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AFGHANISTAN

TECHNICAL REPORT

COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH ASSESSMENT

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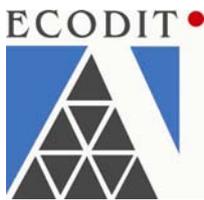


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ACRONYMS

ANDS	Afghanistan National Development Strategy
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
VOA	Voice of America
BSP	Biodiversity Support Program for National Environmental Protection Agency (used interchangeably with BSP/NEPA)
dTS	Development & Training Services, Inc.
IRoA	Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
NEPA	National Environmental Protection Agency (Islamic Republic of Afghanistan)
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
PLACE	Prosperity, Livelihoods and Conserving Ecosystems
RTA	Radio/Television Afghanistan
UN	United Nations
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the USAID Afghanistan Biodiversity Support Program (BSP) is to provide technical support to Afghanistan's National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA) in order to help implement its mandate under the new Environmental Law. The BSP is working closely with NEPA, government ministries, NGOs, UN agencies and the private sector in order to improve environmental management and stewardship in Afghanistan. Primary components of BSP technical support of NEPA with regard to relevant environmental issues are institutional strengthening, national coordination and monitoring, communications and public outreach, education, regulation, financing, and monitoring of community-based management of natural resources. Since NEPA is a new government agency - less than three years old - most Afghans have never heard it. Furthermore, environmental issues are not well understood either by the Afghan population or by the various related government ministries. A comprehensive Communications and Public Outreach Strategy and action plan is therefore vital in raising the profile of NEPA within the government and to the public at large.

This Communications and Public Outreach Rapid Needs Assessment will provide a framework from which to develop a comprehensive Communications Strategy out of which an action plan can be developed. The purpose of this assessment is to clarify the Strategic Goals of NEPA, come up with a Core Theme with regard to communicating its mandate and to develop preliminary ideas with regard to messages, stakeholders, and tools, which will link the messages to the stakeholders. The assessment will form a baseline from which to conduct a communications workshop with key NEPA staff from all over Afghanistan in which the preliminary ideas will be discussed, modified and agreed upon in order to be included in the Communications Strategy. The ideas discussed in this strategy are preliminary and will need to be heavily discussed and finally agreed upon before being included in the Communications Strategy. This assessment will contribute to the fulfillment of the BSP 2008 Work Plan, Task 3.1: Assess communications needs. It will also contribute to Task 3.5: Train NEPA and other stakeholders on environmental public education and outreach.

Establishing the Strategic Goals of NEPA is the first step in an effective communications campaign. These goals should be agreed upon and NEPA staff should all be aware of them.

Examples of these are:

1. to integrate environmental consciousness into the daily lives of Afghans;
2. to link environmental protection to economic sustainability;
3. to link environmental protection to the health of the Afghan population;
4. to link environmental protection to Islamic tradition;
5. to ensure enforcement of the Environment Law;
6. and to monitor performance.

The Communications Strategy and Implementation Plan will focus on communications to the following main audiences:

- NEPA staff
- Afghan Government Ministries
- Office of the Spokesman of the President
- Parliament
- Provincial Government
- District and Local Government
- The Media
- Afghanistan's development partners and consultants
- The General Population, including differences of gender, urban vs. rural, and ethnicity

Strategic Communications is a key component in changing the perceptions within NEPA as well as throughout the broader government and population at large. It is critical in achieving each of the NEPA's strategic objectives. Communicating the appropriate messages to various audiences using the right tools is the key to effective communications.

The Director General is the most important person to drive communications. In order to facilitate the mandate and messages emanating from NEPA, the Information Department should be directly linked to the Director General's office. This office will then be better able to work directly with senior management to address the array of communications issues, both internally and externally.

The communications tools used to implement the communications strategy internally and externally will consist of:

- Meetings, events and workshops
- News-led coverage through national media
- A nationwide public commercial outreach campaign on the radio, television and in print.
- A website, which will include intranet and an external site
- A regular newsletter and other print materials

Key messages will be targeted to specific audiences and utilizing tools that are most effective for reaching and influencing those audiences. Preliminary ideas for messages, audiences and packaging will be discussed below.

A capacity building program will support this communications strategy for key officers and staff. The effectiveness of the strategy will also be evaluated over time.

