



UNDP Afghanistan Annual Report

2006

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the UN's global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. We are on the ground in 166 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. As they develop local capacity, they draw on the people of UNDP and our wide range of partners.

UNDP has been in Afghanistan for over 50 years and continued to operate from Islamabad during the Taliban régime. UNDP re-established its offices in Kabul in early 2002. UNDP supports the people of Afghanistan as they face new challenges and move their country from recovery to development toward the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

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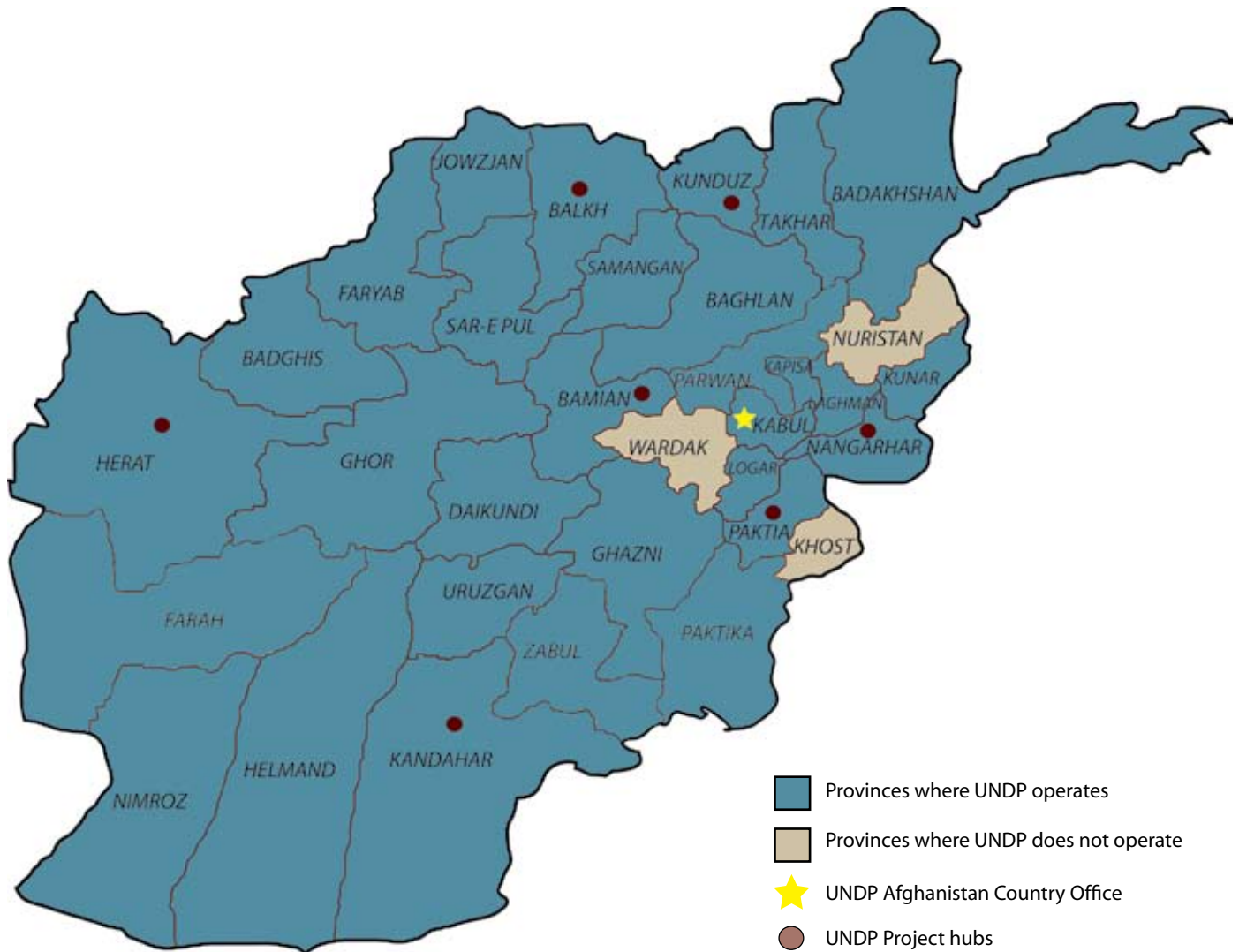
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The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.



UNDP operations in Afghanistan in 2006

Afghanistan's New Beginnings Programme:

Balkh, Bamyan, Herat, Kabul, Kandahar, Kunduz, Nangarhar, Paktia (sub-offices)

National Area Based Development Programme:

All Provinces except Badghis, Farah, Khost, Kunar, Logar, Nangarhar, Nuristan

Urban Development Group/Regional Initiative for Sustainable Economy:

Balkh, Kabul, Kandahar, Nangarhar

Afghanistan Information Management Services:

Balkh, Kabul, Herat, Kandahar, Kunduz, Nangarhar

Green Afghanistan Initiative:

Balkh, Jowzjan, Samangan, Sar-e Pul

Afghanistan Sub-national Governance Programme:

Balkh (2007)

Private Sector:

Parwan

LOTFA: Activities cover all 34 provinces through the Ministry of Interior

2006 was an exciting year for the development agenda in Afghanistan with the signature of the Afghanistan Compact on 31 January, which reaffirmed the commitment of the Government and the international community to realize a shared vision for reaching the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).



While major political benchmarks have been reached under the Bonn process, Afghanistan faces many hurdles to attain the high level development benchmarks set in the Afghanistan Compact and the Interim Afghanistan National Development Strategy (I-ANDS). Recent years have seen significant increase in the volume of resources and rapid progress in the area of institution-building and democracy. The Government made considerable progress in its capacity to manage its own development. However the population access to basic public services is compounded by the lack of capacity across ministries to plan and deliver. Despite a marked economic growth, livelihoods opportunities and choices for Afghan men and women are limited.

2006 was a transition year for UNDP. It was the first year of implementation of our new Country Programme, which covers the period 2006-2008. Our programme shifted from the imperative of delivery of large scale operations (disarmament, elections) to more institutionally complex projects such as sub-national governance, anti-corruption or pro-poor policy making.

UNDP's assistance also transitioned to long-term capacity development. Building on the success of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, UNDP supported institution-building in order to ensure financial autonomy and national ownership. We saw major achievements in this regard with the Parliament, the Independent Election Commission, the Ministry of Finance's budget department and the Civil Service Commission.

Concurrently, UNDP-administered Trust Funds allowed donors to channel funding through the Government's treasury, enabling the Government to take greater responsibility for the allocation and use of those resources, as it is tasked for accounting, monitoring and reporting for its expenditures.

As more efforts are needed to demonstrate the impact of international assistance on local populations, UNDP expanded its interventions at sub-national level with the view to improve service delivery, scale up the impact on poverty reduction and enhance the Government/citizens interface. Our work with Provincial Councils, District Development Assemblies, Provincial Development Councils, and the start of a dialogue with Governors' offices and municipalities translate this commitment. A major endeavour was also to strengthen synergies between our livelihoods and governance interventions at the sub-national level.

Noticeable progress were made in the preparation of national policies, plans and strategies more grounded on realities under the leadership of the ANDS Secretariat while significant infrastructure projects in the fields of rural and urban development improved the conditions of the poor.

In 2006, UNDP mobilized USD 229 million in support of the people of Afghanistan, an important affirmation of the confidence partners have in UNDP's role and performance. Partnerships with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), United States, Japan, DFID and CIDA, only to name a few, have been critical in achieving the level of results described in this report.

Our assistance to the people of Afghanistan was sustained despite operating in a challenging environment. In view of the limited absorption capacity of the State and the lack of an enabling environment, UNDP directly implements

Afghanistan at a Glance:

Population (2006 estimates): 26,600,000

Population under the Age of 25: 68%

Economic Growth: 8%

Per Capita Income: USD 335

Foreign Direct Investment: 2.5% of GDP

Inflation: 8.9%

Opium contributes to approximately 32% of GDP.

