management related training.

Applications Maintenance & Website Development:

AIMS has developed a number of applications and websites which are currently operational in different ministries and institutions and provided technical support to a number of these applications which include trainings, mentoring, coaching, on job support, advisory, troubleshooting and special purpose maps/reports development.

The table below illustrates the support provided to various government ministries and institutions:

No	Agency/Program	System/Program	Type of support
1	National Skills Development Programme	GIS based accreditation system	Installation and training
2	Animal Health Development Program (AHDP) and Department of Animal Health and Production	M&E system	Installation, training and data import
3	Animal Health Development Program (AHDP) and Department of Animal Health and Production	Epidemiology System	Installation, training and data import
4	Animal Health Development Program (AHDP) and Department of Animal Health and Production	Dynamic website	Training and content gathering support
5	USAID	GeoBase	Training, special reports, server maintenance and application upgrade
6	Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA)	DMIS	Training and installation
7	Office of the President, department of schedules	PSM	Training, Installation
8	UNAMA	PMUNA	Trainings, special reports and advisory.
9	Ministry of Woman Affairs	Dynamic website	Training and advisory
10	Attorney General Office	Dynamic website	Training and advisory
11	Ministry of frontiers	Dynamic website	Training and advisory

**Ministry of Women's Affairs Website:** AIMS' software engineering department developed a trilingual (Dari, Pashtu, English) website for the Ministry of Woman's Affairs which was officially inaugurated by His Excellency Abdul Karim Khalili the Second -Vice President of Afghanistan.

**Attorney General Office (AGO) Website:** This was another web development project completed in 2008. In addition to this, a detailed project document was submitted for building a Management

Information System for the four departments of the AGO i.e. Salary Department, Recruitment Department and Human Resource Department.

**Upgrading ANDMA Website to Dynamic and Trilingual:** In 2006 AIMS developed a static website in English language for the Department of Disaster Preparedness (DDP).

The Government of Afghanistan has changed the name of DDP to Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authorities (ANDMA). The UNDP-CDRRP Project funded the revision of the website and secured a new agreement with AIMS to upgrade the website to a dynamic format. The overall goal of the project was to develop a dynamic website for ANDMA, which would support the three primary languages in Afghanistan, (Pashto, Dari and English). This change would better assist in promoting information sharing regarding internal and external activities through the Internet.

Other websites developed during the year 2008 are for Department of Animal Health & Production (DAH&P-WDP) and Ministry of Frontiers and Tribal Affairs (MoF-WDP)

### *3. Information Dissemination*

Through its web-site, AIMS increased the availability of the data to Government, humanitarian community and non-government sectors by 8%. AIMS has distributed over 10,000 maps to the Government of Afghanistan and other organisations for use in their planning, implementation and decision making processes. AIMS services described above are recognized as essential to the Government and non-government organisations. This has led to AIMS to be continuously funded in order to be able to continue its services to the Government and the development community.

In conclusion, AIMS has accomplished its targeted annual deliverables. However, the AIMS transition process will take a longer time than expected, in order to ensure that the process is as soon as possible. The pending transition outputs will be accomplished in 2008.

#### **Mapping Services:**

AIMS developed and disseminated over 5,450 thematic maps of Afghanistan including roads, rivers, security, agriculture, water basin, irrigation and etc. The followings are some of the achievements in 2008:

Technical support to Afghanistan Sub-Governance Programme (ASGP) in image processing and map development in five main cities of the Northern region of Afghanistan;

Conduct of requirements analysis and production of several activity maps for Afghanistan Country Stabilization Picture (ACSP); Several education facility maps Ministry of Education; Customized maps for Office of President; Education sector maps for ANDS for Paris conference; Activity maps for GTZ; Customized provincial maps for Afghanistan Reconstruction Development (ARD); 22 maps of Kabul districts for the planning department of Kabul Municipality; Activity maps for Afghanistan Rural Micro Credit Program (ARMCP); Beacons of Economic Growth Map for Bearing Point/USAID; United Nations locations maps for the security unit of the UNDSS; Customized road distance maps for Supreme DOD (American Company); Customized school maps for UNICEF; Seed Project maps for FAO; Kabul physical and satellite image map for UN-Habitat; UN regional projects maps for UNDP Electoral project.