1. INTRODUCTION

The BSP/NEPA Project is being implemented under an agreement between the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (IRoA) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under the Prosperity, Livelihoods, and Conserving Ecosystems (PLACE) Indefinite Quantity Contract. BSP/NEPA's purpose is to strengthen the National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA) and its ability to implement its mandate under the 2007 Environmental Law. BSP/NEPA is working with key staff at NEPA, relevant ministries, and other stakeholders to improve environmental management and stewardship in Afghanistan. Project activities revolve around providing technical support for issues involving the environment - institutional strengthening, coordination of activities, communications and public outreach, education, regulation, financing, and monitoring of community-based management of natural resources.

The rapid assessment of NEPA's communications and public outreach needs will:

1. Identify the Strategic Goals of NEPA
2. Identify the Core Theme of NEPA with regard to communicating the mandate of NEPA
3. Identify key messages to inform and educate key NEPA stakeholders about environmental issues within Afghanistan.
4. Identify linkages between messages and practical benefits of environmental protection, particularly the health of the Afghan economy, its citizens, and observing Islamic tradition.
5. Identify key stakeholder groups and audiences – both internal and external – who will benefit from knowledge of NEPA and environmental issues.
6. Identify tools, which will deliver the messages to the various stakeholders.

Achieving success from NEPA's strategic objectives will depend on effective communication with the stakeholder groups including NEPA staff, Government Ministries, Office of the Spokesman of the President, Parliament, Provincial Councils, District and Local Governments, the media, Afghanistan's development partners and consultants, and the general population. But before any of that can occur it will require effective internal communications within NEPA itself.

In order to achieve these objectives, all stakeholders must understand that communications flows in two directions. While the NEPA disseminates its information, it welcomes feedback from the country at large.

2. NEPA MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

The mandate of NEPA is to coordinate and monitor conservation and rehabilitation of the environment in accordance with the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan's Environment Law. To achieve this mission, the Ministry needs to develop several strategic goals. For example:

Strategic Goal 1	To integrate environmental consciousness into the daily lives of Afghans <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Public Awareness▪ Government Support
Strategic Goal 2	To link environmental protection to economic sustainability: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Direct and short-term economic benefits▪ Indirect and long-term economic benefits
Strategic Goal 3	To link environmental protection to the health of the Afghan population: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Air▪ Water▪ Sanitation▪ Land
Strategic Goal 4	To link environmental protection to Islamic tradition: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Khilafah (leadership)▪ Other aspects of the Holy Q'uran
Strategic Goal 5	To ensure enforcement of the Environment Law: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Legal mandate▪ Regulations
Strategic Goal 6	To monitor performance: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Internal▪ External

3. KEY STAKEHOLDERS

The first step in designing effective communications is to identify the stakeholder groups to which the NEPA needs to reach out. These groups are:

Civil Servants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Within NEPA▪ Within Ministries in Kabul▪ Within the President's Office▪ At Provincial, District and Local level
Afghanistan's Development Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ UN agencies and other multi-lateral organizations▪ Bilateral Organizations, such as USAID, DFID, CIDA, etc.▪ NGOs▪ Other development actors▪ Consultants and advisors supporting the reform process▪ Investors and other private sector entities
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ National▪ International
General Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Urban▪ Rural▪ Men▪ Women▪ Dari speaking▪ Pashto speaking▪ Other groups

4. MESSAGES

The next component of effective communications is to develop the appropriate messages aimed at stakeholder groups. “Messages” refers to the statements or themes that are of greatest importance to these groups, and to which NEPA must pay particular attention. NEPA has already developed a list of messages, which contributed significantly to the messages below. While these messages will be refined over time, as the relationship between NEPA and key stakeholders changes and intensifies, examples of key communications messages are:

- Deforestation and over-grazing lead to erosion and loss of arable land.
- Hunting of animals and birds is against the government’s decree and leads to the degradation of Afghanistan’s natural heritage.
- Islamic tradition compels Afghans to maintain a healthy environment.
- Cleaning up the air in Kabul will lead to healthier citizens.
- Planting trees will lead to increased income from harvesting of wood.
- Effective grazing policies will lead to sustainability of the land and increased future income.
- Conserving water will lead to increased agricultural production.