Life Expectancy at Birth: 45 (45 years women, 44 years men)

Maternal Mortality: 820 per 100,000 live births

Child Mortality: 220 per 1000 live births

Pre-school Age Child Chronic Malnutrition: 54%

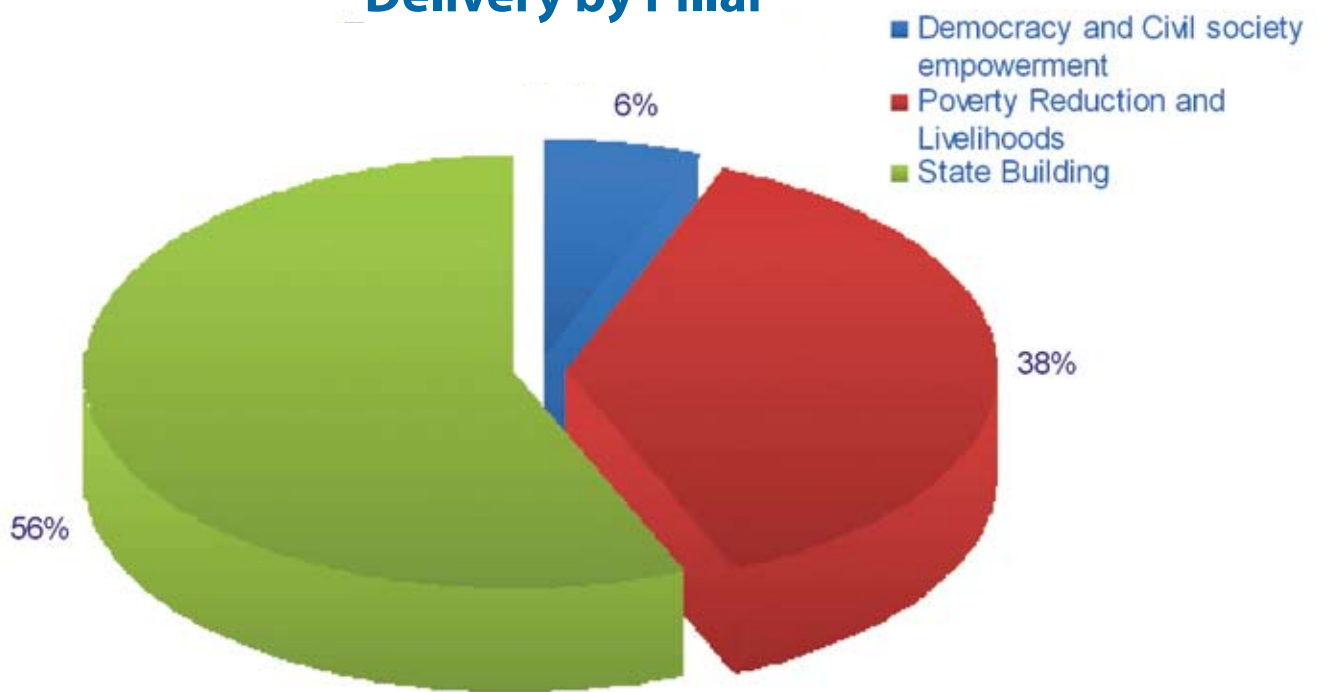
Adult Literacy Rate: 28.7% (male: 43.2%, female: 14.1%)

Access to Safe Water: 23% (43% urban, 18% rural areas)

Health indicators for women are among the worst in the world.

(Sources: UNICEF Best Estimates 2005; IMF Country Report 2006; UNODC Survey 2006; UNFPA.)

Delivery by Pillar



Community shura meeting in Herat Province.



Rural road rehabilitation project in Kabul Province.



Ex-combatant families in Kunduz Province.



most of its country programme. While the security situation steadily deteriorated and the procurement and recruitment processes continued to pose challenges, UNDP delivered USD 200 million of assistance in 2006 (95% of our target).

Progress in 2006 towards realizing the vision of the Afghanistan Compact has not been as rapid as had been hoped. Uneven efforts to improve governance and establish the rule of law, an upsurge in illegal drug production and trafficking, widespread insecurity in the south and southeast of the country and continued impunity for commanders of illegal armed groups have eroded the confidence of the Afghan population in its new State institutions.

This report highlights our results and also identifies a number of key areas where UNDP will strengthen its support in 2007 such as sub-national governance, transparency and accountability, energy and rural development and a more coordinated approach to capacity development in the public sector.

UNDP remains committed to partner with the people of Afghanistan to design better policies for poverty reduction, to build stronger State institutions and to mobilize additional resources advancing the human development agenda. We want to continue to play our role in helping build national capacities for sustainable development and advocate for the policy and institutional change needed to fight poverty and achieve the MDGs.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anita Nirody". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Anita" and the last name "Nirody" clearly distinguishable.

Anita Nirody
Country Director

Statebuilding & Government Support



District development planning during a District Development Assembly meeting in Kandahar.

Infra/structure
علی بن
دیم کرپ
سپورده
موقوفات و زمین
حق اوسدیل
موقوفات
کاروانسرا
بازار (بازار کبیر)
زوکاخانه
موقوفات

Greater Government Capacity

Senior public servants have been equipped with tools and skills that enable them to implement changes to increase effectiveness and efficiency in their work place.

The legitimacy of State institutions greatly depends on their capacity to deliver public services to the population. The establishment of effective systems of public administration is therefore a priority for the Government of Afghanistan. Transition presents a unique opportunity for change and reform, in particular in the public service.

Building on a comprehensive review of the current capacity within the Ministries conducted in partnership with the Civil Service Commission, 224 civil servants in top management positions were trained and coached. This directly benefited Deputy Ministers, Governors, and Directors from 24 Ministries and 2 presidential commissions, with funding from the Governments of Australia, Norway, Germany and Switzerland. As a result, top managers were provided with management tools - such as personal development

“Before, we had plans and programmes which were not specific and modern, but now we use new techniques in the designing and implementation steps that we learned from [UNDP] training courses.”

--Mr. Mohammad Yasin Rahmati, President of Post, Ministry of Communications and Information Technology

and budgetary plans - that they are now using with the support of five national coaches. These tools enable them to implement changes to increase effectiveness and efficiency in their work place. Coaching is a relatively new concept in Afghanistan and the five national coaches were greatly welcomed in the Ministries.

The first civil service training manual was produced both in English and Dari, making training material more accessible for all Afghan civil servants and all training sessions were conducted in Dari.

Anahita Pana, a participant in the UNDP Internship programme.



Through the Internship programme, 120 highly qualified university graduates (60 men and 60 women) were given the opportunity to gain practical experience in government work. Many of the interns were then recruited to work for the Civil Service, ensuring that their new capacity was used to benefit the country.

After graduating from Kabul University, Anahita Pana was interested in the Internship programme because it offered a combination of management training, computer skills and English training. “During the internship, we studied IT and managerial skills in the morning, and in the afternoon, we received practical experience.” One of her tasks was visiting the Ministries and collecting information for the Civil Service Leadership Development project from the Ministers.

“It was a good programme for me because I didn’t have any exposure to management and administration,” she said. “I got a very valuable experience through UNDP.”

Anahita now works for the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission.

“My plans are very big. I want to improve myself and my work ... I want to serve my country.”

--Anahita Pana, HR Department, Civil Service Commission



A CISCO networking academy student at Kabul University receives computer training.



Discussion during a District Development Assembly meeting, Sang Takht District.



A GIS technician works on a map at the AIMS' office.

The Internship programme gave 120 highly qualified university graduates the opportunity to gain practical experience with the Government and facilitated their recruitment in the civil service.

Concurrently, the Capacity for Afghan Public Service project established a pool of coaches and mentors to provide, upon request, the cross-cutting skills needed by Ministries in human resource management, procurement,

“We have worked...to institutionalize effective, transparent, and competent administration.”

—H.E. Saeed Hussain Anwary, Governor of Herat

planning and budgeting. This initiative builds on similar experiences in Kosovo and Timor that promote a new approach to capacity development through coaching and mentoring. The Government of India was the first to contribute a number of coaches for the Ministries through this initiative.

The rationalization of office structures, the re-design of work processes and the upgrade of IT facilities helped the Office of the President to perform basic functions and facilitate decision making. This initiative was supported by USAID and DFID.

Since 2001, Afghanistan has received a large outpouring of international aid. Managing this assistance has proven to be a serious challenge for the Government. Through Making Budgets Work, funded by GTZ and CIDA, timely and efficient preparation of budgets was achieved and further integration of the operating and development

budgets was promoted through two pilot budgeting exercises in the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD). The Ministry of Finance completed the Fiscal Strategy and Budget Framework report for 2007–2008, produced the Budget Execution reports by Ministries and projects on a weekly, monthly and quarterly basis as well as the National Budget Performance report of 2005-2006. Provincial budgeting pilots were introduced in the provinces of Balkh, Panjshir and Kandahar to determine the role of provincial stakeholders in the budgeting process. The analytical capacity of the aid coordination unit at the Ministry of Finance was strengthened and Afghanistan was the first country to submit its report on monitoring the Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 2006.