### *4. AIMS Transition to Sustainable NGO*

Since beginning of May 2008, strong efforts were made to transition AIMS project into an independent entity. Members for the new Board of Directors (BOD), through interview process, were selected and approved by the former Advisory Board which comprised of representatives from UNDP, USAID, and two Government Ministries (MoCIT and MRRD). The NGO by-law was prepared and approved by the Board of Directors. Consequently, AIMS was formally registered as a national Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) with Ministry of Economy of the Islamic Republic

of Afghanistan on 14 June 2008. All project assets inventories, including physical and intellectual, were updated and after a proper review by UNDP were handed over to the new entity. A new Human Resource Manual and a new Finance Manual were prepared and approved by the BOD. The Executive Director was hired and began his duty on 01 November 2008. This was the period when all AIMS' staff contracts were terminated with the UNDP and were re-contracted under the new NGO. Retention of all 120 national staff members including the 3 most senior fixed term contract holders, considered to be a major achievement of AIMS as an NGO. During the transition period, the 5 year business plan was prepared and is ready for implementation. A market assessment and analysis was made for the new entity to be considered in the next 5 years. Financial constraints hit AIMS in 2008, requiring resource mobilization efforts to meet the annual shortfalls. The followings are a highlight of some of the projects (products) developed and submitted to donors in 2008 for funding.

a. Approved projects:

1. National Solidarity Programme M & E system, MRRD, funded by MRRD.
2. Financial Process Automation System, Office of President, funded by Asia Foundation.
3. Animal Health Diseases Programme, Ministry of Agriculture, EC
4. Disaster Management Information System (DMIS) for ANDMA, funded by UNDP Project CDRRP.
5. Certificate Computerization, Ministry of Education, funded by UNESCO
6. Afghanistan Country Stabilization Picture, Ministry of Economy, funded by USAID
7. Built website for Ministry of Economy, funded by UNDP Gender Equality Project
8. Emergency Response and Coordination Unit web-based system. UN-FAO
9. Emergency Needs Assessment, Northern region of Afghanistan, funded by UNAMA
10. National Rural Access Programme Assessment, MRRD, funded by MRRD.
- 11.

b. In pipe (submitted to donors for approval).

1. AIMS Core Operations Capability \$9.3 million submitted to USAID
2. Provincial Infrastructure Management Support System, overall \$22 million or 2.5 million pilot for six months, CENTCOM, USA
3. Project Management System, NABDP, MRRD
4. Provincial Assets and Profile System, Ministry of Economy
5. Regional English and Computer Literacy Training, Governmental Institutions
6. Contract Management System, World Bank

AIMS has been functioning as a National Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) since 01 November 2008. During this period, due to unexpected requests by AIMS previous office building land lord to evacuate the building, AIMS bore additional costs as a result of movement and set ups. However, we successfully managed all the challenges and shifted to a new office compound. The transition funding shortfall for the annual period was very well secured. The 6 products mentioned in the preceding paragraph indicate AIMS strong efforts and longing for its long-term sustainability. The Project Cooperation Agreement was signed between UNDP and AIMS as an NGO for 8 months (Nov. 2008 to June. 2009) which allows AIMS to channel its donor funding through UNDP.

## IV. Implementation challenges

The lower level of capacity at sub-national level puts AIMS in a challenging situation, where the project has to increase its efforts at the sub-national level more than at the national level.

### *Project Risks and Actions*

Cash flow shortages:

While AIMS is exiting UNDP as an independent entity, it will face funding shortfalls by the time it is capable of generating sufficient funds to fully support its operation. UNDP and USAID have stated their tacit commitment to ensure AIMS future funding and sustainability secured. AIMS will require short term (six to nine months) financial support. Beyond that, AIMS will be able to generate revenue through its projects and services to cover its programmes and operations. UNDP and USAID agree to initiate a Project Cooperation Agreement which enables USAID to channel funds through UNDP. AIMS will have to meet USAID contract obligation certification in six months period in 2009.

Afghanistan's security situation:

To reduce security risks, AIMS complies with all UNDP security standards. AIMS implemented improved security measures. In addition, the organisation's relationship with the neighbouring National Security Hospital at AIMS former office location was strengthened. Nevertheless, the overall security situation is outside of AIMS' control.

### *Project Issues and Actions*

**Transition from UNDP to a new structure:** AIMS was successfully registered with the Ministry of Economy as a National NGO in July 2008 and officially transitioned from UNDP into an NGO on 01 November 2008.

**Business model and managerial development:** An Executive Director was hired to identify opportunities for AIMS expansion and further development and to explore resource mobilization.

## V. Lessons Learnt and Next Steps

### *Lessons Learnt*

**Capacity building of national staff to succeed international counterparts:** The sudden and unexpected resignation of the Project Manager in April 2008 created a gap in project management; while the internal capacity of the project and in the leadership of the Deputy Project Manager this transition was recovered successfully. This experience proved the importance of having capable national colleagues on board, that can respond to challenges and encounters the emergency situations.

**Skills Development Program, a great way to increase gender balance:** AIMS, under Skills Development Programme, hires recently university graduated females and training them in the areas of Geographical Information System (GIS) database, Project Management, Institutional Relations Development, customer services, ICT, finance and administration. In the six months training course the candidates enhance their skills in technical and non-technical fields.

