



QUARTERLY PROJECT REPORT [Third QUARTER, 2007]

United Nations Development Programme

Afghanistan

Afghanistan Information Management Services (AIMS)

1 July 2007 – 30 September 2007



Certificate Distribution Ceremony , Assistant Database Course for Kabul University and Kabul Education University employees, 15 September 2007

<p>Project ID: 00037482 Duration: April 2004 - December 2007 Component (MYFF): Public administration reform and anti corruption Total Budget: US\$ 10.1 million Unfunded: USD 900,000</p>
--

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS.....	3
II. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES.....	6
Updated Project Risks and Actions:.....	6
Updated Project Issues and Actions:.....	6
III. FINANCIAL STATUS AND UTILISATION	7
Financial Status.....	7
Financial Utilisation.....	7
IV. AIMS 2007 ANNUAL WORK PLAN..... (EXTERNAL ANNEX)	

I. IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

Output 1: AIMS becomes sustainable and information management capacity of the Government of Afghanistan and humanitarian community is increased.

Annual Target / Deliverables: AIMS become an independent sustainable information management service organization.

In view of AIMS's objective of becoming an independent, sustainable entity by the end of 2007, the project hired two International Technical Advisors in the areas of Legal Transition and Business Development/Market Analysis. During the reporting period, the Legal Transition advisor looked at various models of transition for AIMS such as private sector, government owned business and NGOs. The advantages and disadvantages of these models have been discussed with the government, development partners and other stakeholders. The NGO model is being seriously considered. The Business development advisor has been developing a strategic action plan for AIMS to pursue over the next five years. It is expected that the plan will be delivered early in the fourth quarter of 2007.

In addition to the above, AIMS worked during the reporting period to mobilize resources to cover financing for the calendar year of 2008. USAID has expressed an interest. AIMS must therefore mobilize an additional \$1 million to meet its costs for the full year. Toward that end, the project has been working to secure funds for operating costs through the income produced from project completion.

As specified in the AIMS 2007 Annual Work Plan, the project has also endeavored during the reporting period to systematize its array of marketable products and services, which will enable a smoother transition to financial independence and sustainability. A number of specific activities have been conducted toward that end. For example, since the customer services department is integral to business development and marketing processes it was supplied with new staff and strategic guidance from the project's business development advisor. The department has been credited with increasing maps sales to government institutions like the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development and development organizations like the US Agency for International Development.

AIMS also placed considerable emphasis on the development of its institutional relations department (IRD) during the reporting period. Since the majority of the project's information management contracts are associated with government and non-profit organizations, the greater investment of resources in the IRD will enable AIMS to more effectively transition to financial independence. For example AIMS has begun the assessment of the Provincial Development Committee (PDC) for the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) on development, installation, and training for profile and assessment system projects. IRD organized contract engagement and coordinated a feasibility study and applications development.

While the focus in the last quarter was on AIMS transition plan, a number of other activities were undertaken as outlined below. During the reporting period, AIMS made progress in the following areas toward increasing the information management capacity of the Government of Afghanistan and the humanitarian community.

Management Information Services (software engineering):

Geobase

AIMS software engineering staff completed the first phase of spatially enabling Geobase via implementation of ArcGIS server in July. The spatially-enabled Geobase will provide on-line Mapping production for USAID stakeholders. This technology can be adopted for similar government software projects.

Geobase 2.0, which is currently operational and being used by implementing partners, has been maintained on a regular basis, and new functions have been added during the reporting period to further improve the system. For example, training was given to data providers to ensure the system is up-to-date.

Needs Assessment for Office of the President

The two-week Management Information System (MIS) needs assessment for the scheduling department of the President's office was conducted. A detailed requirement report was created to enable the development of an appropriate MIS system. An assessment and recommendation report was produced following several software application needs assessments for the different government and non-government agencies including Afghanistan Investment Support Agency (AISA). AIMS also submitted a project proposal to UNDP for the development of the AISA management information system.

Provincial Development Committees' Profile and Assets System

In view of Afghanistan's need for effective coordination of reconstruction and development efforts at the national and provincial levels, the cabinet in November 2005 approved the establishment of the PDCs. During the reporting period, AIMS conducted a feasibility study, which constitutes the first phase of the PDC Profile and Assets System development cycle, and as such, the study will make an initial assessment of the benefit, risk, and cost of the project, as well as develop a good estimation of the efforts required to follow up the system development. Once the results of the study are approved, the second phase, development of a fully functioning web-based PDC Profile and Assets System, will be launched.

Certificate Computerization for the Ministry of Education

AIMS has submitted a project proposal to the Ministry of Education (MoE) for setting up the certificate computerization system within MoE and improving the application management and text books within the ministry by introducing software applications. The project will be funded by UNESCO with a 50% contribution to the AIMS Project. The expected starting date of the project will be November 2007. The computerized certificate system will automate the process of preparing and distributing 12th grade certificates which is currently a time-intensive activity for the higher education department of the Ministry of Education.

ICT and Information Management Capacity Assessment for UNDP assisted Afghanistan Sub-national Governance Programme

The AIMS regional team, as requested by Afghanistan Sub-national Governance Programme, conducted an assessment of the ICT infrastructure and information management capacity in the Balkh and Faryab provinces. A recommendation report was developed, and TORs are under preparation for the development of required information management systems for the Balkh province.

Provincial Mapping of United Nations Activities

The Provincial Mapping of UN Activities Project (PMUNA) was successfully piloted in Kunduz in August after development of the project tracking software was completed by AIMS. The next stage of the project will start in mid-October 2007.