National efforts to implement an efficient counter narcotics strategy are compounded by the lack of capacity across Government to plan and implement projects. To help the Ministries, training and coaching were provided to facilitate a better understanding of the funding mechanism available to implement the counter narcotics strategy and relevant administrative and financial procedures.

It is at the provincial and district levels that the Government's ability to deliver services to the local population is the weakest. UNDP engaged in an in-depth review of needs during provincial and district level meetings with district and provincial governors. UNDP took a lead role in fostering dialogue between the Government and donors around local governance. As a result, the

Afghanistan Sub-national Governance Programme will address the critical challenge of strengthening local government through a partnership between the Ministry

of Interior, the Civil Service Commission and the Office of Administrative Affairs, with the support of the Government of Norway.

Transparency & Accountability

Government outreach to its constituencies has improved and progress has been made in communication and information management.

A critical way to connect Government to people is through improved communication and information sharing. Working with the Office of the President's spokesperson, the establishment of 10 regional information hubs has increased the reach of the Government's message to almost all provinces, with support from the International Organization for Migration (IOM), USAID and DFID. This significantly improved the ability of the Office of the President to monitor information from the provincial level and to make more informed choices.

Ministries and Government institutions benefited from the mapping and data management services as well as the training provided by the Afghanistan Information Management Services project (AIMS), funded by USAID and the European Commission (EC). Five AIMS regional offices were established in Jalalabad, Kunduz, Mazar, Herat and Kandahar and expanded information management services and training to the provincial government. A

DG Mustafa Mastoor



“UNDP is able to ensure transparency at all levels: with accounts, the hiring process and in procurement.”

—Mustafa Mastoor, Director General, Budget Department, MOF

National Information and Communication Technology Council was set up at the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology. Additionally, the “.af” project, which was a major push to get Afghanistan online, was turned over to the Ministry.

The high level of corruption in Afghanistan has multiple adverse effects. It undermines the public confidence in the Government and casts doubt on the effective use of donor funds. The threat posed by corruption is recognized by the Government and steps have been taken to address the issue. UNDP, in close consultation with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank - with the support of Italy - has prepared a technical assistance programme to conduct the needed diagnostics and surveys to lay the foundation for institutional, legislative and policy frameworks for combating corruption in Afghanistan. A survey on the perception of corruption by Afghans was conducted with the support of Integrity Watch Afghanistan (IWA).

Key to this approach is the gradual development of a culture of non-tolerance for corruption in the public and private sector by raising awareness and educating the

Making Budgets Work

2006 marked the third year of cooperation between UNDP and the Ministry of Finance on the national budget process. The Making Budgets Work project seeks to help the Government prioritize funding allocation, in line with the sectoral plans of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS).

One of the major challenges has been the coordination of international aid coming into the country. In 2006, the Ministry of Finance (MoF) was able to create a standard budget calendar, which rationalizes allocation of funding and enables the Ministry to plan for ANDS spending. Director General Mustafa Mastoor underlines the coordination of the operating and development budgets as a major achievement in 2006. He also notes that work is increasingly performed by national advisors with less dependency on international expertise.

Another critical success was the introduction of a provincial budgeting pilot exercise in the provinces of Balkh, Panjshir and Kandahar to determine the role of provincial stakeholders in the budgeting process.

public at large, as well as the civil service. UNDP's efforts to improve communication and information management paid off in this area as well: improved access to information

has increased the capacity of public institutions to monitor and report resource use; local corruption scandals were highlighted as a result.

Strengthening National Strategies to Achieve the MDGs

The national policy planning and budgeting process is more inclusive and more grounded on realities.

To achieve the Millennium Development Goals in Afghanistan by the extended 2020 timeline, the Goals must be translated into national development policies and incorporated into key economic development decisions.

“Afghan Government strategic leadership is key to effective poverty reduction. The I-ANDS was a great starting point.”

—Department for International Development, Afghanistan

The refinement of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) 2005-2010 was a major endeavour in 2006. The preparation of the ANDS involves a set of ministry-based sector strategies that are costed and can qualify for a Poverty Reduction Strategy

Paper (PRSP). Through active participation in the sectoral working groups, UNDP advocated for the sectoral strategies to be pro-poor and respond to human development concerns. UNDP, DFID and CIDA provided strategic support to the Government by assisting in establishing the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB) to track progress made towards the MDGs and the ANDS benchmarks. The JCMB produced two progress reports in 2006 that are used as reference documents by development partners.

The national policy planning and budgeting exercise must be grounded on realities. Twelve Provincial Development Councils benefited from training on pro-poor policy-making. Additionally, the National Area Based Development Programme established 138 District Assemblies and piloted a provincial budgeting exercise in 3 districts. All of this has significantly improved development planning and fed into the ANDS.

Below: H.E Ishaq Nadiri



ANDS: The Plan to Fight Poverty

In January 2006, the Government of Afghanistan presented the Interim Afghanistan National Development Strategy (I-ANDS) to the London conference. UNDP, UNAMA, DFID and CIDA engaged in a strategic partnership with the Government to translate the I-ANDS benchmarks into sectoral strategies that are grounded on local realities. National ownership and leadership are critical to coordinate the policy making process and ensure that it is done through a participative process involving civil society and stakeholders at central and sub-national level. The ANDS acts as a cornerstone for all assistance coming into Afghanistan.

The preparatory assistance phase, which began in 2006, was largely a foundation-building process, with UNDP playing a role of facilitator and supporting the set up of the Secretariat and the establishment of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board to track progress towards the ANDS benchmarks and the MDGs. The ANDS formulation will continue in 2007 with the support of UNDP and other development partners.

“We have an Interim Afghanistan National Development Strategy that needs to be costed and translated into implementation strategies. UNDP is there to share with us lessons learned from other countries to prepare sectoral strategies that respond to human development concerns. UNDP also provides a flexible mechanism for resource mobilization and donor coordination.”

—H.E. Ishaq Nadiri, Senior Economic Advisor to the President

Afghanistan's Centre for Policy and Human Development : Broadening National Discourse

The opening of the Afghanistan's first ever policy research institution at Kabul University is meant to have a profound impact on the country's top academic institution. The Centre for Policy and Human Development (CPHD) is a joint UNDP and Kabul University initiative, established to promote the concepts of human development among Afghan academics, decision makers and the wider population.

The mandate of the Centre is to introduce modern policy research within the university and serve as a bridge between academic and policy communities.

"The country needs a development vision based on the long-term needs and aspirations of the Afghan people. Such a vision can be derived through participatory approaches, once information is made available, data gathered and analyzed. Then options can be debated in public", emphasized UNDP at the inauguration.

One of the central tasks of the Centre will be the production of Afghanistan's National Human Development Report (NHDR). This powerful advocacy tool will enable Afghans in the institutionalization of a high quality and research-oriented approach to human development concepts.

The first Afghanistan report, on the theme of human security, was published in 2004, and received an award for its outstanding contribution to the development community. The Centre engaged in the preparation of the second report focusing on rule of law and justice in Afghanistan.

The Centre will also operate an international exchange programme for Kabul University researchers, lecturers, and students. Additionally, it will invite prominent international scholars to share their intellectual and scientific explorations with Afghans through seminars, presentations and other events.

The Centre is housed at Kabul University.

“I hope the Centre for Policy and Human Development and Kabul University will work hard to root the human development concept deeply in our academic life.”

--H.E. Mr. Stanizai, Vice Chancellor of Kabul University



The Vice Chancellor, Mr. Stanizai, opens the Centre for Policy and Human Development at Kabul University.

The process of building consensus around the strategy is critical for its nationwide success and ownership. Awareness and consultation campaigns on the ANDS and the MDGs were conducted in 8 provinces and specifically targeted civil society organizations in 2 provinces. As a result non-state actors were able to dialogue more effectively with the central Government.

Efficient data collection and analysis systems need to be accessible to policy makers. A central monitoring and reporting system was established at the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) to capture rural poverty dynamics for effective programme targeting. In this respect, a MRRD strategic plan that defines the focus and thrust of rural development efforts as being pro-poor and nationally-led was prepared.

Security Sector Reform

The Government is empowered and equipped to accelerate police reform as well as to tackle the issue of illegal armed groups and the high prevalence of small arms and ammunition.

ammunitions, drug trafficking and continued impunity for illegal armed groups. Insecurity is disrupting rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts and is eroding public confidence in the elected Government.

The considerable achievements made since 2002 in economic growth and democratization are threatened by widespread insecurity in the south and east of the country, the prevalence of small arms and

A well paid and well trained national police force that is loyal to the Ministry of Interior and widely visible to the public will create a sense of comfort amongst the population which is essential for security in Afghanistan.