### *Recommendation*

AIMS with its hundred staff members (99% nationals) exited UNDP as an independent entity (Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)). The staffs are highly professional and paid respectively. AIMS's transition into an NGO was successful however; its short-term sustainability remains

unresolved. AIMS remains as an important asset to the Government of Afghanistan. Ignoring its sustainability, the country will lose lots of young professionals who in the other case may seek job opportunities outside the country. At this stage, AIMS' protection is very important. In the short term, (5-10 years) the Government will need to utilize AIMS' well experienced and highly skilled nationals for reconstruction and development purposes of the country while in the long run, (10–20 years) AIMS offering services can be exported to other countries. It is recommended that the Government of Afghanistan and the interested donors, who eagerly struggle to recover the country from crises, should ensure that AIMS' sustainability is not ignored for the next 5 to 10 years.

## VI. Financial status and utilization

### Financial status

**Table 1: Contribution overview [01 April 2008 – 31 December 2008]**

DONOR NAME	CONTRIBUTIONS		CONTRIBUTION BALANCE
	Committed	Received	
USAID	6,211,641	6,211,641	
UNDP	2,283,550	2,283,550	
Project Genderated Funds	3,100,233	3,100,233	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11,595,424</b>	<b>11,595,424</b>	<b>-</b>

**Table 2: Funding status (as of the end of the 2008)**

Financial Status

DONOR NAME	RECEIVED*	EXPENDITURES			PROJECT BALANCE	EARMARKED**	AVAILABLE FUNDING (as of 1 Jan of the next year)	REMARKS
		Period Prior to the Reporting Year	Reporting Year Only	TOTAL				
USAID	6,211,641	3,939,057	2,272,584.43	6,211,641	-	-	-	
UNDP	2,283,550	2,083,550	200,000	2,283,550	-	-	-	
Project Generated Funds	3,100,233	3,899,570	418,833	4,318,403	1,218,170	-	-	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>9,922,177</b>	<b>2,891,418</b>			<b>-</b>		

## Financial utilization

**Table 3: Annual expenditure by activity [1 January 2008 – 31 December 2008]**

ACTIVITY	BUDGET 2008	EXPENDITURE (01 JAN - 31 DEC) 2008	BALANCE	DELIVERY RATE
ACTIVITY 1 - Project Management Cost	940,857.41	1,111,170.41	(170,313.00)	118.1%
ACTIVITY 10 -		165.79-	165.79	0.0%
ACTIVITY13 - Exit Strategy Development	1,885,287.00	1,654,972.91	230,314.09	87.8%
ACTIVITY3 - Government Services	8,033.20	10,500.20	(2,467.00)	130.7%
ACTIVITY 5 -		1,310.93	(1,310.93)	0.0%
<b>GMS - 5%</b>	<b>113,560.23</b>	<b>113,629.22</b>	<b>(69.00)</b>	<b>100.1%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2,947,737.84</b>	<b>2,891,417.89</b>	<b>56,319.95</b>	<b>98.1%</b>

**Table 4: Annual expenditure by donor [1 January 2008 – 31 December 2008]**

DONOR	ACTIVITY	BUDGET 2008	EXPENDITURE (01 JAN - 31 DEC) 2008	BALANCE	DELIVERY RATE	REMARKS
<b>USAID</b>	ACTIVITY1 - Project Management Cost	840,473.51	840,473.51	-	<b>100.1%</b>	
	ACTIVITY13 - Exit Strategy Development	1,317,170.76	1,317,170.76	-		
	ACTIVITY5		1,310.93	(1,310.93)		
<b>GMS - 5%</b>		<b>113,560.23</b>	<b>113,629.22</b>	<b>(69.00)</b>		
<b>Sub total - USAID</b>		<b>2,271,204.50</b>	<b>2,272,584.43</b>	<b>(1,379.93)</b>		
<b>UNDP</b>	ACTIVITY1 - Project Management Cost	52,383.90	52,383.90	-	<b>100.0%</b>	
	ACTIVITY13 - Exit Strategy Development	139,582.90	139,582.90	-		
	ACTIVITY3 - Government Services	8,033.20	8,033.20	-		
<b>Sub total - UNDP</b>		<b>200,000.00</b>	<b>200,000.00</b>	<b>-</b>		
<b>Project Generated Funds (FAO,EU,UNAMA)</b>	ACTIVITY1 - Project Management Cost	48,000.00	218,313.00	(170,313.00)	<b>87.9%</b>	
	ACTIVITY13 - Exit Strategy Development	428,533.34	198,219.25	230,314.09		
	ACTIVITY 10		(165.79)	165.79		
	ACTIVITY3 - Government Services		2,467.00	(2,467.00)		
<b>Project Generated Fund</b>		<b>476,533.34</b>	<b>418,833.46</b>	<b>57,699.88</b>		
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>2,947,737.84</b>	<b>2,891,417.89</b>	<b>56,319.95</b>	<b>98.1%</b>	

**Annexes**

**Multi-Annual Work Plan (or RRF)**