GIS Services:

The AIMS GIS department develops customized maps based upon requests received from the government, UN, national, and international agencies. The GIS-based maps serve to increase the capacity of these organizations to deliver development and information to the people of Afghanistan.

In the Third quarter of 2007, the GIS department was involved in several customized mapping projects, including the following:

- Geobase project maps
- CARE activities maps
- Swedish Afghanistan Committee Maps
- US Agency for International Development/Office Foreign Disaster Assistance City Maps
- United Nations Development Programme Security Maps
- United Nations Office for Project Services Location Maps
- Ministry of Education Provincial Maps

In addition to the customized map projects, the AIMS GIS department updated the Kabul city base layers in August. Accordingly, a new administrative boundaries map is being prepared with larger fonts to enable older people to better read the maps along with updated annotation to the Afghanistan physical map. The new map is scheduled to be completed during the fourth quarter of 2007.

Furthermore, the AIMS GIS department has provided on-going technical support to eleven GIS labs in the ministries and departments as part of its advisory services to the GoA. Members of the GIS team have been assigned as focal points for GIS labs in the ministries and departments. These focal points visited the GIS labs and provided both technical and project-related advisory services to the GoA staff.

Enabling Environment Programme for Government Ministries/Departments:

AIMS is the leading organization in building information management capacity in the government of Afghanistan. In order to create an enabling environment for information management and GIS, IRD has started an English Language and Computer Literacy programme for the following ministries and departments:

Table 1: AIMS Enabling Environment Programme statistics

Ministry/Department	English Languages	Computer	Status	English/Computer
Office of Administrative Affairs (OAA)	200	50	Ongoing	250
Office of the President (OOP)	135	61	Ongoing	196
Ministry of Agriculture (Animal Husbandry Dept)	21	21	Ongoing	42
Ministry of Communication and Information Technology	150	120	Ongoing	270
Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA)	27	17	Ongoing	44
National Security	82	0	Completed	82
Ministry of Transport (Civil Aviation Authority)	80	0	Completed	80
Total	695	269		964

Technology Awareness Workshop

AIMS has conducted three Technology Awareness Workshops (TAW) for government officials at the Ministry of Economics, the Ministry of Justice and the Supreme Court, contributing toward the project's objective of enhancing the government's information management capacity. The Technology Awareness Workshop is a lecture, presentation, and orientation series with demonstrations of GIS/GPS, Management Information System (Database), Remote Sensing technology, the Internet, and ICT systems used in AIMS. The objectives of the TAW is to enable high officials in the government of Afghanistan to acquire a basic understanding of Geographic Information System and Global Positioning System technology, to raise awareness of the utility of GIS, GPS, and Remote Sensing technology for planning and monitoring activities, to introduce the MIS (Database), and promote awareness of its use in the decision making processes.

II. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

UPDATED PROJECT RISKS AND ACTIONS:

Risk 1: Potential for project delays if donors or Government reject recommendations of transition assessment

As AIMS is transitioning from the UNDP structure to financial independence, a transition assessment is currently being carried out the recommendations of which will be delivered early in the fourth quarter of 2007. However, it is possible that one or more of the AIMS project stakeholders will reject the recommendations put forth in the assessment, which could lead to long project delays and jeopardize the overall financial viability of the project during its transition phase. To mitigate this risk, AIMS has attempted to ensure that all of the stakeholders are properly consulted in relation to the assessment by including comprehensive stakeholder consultation procedures as part of the assessment team's Terms of Reference.

UPDATED PROJECT ISSUES AND ACTIONS:

Issue 1: Staff retention during project transition

AIMS is currently facing staffing issues in the context of its transition from UN support to independent status, since many of the project's employees would enjoy the prestige of working with the UN and would like to continue to do so. To address this issue, AIMS management has started working on staff retention strategies during the reporting period. An internship programme was initiated and nearly 30 interns have already been added to the staff.

III. FINANCIAL STATUS AND UTILISATION

FINANCIAL STATUS:

Table 1: Contribution Overview April 2004– 31 December 2007

DONOR NAME	CONTRIBUTIONS		CONTRIBUTION BALANCE
	Committed	Received	
USAID	4,840,437	3,940,437	900,000
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	-
TOTAL	9,440,670	8,540,670	900,000

FINANCIAL UTILIZATION:

Table 2: Quarterly Expenditure by Activity 1 January – 30 September 2007

Activity	BUDGET [2007]	Q1	Q2	Q3	BALANCE	DELIVERY (%)
Activity1 Project Management	922,127	246,862	595,395	875,044	-317	100%
Activity13 Exit Strategy Development	1,177,124	0	349,270	727,298	449,826	62%
UNDP GMS 5%	84,211	1,105	32,422	64,109	20,102	76%
Total	2,183,762			1,666,451	517,311	76%

Table 3: Quarterly Expenditure by Donor 01 January 2007 – 30 September 2007

DONORS	ACTIVITY (as per approved budget)	2007 Budget	Q1-Q3 EXPENDITURE 01/07/07 - 30/09/07	BALANCE as of 30/09/07	DELIVERY RATE %
USAID	Activity 1: Project Management	422,877	490,765	-67,888	37%
	Activity 13: Exit Strategy Development	1,177,124	727,298	449,826	
	GMS 5%	84,211	64,109	20,102	
Subtotal USAID		1,684,212	1,282,172	402,040	
UNDP	Activity 1: Project Management	499,550	384,279	115,271	77%
	Subtotal UNDP	499,550	384,279	115,271	
Total		2,183,762	1,666,451	517,311	76%