Disarmament: A New Beginning

The Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups (DIAG) project aims at supporting the Government in improving human security, contributing to socio-economic development and promoting good governance with major support from Japan. It is a key project of the Afghanistan's New Beginnings Programme (ANBP) which seeks to create a stable environment for democracy in Afghanistan.

As a follow-up to the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) process, this project targets groups rather than individuals. As a result of surrendering weapons, a community will benefit of a development project, making the process a synthesis of security and development.

Due to political and security barriers, DIAG has proven to be very challenging to implement. After discussions with H.E. President Karzai in December, the Ministry of Interior and UNDP in close consultation with UNAMA agreed to begin the process of nationalizing the project. Security is key for the development of Afghanistan and UNDP will continue to work closely with the Government as the project is handed over to the Ministry of Interior.

Afghan National Army checking weapons turned over as part of UNDP's DIAG programme.



“[UNDP] ANBP is very important for DIAG's implementation: coordination of different partners, collection of weapons, and general organization.”

--M. General Abdul Manan, Ministry of Interior, Counter-Terrorism Department

The Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOFTA) ensures the payment of over 63,600 police salaries in all 34 provinces, with the aim of increasing security through a sustainable police presence. This effort towards police reform was made possible through funding from the EC and the Governments of the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Japan, Germany, Finland and Australia.

With illegal armed groups spread throughout the country and a heavily armed population, disarmament is another crucial step towards stability and human security. The Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) process was completed in June 2006, with over 63,300 ex-combatants having disarmed and demobilized as well as nearly 56,000 ex-combatants completing the reintegration phase. DDR was mainly funded by the Government of Japan, UK, Canada, USAID, the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland and the EC.

With Afghanistan having succeeded in establishing a formal and unified national army, the next step is the Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups (DIAG) project which targets militias. In 2006, DIAG collected a total of 26,848 weapons (23,172 light and 3,676 heavy) with major support from Japan. In view of the fundamental obstacles to the disbandment of illegal armed groups, a strategic review took place to address the inefficiencies in structure and management. Enhanced public information efforts will be pursued during the second phase of the project, in conjunction with the implementation of development projects in areas where disbandment is active, as well as the strengthening of the role of the Ministry of Interior.

Concurrently, the Ministry of Defense (MoD) took on the responsibility of surveying, consolidating and destroying ammunition in the field. The MoD also took over complete responsibility for managing two consolidation sites in Jalalabad and Kandahar, which it now fully controls with support from CIDA and the EC. The Ammunition School, which trains military personnel in ammunition handling and destruction, was also handed over to the Ministry of Defense. The Government is committed to destroy all known stockpiles of anti-personnel mines to meet its State obligations to the Ottawa Convention on banning all anti-personnel landmines stockpiles.

Afghan National Police marching in formation.



Computerized and Moving Forward

Until domestic revenues allow the Government of Afghanistan to finance the recurring costs of the police forces, the UNDP-administered Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOFTA) will continue to ensure payment of police salaries in all 34 provinces.

One major progress towards better management of the police forces is the computerization of the payroll system. The electronic payroll system has been deployed in 31 of the 34 provinces. In October 2006, 45 police officers graduated from the computerized payroll course, certifying that they will be able to pay the police forces more efficiently.

This graduation marked the sixth completed course in computerization of payroll and personnel data entry, which has so far trained 120 officers from 31 different provinces. Mir Aqa Dost, LOFTA Deputy Project Director said, "Computer trainings will enable police officers to do in one hour what they do [now] in days."

Joint monitoring missions are conducted in the provinces to ensure proper accountability and transparency of expenditures at the provincial level.

“The computerization of our payroll system highlights the fact that we are building a competent police force.”

-- Brigadier General Sardar Mohammed Kohdamani, Deputy Director of the Department of Education in the Ministry of Interior

Deepening Democracy



Voting in Parliament.

Tools for Democracy

The Independent Election Commission, the Parliament and the Provincial Councils have been established and equipped with the necessary skills to undertake their functions.

After the first ever democratic elections in the history of Afghanistan and the inauguration of the new Parliament in December 2005, the country was faced with the challenges of consolidating democracy, building national institutions and making them sustainable.

In preparation for the upcoming presidential elections scheduled in 2009, the establishment of a viable Independent Election Commission (IEC) has been another major success supported by CIDA. While the Independent Election Commission was heavily dependent on external financing, UNDP gave the IEC constant support as discussions were carried out with relevant Ministries to ensure budgetary independence and autonomy. In October 2006, the Independent Election Commission gained financial independence.

Following the inauguration of the National Assembly in December 2005, the newly elected Parliamentarians and the staff of the Secretariat of the National Assembly needed tools and training to undertake their duties. Efforts focused on organizing seminars on legislative matters and improving administrative and management processes, research and communication. Networking and knowledge sharing with other Parliaments was also encouraged. This approach has increased the knowledge of Parliamentarians and their confidence in carrying out their duties. The Parliament is now equipped with modern security equipment, ICT facilities and even a nursery. The financial and administrative systems at the Secretariats of both Houses have been improved, in particular in the area of cash management and budget expenditure tracking. This was made possible through notable support from GTZ, CIDA, the EC and the Government of Denmark.

To help the Government to keep in touch with its constituency, a large public outreach campaign was initiated. The campaign also included a three-day seminar for media to train journalists who will routinely cover parliamentary issues. A platform was established to

A woman casts her vote during the 2005 elections.



Independence and Ownership

Of particular note in 2006 was the transition of the Independent Election Commission from donor financing to financial independence through the approval of a specific allocation under the national budget - as mandated by the Afghanistan Compact.

UNDP worked hand in hand with the Commission to carry out discussions with relevant Ministries to support the process of drafting a budget that guarantees national ownership and autonomy.

The financial independence of the Commission is an important step towards securing democracy. UNDP will continue to work with the Commission as it seeks to implement a pilot programme in three provinces to measure the feasibility of the voting process in preparation for the 2009 elections.

“Afghanistan experienced its first free and fair elections. If we continue, this will guarantee the future of democracy in Afghanistan.”

-- Daoud Ali Najafi, Chief Electoral Officer, IEC Secretariat

Cooperation across borders

Local government is not a new idea in Afghanistan. Traditionally, shuras (village level assembly resolving community issues) have been playing an important decision making role. However, having democratically elected representatives who work with the Government is new. Recently elected Provincial Councils must be equipped with the right skills and knowledge of their functions to fully play their role. Learning how local government works in Indonesia and the Philippines was an enlightening experience. "This is a new structure for us," said Mr. Mohammedullah Batash, Advisor to the Parliament, "we do not have enough experience and information. This helps us." Indonesia was an especially interesting experience because of the communalities with Afghanistan: Islam and democracy.

Provincial Counsellors and Government representatives observed the way Provincial Councils operated, how legislation works, how they relate back to the central government, and how they do development planning by having short-term and long-term plans.

Ibrahim Hikmati, Deputy for Provincial Councils in the Office of Administrative Affairs said that one of the most important impact of exposure visits is the realization "that Afghanistan is not an isolated country in the world -- we are connected. These countries had problems too, and in the future we will be like them."

Dr. Karim Baz, the Provincial Councils Liaison in the Office of Administrative Affairs noticed the immediate impact of the exposure visit to the Philippines "It was definitely valuable. Even the members of the shuras, when they came back, they made immediate changes."



“In a Muslim country, we can introduce democracy. This is not contradictory.”

--Dr. Karim Baz, PC Liaison, Office of Administrative Affairs

Dr. Karim Baz in the Philippines.

foster dialogue and interaction with civil society. Public information materials were developed and six radio programmes were set up to reach ordinary Afghans about the work of their Parliament. In addition, in an effort to reach out to the populations outside of Kabul, "Taking Parliament to the People" is another initiative that conveys the Parliament's message to the provinces.

A major conference, Countering Corruption, was organized by the Parliament in collaboration with the judiciary and the Government.

Justice and Human Rights

The establishment of a viable democracy depends on the ability of State institutions to uphold human rights, enforcing the fundamentals of good governance, justice and the rule of law, and fighting endemic corruption.

The absence of strong State institutions, particularly in rural areas, low salaries, the high level of corruption among justice officials and the failure to ensure a secure environment for judicial personnel continues to severely undermine the capacity of the legal system to act

The newly elected Provincial Councils also benefited from exposure to new tools and ideas that allowed them to better perform their role. Elected Counsellors visited the Philippines and Indonesia, where they were able to see how other countries are dealing with local governance issues. After the visits, the Counsellors came together for a conference to compare their experiences and discuss how they could apply what they learned to the context of Afghanistan. Parliamentarians and Provincial Counsellors were sensitized about the MDGs and the ANDS benchmarks.

independently and impartially.