The audiences, tools and packaging of these messages will be discussed below.

5. LINKING STAKEHOLDERS WITH MESSAGES

The NEPA stakeholders have different interests and motivations. These are important factors in helping NEPA develop the most appropriate messages and tools for interacting with each of these groups. For messages to be successful they must focus on the stakeholders' needs. The art of delivering messages is to keep them clear, precise and consistent. NEPA messages need to be agreed on and coordinated before being communicated to stakeholder groups.

5.1 Internal Stakeholders

Many NEPA staff are unclear about the role of NEPA. At present one of the most important roles of the Director General in relation to communications is to build up a culture of communications within NEPA itself. This means regularly sharing relevant information with all of the NEPA's departments through regular meetings, workshops and other face-to-face interactions. It also requires the development and use of the following communications tools:

- The regular use of NEPA's email system by all officers and staff. Most Kabul NEPA staff need to have access to email, but at present it is not available to many NEPA staff, **including the Information Director and his staff**;
- The development of the website, which should have both a general section for external stakeholders and an intranet, which will have information only available to NEPA employees;
- A clearly visible and prominently displayed NEPA mission statement

5.2 External Stakeholders

Civil servants within the Afghan Government Ministries need to become aware of NEPA and its mandate.

NEPA should interact with other relevant Government Ministries (such as Agriculture) in three main ways:

- Create a senior-level communications working group, which will consist of communications representatives from each relevant ministry who will meet on a regular basis to conceptualize and to coordinate communications activities;
- Provide systematic support to each other for information activities and campaigns of Government Ministries, and help share resources and information between the Ministries where possible;
- Develop a spirit and culture of collaboration where information becomes freely available to whoever seeks it, which is ultimately in the best interests of everyone.

The *Office of the President* is obviously the most important government entity regarding leadership of Afghan Government communications. The NEPA spokesperson or Director of

Information needs to be in regular contact with the President's Office to ensure that the communications strategy is in line with the point of view coming from the president. The Spokesperson should have regular meetings with the Office of the Spokesman of the President to liaise on messages, which need to go out. In addition, the NEPA Director General or his Chief of Staff should be aware of this activity and should keep up to date on any changes in messages emanating from the President's Office.

The *Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament* both have active Media Offices. It is important for the NEPA information Department to keep in contact with these two Offices; to at least get feedback from Parliament on all developments affecting NEPA issues.

Provincial and District Authorities contain very important stakeholders. Due to physical constraints they are in some cases difficult to reach with ease, but a key task of the NEPA Information Department will be to work out a strategy for building up regular contact with these bodies. NEPA should make its presence known with periodic visits from senior staff to the 28 provincial NEPA offices. Visits by the NEPA Director General and/or other senior staff to the provinces is important to highlight the NEPA mandate and it should be accompanied by senior Afghan journalists from the national media in Kabul to ensure that the visits are widely reported in the national media, along with messages from the Director General or Chief of Staff. Wide coverage in the Afghan media, especially on key radio stations, should be achieved by ensuring that the media are given interesting stories about the main issues facing NEPA with regard to the population and the Afghan Government. There are communications officers in all the offices of Governors in each Province, who can help facilitate NEPA and other government communications requests.

The media, both national and international, are vital in helping NEPA speak to the country at large regarding environmental issues and compliance. The strategy for using the media should be based on the following:

- *Use a variety of media, and play to their respective strengths* – All of the different Afghan media have their relative strengths. Radio is the most effective way of reaching the largest audiences all around the country, particularly in the rural areas; television can be effective in urban areas and is increasing in importance; and; newspapers and journals are useful for giving detailed information to limited numbers of educated stakeholders in urban areas. Currently NEPA is not using radio or television effectively enough. The Chief of Staff and other senior officials are regularly interviewed on radio in particular. While this is important – it is not enough. Radio and television journalists need to be encouraged to go into more depth about environmental issues and travel into the field to investigate them, speak with local NEPA officials (with clearance and tutoring from the Information department of NEPA) and to interview local Afghans affected by environmental issues.
- *Keep the media interested by giving them interesting news* – The media must be kept interested in the NEPA's activities. One means of doing so is to give them interesting news. That is what the media always want. News should be disseminated through press releases. A database of journalists and contact information should be developed and kept

in the Information Department and utilized frequently to reach out to the press and recommend story ideas to them. Press is the best form of public outreach since it is the most widely trusted – and it is free.