After the successful completion of the Justice for All strategy in 2005, planning the implementation of the justice sector reform proved to be challenging, in particular in view of the limited resources. With critical support from the Netherlands, the ability of the Ministry of Justice and the Attorney General Office to plan and budget activities was enhanced, which resulted in both institutions obtaining increases in budget allocations from the Ministry of Finance. In partnership with the Kabul Faculty of Law and

South-south cooperation

Twenty-eight parliamentary delegations from Africa, Asia and South America attended the parliamentary Internship programme organized annually by the Lokh Sahba, the Lower House of the Indian Parliament. Among them, three Afghan delegates from the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs and two representatives of the Afghan National Assembly participated in this four-week training programme.

The parliamentary Internship programme brings together delegates from developing countries to familiarize themselves with the Indian legislative system and to allow them to share knowledge and experiences on their own legislature.

Mr. Shah Sultan Akifi, General Director of Human Resource at the National Assembly, was particularly interested in the decentralized legislative and decision-making system practiced in India where State Councils made rulings on legislative issues pertaining to their own regions and the centralized National Assembly on issues of a national nature. Furthermore, he heralded the efficient practice of joint parliamentary committees, in India, where leadership is assumed by either the Upper or Lower House (as opposed to the Afghan practice of equal participation from both Houses) as a practical solution to avoid duplication and to save time during the resolution of cross-cutting parliamentary issues.

One immediate effect of the Internship programme was to recommend the Administrative Boards of both Houses to convene Joint Committees between the National Assembly and Ministries.

Inspired by his experience in India, Mr. Shah Sultan Akifi developed a system of weekly, monthly and quarterly plans, including weekly reporting, which he currently uses. This encouraged colleagues in the National Assembly to develop similar systems to increase work efficiency.

Having observed united decision-making within the Indian Parliament, Mr. Shah Sultan Akifi is keen to promote impartial and neutral decision-making and unified action in Parliament.

“After the Internship programme, I realized that I am a human being as well as an Afghan and a Muslim. During the course, I made many new friends with delegates from all over the world... If we want to have a developed world, the first thing we need is humanity. We must respect each other. You must be able to maintain friendships with different peoples, with different languages and religions”

“I understood that as a civil servant I must be neutral and impartial in support to the Parliamentarians. We must maintain our impartiality and neutrality otherwise the National Assembly will not develop well”

--Mr. Shah Sultan Akifi, General Director of Human Resources at National Assembly





Anita Nirody participates in the opening of the new Joint Judicial Facility in Herat.



An ever-increasing number of media cover public events on a regular basis.



Children trained to use Afghan sign language demonstrate their newly-acquired skills.

Political Science, the new law curriculum was approved. Staff associations like the Afghan Prosecutors Association and Women Lawyers Association were created.

The lack of access to justice is a defining characteristic of human poverty and access to justice at the district level, in particular in rural areas, is severely limited. The effectiveness of justice institutions was assessed in 6 provinces and 10 pilot districts, which allowed for the reorientation of development assistance in this sector in 2007 with the support of the EC.

Complaints of serious human rights violations are numerous and the rising number of civilian casualties resulting from military operations is another human rights concern. The Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission is an institution guaranteed under the Constitution and tasked with the responsibility of promoting and monitoring the respect of human rights. A sustained and trusted partnership with UNDP resulted in the financial independence of the Commission in 2006.

“One of the reasons the Commission started to stand on its own feet in 2006 was the very thorough training provided by UNDP.”

-- Dr. Hussain Ramoz, Executive Director, Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission

Women and children continue to face serious discrimination while existing laws, customs and practices deny them access to justice. The monitoring and reporting of cases of human rights violations is a critical step towards more awareness and political action. UNDP, in partnership with UNAMA, the OHCHR and CIDA, works with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to enable the Government to meet its obligations, under the six international human rights treaties to which Afghanistan is party: the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination; the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women; the Convention against Torture; and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Protecting the Vulnerable

The rights of vulnerable groups are better recognized.

No matter how difficult the socio-economic situation is in a country, some groups are more affected than others. UNDP follows a rights-based approach that considers the most vulnerable groups as rights-holders with entitlements. In Afghanistan, the most vulnerable groups are Afghans with disabilities,

marginalized women, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and in some instances returnees and ex-combatants. Employment generation initiatives must benefit the most vulnerable groups of society to promote inclusion and social cohesion.

The Governments of Afghanistan and Australia partnered with UNDP to launch a housing project for returnees and Internally Displaced Persons, in which

selected households will play an integral role in building their own houses. There will be considerable work carried out to make the housing projects open to communities and not just physical structures. The project is named Alice Ghan in honour of the large Afghan-Australian population living in Alice Springs, Australia. It was designed with technical advice from UNHCR.

UNDP ensures that employment generation initiatives benefit the most vulnerable groups of society to promote inclusion and social cohesion. In partnership with the Government of Australia, land to host a housing project for returnees was identified.

The National Programme for Action on Disability supports Afghans with disabilities in exerting their rights

for access to education, health and international obligations with the support of USAID. The ability of disabled persons organizations to advocate for their rights has been enhanced as demonstrated by their increased visibility on radio and TV programmes. Disability is now high up on the national agenda, with 4 Ministries identifying it as a priority. Legislation now guarantees equal rights for people with disabilities, yet up to 75% of disabled children between 7 and 14 years of age are not in school. In partnership with the Ministry of Education, a strategy was developed to ensure access to education for disabled children. As a result of an active partnership with the Ministry of Public Health, the 2006 package for health services includes mental health and disability.

Civil Society: Keeping the Government In Touch

Civil society groups were sensitized to play their oversight and accountability role.

Civil society in Afghanistan is diverse and fragmented resulting in limited participation in decision making processes related to development and governance. To become a strong and vibrant sector actively involved in national policy formulation and development oversight processes, civil society groups need to be better equipped with analytical and advocacy skills while having more access to information.

The ongoing preparation of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy is a major opportunity for civil society to engage with Government in a policy dialogue around development priorities. Civil society groups were first given the opportunity to voice their concerns while participating in the London conference. Later in 2006, civil society groups participated in a number of provincial consultations and focus group discussions on national priorities.

To equip civil society groups with the skills and knowledge to play their accountability and oversight role, representatives were exposed to various international events such as the conference on Promoting Transparency

and Accountability of Local Governments in Indonesia; the 12th International Anti-Corruption Conference held in Guatemala; the International Youth Forum in Romania; and the International Conference on New or Restored Democracies in Mongolia. A focus group discussion on anti-corruption was facilitated in Kabul in partnership with Integrity Watch Afghanistan and was replicated in 8 provinces. The main recommendations will feed into the National Anti-Corruption Strategy.

While 68% of the population of Afghanistan is below 25 years of age, this majority segment of the population is generally disenfranchised, lacks educational and employment opportunities and rarely participates in decision-making at the community, provincial or national level. The regional Leadership Course for Youth Leaders organized by UNDP in Thailand in December 2005 triggered the preparation of a joint UN Youth programme for Afghanistan, which was organized in partnership with seven UN Agencies and eight Ministries. The main objective is to ensure that Afghan Youth participates effectively in the socio-political process at the national and local level while having access to, and participating in the socio-economic development, with emphasis on education, skills development and employment opportunities.

special note on gender

In today's Afghanistan, gender equality and the advancement of women have been given ample consideration in the Constitution, the Afghanistan Compact and the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS). But the fact remains that women are one of the most vulnerable groups in Afghanistan. Women hold 27% of the total seats in the lower house but only one ministerial position out of 24 Ministries and one gubernatorial position out of 34 provinces. Women constitute only 31% of the civil service across the ranks. Though this might seem positive, a closer look into sex-disaggregated data shows that only three Ministries



are helping to bring up the figure. Seventeen Ministries and agencies have less than 10% female representation among regular employees. Women continue to face serious discrimination while existing laws, customs and practices deny them access to justice. Women are faced with gender-based violence.

Key policy documents need to be translated into concrete actions that can turn the tide. For this purpose, public sector institutions need to be sensitized and equipped with the necessary skills and tools.

Continued technical and advisory supports were extend-

ed to the Ministry of Women's Affairs to facilitate integration of gender in the ANDS. In this respect, the cross-cutting Consultative Group established by the Government to ensure that gender considerations are part of all ministry sector strategies was an important advocacy tool for UNDP. Specific support included the development of a strategy for improved participation of women in governance and technical inputs for the development of a strategy for vulnerable women.

Training, advocacy materials and manuals were developed and 11 representatives of provincial Departments of Women's Affairs were trained in several strategic areas,

“The Ministry of Women's Affairs values the partnership with UNDP. In ensuring women's status in society, equal participation in power and gender equality, UNDP's role and partnership with the Ministry is critical. This collaboration has significantly contributed to the Ministry's achievements for the promotion of gender equality and in bringing changes in women's lives in Afghanistan.”

--H.E Dr. Husn Banu Ghazanfar, Minister of Women's Affairs (Pictured Right)



including gender awareness, analysis, advocacy and management. This resulted in increased confidence of the heads of Departments about their role and the tools available to deliver on the mandate of the Ministry. The Ministry of Women's Affairs became a recognized resource organization on gender and women's rights-related issues and this has positively affected its relationship with other Ministries and non-governmental organizations, in particular with women's networks. The efforts of the Ministry to advocate for the advancement of women's rights and elimination of Violence Against Women were also acknowledged. A particular achievement was the public awareness campaign on Violence Against Women and Girls.

The ability of the Government to conduct gender sensitive analysis remains limited in all Ministries and can only be addressed through continuous embedded technical assistance. Of critical importance will be efforts towards the full operationalization of the Gender Studies Institute at Kabul University.

Through the Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA), the "Gender Mainstreaming in the Afghan Police Forces" initiative supports 160 female police currently serving in Afghanistan, but also aims to recruit another 300 policewomen. A Gender Unit was established at the Ministry of Interior. The unit will work to expand a successful pilot programme on family violence from Kabul to 5 provinces in 2007.

Women have less access to education and employment opportunities. The adult literacy rate is 43% for males and 14% for females. The Cisco Academy computer and IT training programme promotes women's education, connecting them to modern technology by offering affordable tuition fees to female candidates. This incentive together with the completion of a Women's Dorm and IT centre resulted in an enrolment rate of 40% women. To promote women's access to livelihoods, a Women's Employment Centre was built in the Department of Women's Affairs compound in Kandahar, one of the most socially conservative provinces of the country. After DDR, to assist women in ex-combatant families, about 250 of them received teacher's training to help give their households economic security. The majority have been placed as teachers through an active partnership with the Ministry of Education.

In support of the 68 women elected to the Lower House, the Gender Resources Centre for female Parliamentarians was established in partnership with UNIFEM. A kindergarten in the National Assembly was also opened to support the Parliamentarians and Secretariat staff to find a good work-life balance. At the Ministry of Justice, UNDP also supported the establishment of the Women Lawyers Association.

The Government still has a long way to go to achieve full integration of gender equity in its development planning and practices. It is expected that the multi-stakeholders gender equality programme, supported by UNDP, will make critical technical assistance available across Ministries to address both short and long term needs.



Facing Page -Top: A women's literacy course. **Top Right:** Women at a Cisco project work on a draft. **Below:** A female Afghan National Police officer completes her training. **Below:** Voting in Parliament. **Bottom Right:** A woman holding her certificate awarded for the completion of the ANBP reintegration project.

Promoting Sustainable Livelihoods



RISE irrigation project, Nangarhar.

District Development Plans were formulated in 138 districts in 14 provinces. Rural and urban infrastructure projects have benefited communities throughout Afghanistan, providing vocational training and short-term job opportunities targeting the most vulnerable groups. Concurrently, regional trade small agribusinesses were encouraged.

Despite a marked economic growth during the recent recovery, choices and opportunities for men and women are limited. It is estimated that 40% of the labour force is unemployed. Ex-combatants and other potentially unemployed young men are prime recruiting targets for anti-government groups. The economy remains heavily reliant on agriculture and vulnerable to natural hazards such as drought and floods. 78% of the Afghans live in rural areas (of which 68% are “poor”) and 22% in urban areas (of which around 60% live in informal settlements). Poppy cultivation contributes to approximately 32% of the country’s GDP.

The promotion of alternative livelihoods requires an integrated approach to rural and urban development focusing on solutions for energy and infrastructure for the poor, community empowerment, employment generation, sound environmental management and the promotion of a conducive environment for small and medium enterprises.

Rural Development & Income Generation

Decades of conflict have ravaged Afghanistan’s rural areas. Many villages lack basic infrastructure, drinking water and access to roads to major cities. Because recovery priorities vary from province to province, the first step towards improving livelihoods was to empower communities to articulate their own needs. Under the umbrella of the National Area Based Development Programme, the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development worked with clusters of rural communities to establish District Development Assemblies. These assemblies have formulated District Development Plans in 138 districts in 14 provinces (covering approximately 36% of the country) thus taking the lead in planning their own future. Concurrently, Provincial Development Committees benefited from orientation training in 11 provinces that enabled them to understand better the link between the national and local planning process. Rural livelihoods remain at the forefront of Afghanistan’s economic recovery. In 2006, the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development finalized its strategy to prioritize and plan for development projects.

Under the umbrella of the Ministry for Rural Rehabilitation and Development, 92 rural development projects were implemented in 26

Water-well project, Samangan.



Water Sanitation in Ayback City

Access to clean water is a major development challenge in Afghanistan today, especially in rural areas affected by years of drought. Estimates suggest that 23% of the population has access to improved drinking water sources, 43% of households in urban areas against only 18% in rural areas. In rural areas, it is estimated that 4 out of 5 Afghans may be drinking contaminated water.

In partnership with the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development and the municipality, two new deep-water wells were excavated in Ayback city in Samangan Province. In addition to the wells, a local water-pipe network was installed by means of which water can be distributed to the community. Approximately 30,000 people now have access to clean water.

Given the pervasive water and sanitation crisis in Ayback, the project is considered a landmark development that will have profound implications on peoples’ daily lives, in particular women and girls who are often the ones who sacrifice their time and their education to fetch water, often long distances from their homes.

“After oxygen, clean water is the most important necessity of life, yet the inhabitants of Ayback City did not have access to it for [a long time].”

--Abdulhaque Shafaque, Governor of Samangan Province



Field visit, Balkh Province.



Training on rural development planning.



Water and irrigation work, Nangarhar river.

provinces in the area of water supply and sanitation, education, irrigation, public facilities, public health and transportation. In collaboration with the US Provincial Reconstruction Teams, 30 quick impact projects were completed by UNOPS, mostly bridges and local government buildings. Through improved physical facilities, the quick impact projects enabled local government to deliver better public services to the population.

Of particular interest is the piloting of an approach in Kandahar to demonstrate tangible delivery in insecure areas through quick-impact small scale rural infrastructure projects that provide immediate benefits to the communities. Priority was given to projects that could be implemented by the community through cash-for-work schemes, thus providing employment opportunities and construction skills to the unemployed. In exchange, the communities were asked to guarantee the security and welfare of the project designers, surveyors and engineers. This successful approach, supported by CIDA and USAID, will be replicated in other areas in the south.

Under the Counter Narcotics Trust Fund, 17 alternative livelihoods projects were approved, including 11 infrastructure projects providing short-term job creation (8 irrigation and flood protection, 2 road and 1 micro-hydro projects.) Two labs for mushroom production have been completed in Kabul and Balkh provinces as a possible alternative livelihood solution for farmers. In addition, 3,000 drug addicts have started benefiting from a drug treatment and rehabilitation pilot initiative implemented by the Ministry of Health in Balkh and Nangarhar provinces.

Mine clearance efforts contribute greatly to the promotion of livelihoods as it helps to recover arable

land, or land that could be used for off-farm activities. Road clearance also helps improving commerce and Government outreach. In partnership with the UN Mine Action Centre and UNOPS, and with major support from USAID, 2006 saw the completion of the de-mining of 60 km road connecting the two provincial centres of Ghazni and Sharan, 115 km on Grishk-Delaram road and 123 km on Kabul-Gardez road. The de-mining of Kabul International Airport continued while the mine clearance of the Kabul to Pul-e Khumri power line was completed in August 2006.

To promote income generation, 39 urban infrastructure projects have provided short-term job opportunities and vocational skills to the local population in partnership with local authorities, FAO and the UN Mine Action Centre in Afghanistan - with funding from Japan.

In the city centres of Mazar-e Sharif, Jalalabad and Kandahar, road drainages have improved sanitation conditions as well as accessibility to market areas by preventing the overflow of heavy rainfall on the surface of roads. The construction of facilities like the women's employment centre in Kandahar and the disability access centre in Jalalabad improved communities' access to services, while at the same time providing employment opportunities. Forty-five percent (45%) of the employment opportunities benefited socially vulnerable groups, including returnees, ex-combatants, disabled and marginalized women. Some of the construction builders were able to find a job as a result of masonry skills they obtained through participating in the construction work.

Employment generation is particularly critical to prevent ex-combatants from joining illegal armed groups and drug lords. More opportunities for income generation must be created to ensure their long term reintegration into society.

A Powerful Partnership: Regional Initiatives for a Sustainable Economy

One of the fundamental needs for the current and future development of Afghanistan is economic stimulation. In order to promote integrated regional development and create an enabling environment for a long-term, sustainable and regional economy, UNDP Afghanistan partnered with the Government and other UN agencies to formulate the Regional Initiative for Sustainable Economy (RISE).

The programme is jointly implemented by UNDP, the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), and the UN Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan (UNMACA) working closely with the Ministry of Urban Development and the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation in three target areas: Mazar-e Sharif, Kandahar and Jalalabad. The project is fully funded by the Government of Japan.

UNDP is supporting the capacity development of relevant local authorities and short-term employment generation through the construction of urban infrastructure. RISE targets the most vulnerable groups in Afghanistan such as ex-combatants, disabled persons and vulnerable women. An ex-combatant in Kandahar (pictured below), employed by UNDP to work on a slab-casting site, credits this opportunity for preventing him from joining the insurgency to earn money.

In close cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation and local Community Development Councils, FAO selected 2,000 beneficiaries in target provinces, reaching a total of 84 villages. The selected farmers received wheat seed, fertilizer and storage silos. Hand tools and vegetable seeds were also distributed. In Nangarhar Province, 5 fish ponds were constructed. FAO and the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation also trained farmers and herders in plant protection, animal health and knowledge of nutrition.

UNMACA plays an important role in creating a safe environment for economic growth by increasing arable land and market accessibility. Afghanistan is one of the most heavily mined countries in the world, and UNMACA's work not only accounted for nearly 10% of all Afghan NGO demining in 2006, but also raised awareness and treated socio-psychological trauma, aiming to rehabilitate and reintegrate victims back into society.

The long-term impact of this multifaceted and multi-agency initiative is expected to create a more stable and enabling environment for Afghanistan's development activities.



In Jalalabad, canal clearing work.



In Kandahar, an ex-combatant receives vocational skill training.

Through the last stage of the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) process, 335 ex-commanders received training in business skills, while 250 women of ex-combatant families received teacher's training to help give their households economic security.

To expand employment opportunities for Afghan men and women, the Cisco Networking Academy

Programme equips trainees with IT skills. Six networking academy training centres have been established around the country in partnership with Kabul University's Faculty of Computer Science, the Ministry of Communications and the Ministry of Women's Affairs. During the last quarter of 2006, 658 students enrolled in the programme of which 40% are women. 192 students graduated in 2006 and 80% of them found a job.

The Private Sector

In the long-term development process, it is not just the small rural rehabilitation efforts that need support, the larger economy and the private sector are equally important. Private sector development encompasses the promotion of small and medium enterprises, addressing livelihoods in rural areas and developing local capabilities and the promotion of regional trade and investment to promote entrepreneurship.

Small agro-business ventures which are the most productive and labour-intensive sub-sectors of the Afghan economy helped boost income-generating activities and enterprise among the rural "poor". In partnership with the Afghanistan Investment Support Agency and the Ministry of Commerce, research on potential growth for community-based agricultural value-added processing was conducted. The National Area Based Development Programme concluded feasibility

studies for cotton and rose-oil production, which attracted USD100,000 from private sector investors.

The organization of trade and investment conferences as well as workshops improved access to information and promoted cross-border networking for Afghan businesses, in addition to generating business deals. To create a regional economic platform between Afghanistan, Central and South Asia, the Afghanistan International Investment Conference and Exhibition gathered forty-nine business enterprises from Pakistan, Iran, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, which resulted in the signing of Letters of Intent by two investors in the food processing sector. In February 2006, 22 representatives from the Government, chambers of commerce, fruit growers associations and private sector industry participated in a study tour in Malaysia to view farming practices being followed by Malaysian farmers.


Farmers visiting the pilot solar dryer project in Parwan Province.

Fostering Trade: South-South Cooperation

In October 2005, a rapid appraisal of the potential to revitalize Afghanistan's dried fruits industry through South-South cooperation was fielded. The improvement of drying technologies was identified as a prerequisite for an enhancement of product quality and value. Building on this recommendation, prominent Government and business figures as well as agricultural technicians from Afghanistan participated in a study tour in Malaysia in February 2006 which resulted in a project to establish a pilot solar drying and post harvest facility.

The site was selected in Parwan Province based on the quality of raisin-grade grapes and three farmers were identified to undergo training in Malaysia. Representatives from the Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute also visited Afghanistan.

This community-based pilot facility focuses on enhanced revenue generation and retention at the community level. It redefines the traditional methodology by bringing processing facilities to the farm gate. This facility could be replicated across the country for the revival of the dried fruits industry with an adequate marketing strategy.



“We believe that in order to develop institutions for agricultural development in Afghanistan, Malaysian technology is relevant and essential.”

— Dr. Hassan Abdullahi, Deputy Minister of Rural Rehabilitation and Development

“I Will Never Hold a Weapon Again!”

Four years ago, an AK-47 was Hekmatullah's only means of income. In his own words, he was a “mujahid doing jihad.” Life was hard, and he lived under constant fear of being attacked and killed by rival militias. But he also lived under a different fear: being discovered by his family.

His wife, two sons and his daughter did not know how he earned his money. He recounts how difficult it was having to hide it from them. “It was the most annoying part of my life when, for the first time, my kids started asking me what I was doing, and what I needed a gun for?” He could not convince his children that he carried the gun for a legitimate reason.

But now he no longer carries a gun. He handed over his gun to the Government of Afghanistan through the UNDP's Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) programme. He also registered for the reintegration scheme.

Under the DDR process, Hekmatullah initially received a total of USD 700 to set up a small shop. He then applied for other loans, and received them in two phases. Hekmatullah managed to repay his loans in just three months and is keen to expand his business with a bigger loan, which he will repay over a longer period of time.

“No need for guns and bullets anymore,” Hekmatullah says. “My kids are going to school. I am very happy for them. I want them to become doctors in the future.” He smiles as he carries on his business, serving his customers.

Through its demobilization and reintegration phases, the DDR process has provided ex-combatants with education, training and job opportunities suited to their particular needs.

As of the end of 2006, 63,380 military personnel have disarmed and nearly 56,000 ex-combatants have completed the reintegration process. UNDP's hope is that Hekmatullah's story will soon become a common one.

“My kids are going to school. I am very happy for them. I want them to become doctors in the future.”

--Hekmatullah, reintegrated ex-combatant



Hekmatullah, a reintegrated ex-combatant, stands in his loan-financed shop.

They observed the role played by farmers' organizations in providing agricultural extension services and building capacity of agro-based small and medium enterprises.

The regional business forum for Afghanistan was organized concurrent to the 2nd Regional Economic Cooperation

Conference in November 2006, in New Delhi, India and was attended by 82 Afghan business representatives. This provided the Afghanistan delegation with the opportunity of being matched with potential partners from India, Pakistan, the United Arab Emirates, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Iran, Turkey and the United States.

Women receive winter assistance, Kabul Province.



Access to safe drinking water in drought-stricken areas in southern Afghanistan.



Snow clearance to open roads, southeast Afghanistan.



Disaster Management

Afghan rural communities are particularly vulnerable to the high frequency of natural hazards such as earthquakes, landslides, floods and drought. An extension of the joint drought appeal launched in 2004 called for additional assistance in at least 17 provinces in four areas: agriculture, family shelter and non food items, water and others (emergency employment, watershed management and infrastructure). The risk of water-related hazards was reduced by providing safe drinking water to communities severely affected by drought, flooding or harsh winter, with support from DFID and CIDA. 652 water wells were constructed in 22 districts, supplying safe drinking water to 32,719 families.

Extreme winter is another annual phenomenon having a large scale impact. The winterization programme, administered by UNDP, assisted 22,000 vulnerable families to survive the winter. Vital rural roads were cleared of snow. 15 passes and 80 km of highway were kept open during winter 2005-2006.

In addition to supporting the Government's ability to respond to disasters, attention focused on risk reduction efforts, assisting communities in self-preparedness, by protecting key infrastructure, villages and agricultural land with riverbank containment against floods like in 16 districts of Kunduz and Balkh provinces.

Keeping Warm: Winterization

The winter of 2006 was predictably harsh in Afghanistan, with many saying it was the worst in recent memory. Thanks to a more co-ordinated effort between the Government of Afghanistan and the international community, more families were prepared for winter this year than they were last year.

The Emergency Commission, which is headed by Afghanistan's Vice President, Karim Khalili, examined and evaluated key risk areas and produced cost estimates for winterization. They then called on UNDP's expertise to implement the plans.

Through contributions from USAID, Norway, and DFID, UNDP administered the Winterization initiative, which provided vital services and goods to 11 high-risk provinces. This partnership assisted approximately 10,000 families with relief assistance, helping protect the most vulnerable from the winter.

Giving out coal as emergency winter assistance, Kabul.



Environment & Energy

Environmental awareness was raised through community mobilization in rural Afghanistan. 40 Village Environment Committees and 80 green school clubs were established. Four urban greening workshops sensitized 160 high-level provincial leaders on environment management.

Environmental degradation, partly caused by direct war damage, but also by the indirect effects of over-exploitation and neglect of soils, water resources and forests, undermines the future welfare of rural communities.

The Green Afghanistan Initiative (GAIN), a programme jointly implemented by FAO, UNEP, UNDP, UNOPS, WFP and IOM, seeks to promote environmental awareness and action. UNDP focuses on community mobilization and environment awareness, targeting children, rural women, local and provincial leaders and providing support to the National Environment Protection Agency.

To promote environmental concerns among Afghanistan's future leaders, green school clubs were established in 80 primary schools, reaching 100,000 school children in 40 villages, 40% of which were girls. Children engaged in essay, drawings and poetry competitions with enthusiasm. It is expected that a change in children's attitude towards environmental protection will positively influence their families. Recognizing the critical role of women in environment preservation and rural energy,

2,000 women were trained on environmental management issues. Awareness has also been raised by disseminating a training manual on environmental management in national languages. The manual was developed by the Environmental Education Group, which brought together UNEP, FAO, WFP and UNDP.

To raise awareness among today's leaders, four urban greening workshops were organized in Sheberghan, Mazar-e Sharif, Aybak and Sar-e Pul and gathered 160 high-level provincial leaders to empower them to mainstream environmental issues in provincial development planning.

In four pilot provinces, the Community Development Councils formed 40 Village Environment Committees, specifically charged with environmental planning and interventions.

With respect to Sustainable Land Management Project, support was provided to the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation in initiating the process of drafting the National Action Plan on Desertification. A national report outlining the factors that influence desertification was submitted to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

To monitor the impact of all environment preservation interventions, a Monitoring and Evaluation unit equipped and staffed with skilled personnel was set up in the National Environment Protection Agency.

From left to right: A schoolboy holds up material on environment, Women learn about environmental planning, A UNDP GAIN awareness campaign in schools, One of the 40 Village Environment Committees.



To achieve the high level development benchmarks set in the Afghanistan Compact and the MDGs, partnerships are key. The reconstruction and development challenges in Afghanistan require the commitment of all development partners.

Under the new UNDP Country Programme, UNDP consolidated partnerships with ten Ministries, in particular with the ministries of Finance, Rural Rehabilitation and Development, and Interior. Other critical Government partners include the Office of Administrative Affairs, the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission, the Independent Election Commission, the Parliament and the Office of the Senior Economic Advisor to the President.

“Partnership with UNDP plays a vital role in the scope and effectiveness of our approach to comprehensive development and village-based decision-making.”

-- H.E. Mohamed Ehsan Zia, Minister of Rural Rehabilitation and Development

At the provincial and district levels, working partnerships have been established with Governors' offices, Provincial Councils, Provincial Development Committees, District Development Assemblies and with a number of municipalities.

With respect to sister UN Agencies, UNDP continued to work with UNAMA on security sector reform, support to policy making, sub-national governance and capacity development. UNDP engaged with FAO, UNHCR, UN Habitat, UNEP, WFP, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNIFEM, UNOPS, UNMACA and the United Nations Volunteers in employment generation, reintegration of returnees, gender equity, justice reform, support to the Parliament and environment.

Partnerships with a platform of civil society organizations and a forum of Youth Organizations were established for activities relating to the ANDS. Civil society empowerment in the fight against corruption was promoted through partnerships with the Association of Certified Fraud Specialists (ACFS) and the local NGO Foundation for Culture and Civil Society (FCSC). To promote awareness, UNDP also works closely with Kabul University, the Esteqlal and Habibia high schools, Radio and Television Afghanistan and a wide variety of NGOs.

Continuous progress in the set-up of the Parliament has been made possible through durable partnerships with the Friedrich Ebert and Heinrich Boell Foundations, the National Democratic Institute and the British Council. Coordination of support to the Independent Election Commission is conducted with The Asia Foundation and IFES. Strategic partnerships were also deepened with Kabul University, the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission and Counterparts International, and with the Afghanistan Investment Support Agency.

“Canada is proud to work with the UNDP, a long-standing and dynamic development partner, as it works with the Government of Afghanistan to help Afghans rebuild their lives, communities and society. In just a few years, the Afghan people have made extraordinary progress in building a stable, self-reliant and democratic state. All of this progress - unthinkable only a few years ago - is testimony to the will and fortitude of the Afghan people, as well as to the commitment and engagement of international partners such as UNDP.”

--Stephen Wallace, Vice-President/Vice-président, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)

Partnerships with the US, EU, Japan, Canada and UK have been critical to achieving the level of results described in this report. UNDP also strengthened its collaboration with the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank in the fields of transparency and accountability. Strategic partnerships were formed with bilateral donors such as Norway on sub-national governance related issues and public administration reform. Germany, Australia and Switzerland also supported public administration reform. Lastly, UNDP has begun the process of forging a new series of partnerships with the PRTs to strengthen programme coordination.

“UNDP is the indispensable partner of Japan for our efforts to bring peace, stability and welfare in Afghanistan. Japan is strongly determined to contribute to the reconstruction of Afghanistan through closer cooperation with UNDP.”

--H.E. Ambassador of Japan, Junichi Kosuge

2006 Delivery against contributions

	Donor	USD
	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	98,315,779
	EUROPEAN UNION	32,663,423
	JAPAN	14,465,370
	CANADA	11,618,294
	UNITED KINGDOM	10,170,032
	UNDP	7,576,710
	BELGIUM	4,008,607
	SWITZERLAND	3,216,489
	DENMARK	2,813,568
	UNMAS (EC)	1,957,015
	ITALY	1,768,077
	FINLAND	1,746,745
	AFGHANISTAN	1,764,344
	NORWAY	1,724,571
	NETHERLANDS	1,459,595
	FRANCE	1,349,259
	UNHCR	1,229,224
	AUSTRALIA	871,524
	GERMANY	789,884
	NEW ZEALAND	682,619
	LUXEMBOURG	592,357
	INCOME GENERATED FROM PROJECTS	527,055
	UNAMA	308,857
	SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY	173,048
	REPUBLIC OF KOREA	98,304
	AUSTRIA	78,038
	INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION	64,802
	WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME	53,697
	FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION	48,868
	GTZ	36,656
	INT'L NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS	36,494
	CISCO CORPORATE PHILANTHROPY	26,642
	WORLD BANK	19,801
	GEF	16,749
	PRIVATE SECTOR	8,126
	GREECE	6,493
	UNOCHA	1,838
Grand Total		202,288,953

Acronyms

AIHRC: Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission
AIMS: Afghanistan Information and Management Services
ANBP: Afghanistan's New Beginnings Programme
ANDS: Afghan National Development Strategy
CIDA: Canadian International Development Agency
CNTF: Counter Narcotics Trust Fund
DDA: District Development Assemblies
DDR: Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration
DFID: Department for International Development
DIAG: Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups
FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization
GAIN: Green Afghanistan Initiative
IDP: Internally Displaced Person
IEC: Independent Election Commission
I-ANDS: Interim Afghan National Development Strategy
IFES: International Foundation for Election Systems
JCMB: Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board
LOTFA: Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan
MBW: Making Budgets Work
MDG: Millennium Development Goals

MRRD: Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
NABDP: National Area Based Development Programme
NGO: Non Governmental Organization
NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
OHCHR: Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PRT: Provincial Reconstruction Team
RISE: Regional Initiative for Sustainable Economy
UNAMA: United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNDP: United Nations Development Programme
UNEP: United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA: United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF: United Nations Children Fund
UNIFEM: United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNMACA: United Nations Mine Action Center for Afghanistan
UNOPS: United Nations Office for Project Services
USAID: United States Agency for International Development
WFP: World Food Programme
WTO: World Trade Organization



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