It will be important for the Director General to hold press conferences to spell out what the main messages of NEPA are, what NEPA is trying to do, and how the media can keep in touch with him. It is important to build him up as a key figure for the media to contact for reports, interviews and discussion programs.

Donors wield significant influence on economic development and government activity in Afghanistan and, as such, are a key stakeholder group for NEPA. Donors are especially interested in finding out the effectiveness of programs they are funding, and they also like to know whether the activities of Afghan Government are achieving the desired impacts, and whether the process of governance is open, transparent and inclusive. They also have funding available for specific purposes and by establishing relationships with them; NEPA will ensure that it will be made aware of such funding opportunities.

The General Public is not homogenous. There are many segments of the General Public, but for the purposes of NEPA messaging they will be narrowed down into two main groups: *Urban and Rural*. Both of these groups are interested in how NEPA is affecting them. They want to know how environmental issues are impacting their lives. But the interests and expectations of these groups vary considerably. The Urban population is much more concerned with urban issues such as air pollution and water and sanitation issues, while the rural population will be more concerned with agricultural issues such as overgrazing and deforestation, and water and land issues – as well as hunting of animals. As discussed above the rural population will want to receive their information much more from radio, while the urban population relies ever more frequently on TV and Print. Some messages might be more appropriate to men or women, but a bigger gender difference is in how they prefer to receive messages - men prefer news programs while women prefer dramas and serial programs. Most Programming will need to be in both Dari and Pashto. This is a very sensitive issue among the Pashtuns since most media production comes out of Kabul and tends to favor Dari. Some materials should also be in Tajik. This is particularly true of radio programming targeting women in the rural areas of the north, where many men speak Dari but the women do not.

Examples of the relationship between Audiences, Messages and Packaging are shown in the table below. Many more messages will need to be discussed and refined in the workshop:

Audience	Key Messages	Packaging of Messages
NEPA staff	All	Website (Intranet), Magazine, Newsletter, Face-to-Face Meetings and Workshops
IRoA Ministries, Office of the President, and Parliament	All	Communications Working Groups and Meetings, Magazine, TV and Radio Programs and Spots, Website (external)
Development Partners	All	Face-to-Face Meetings, Website (external)
Media	All	Face-to-Face Meetings, Website (external), Radio and TV Programs, Magazines and Newspapers
General Public – Urban Women	Islamic tradition compels Afghans to maintain a healthy environment. Cleaning up the air in Kabul will lead to healthier citizens.	Radio Serials, TV Serials, Billboard Campaign, Radio and TV Spots, Newspapers
General Public – Urban Men	Islamic tradition compels Afghans to maintain a healthy environment. Hunting of animals and birds is against the government’s decree and leads to the degradation of Afghanistan’s natural heritage. Cleaning up the air in Kabul will lead to healthier citizens.	Radio News-style Programs, TV News-style Programs, Billboard Campaign, Newspapers, Radio and TV Spots
General Public - Rural Women	Islamic tradition compels Afghans to maintain a healthy environment. Deforestation and Overgrazing Leads to loss of arable land Effective grazing policies will lead to sustainability of the land and increased future income. Planting trees will lead to increased income from harvesting of wood. Conserving water will lead to increased agricultural production.	Radio Serials, Billboard Campaign, Face-toface Meetings, Mullah, Radio Spots

<p>General Public – Rural Men</p>	<p>Islamic tradition compels Afghans to maintain a healthy environment.</p> <p>Deforestation and Overgrazing Leads to loss of arable land</p> <p>Effective grazing policies will lead to sustainability of the land and increased future income.</p> <p>Hunting of animals and birds is against the government’s decree and leads to the degradation of Afghanistan’s natural heritage.</p> <p>Planting trees will lead to increased income from harvesting of wood.</p> <p>Conserving water will lead to increased agricultural production.</p>	<p>Radio News-Style Programs, Billboard Campaign, Face-to-face meetings, Mullah, Radio Spots</p>
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6. MESSENGERS

As the senior figure in NEPA, the most important person for delivering the Communications Strategy is the Director General. The stakeholders around the country, especially the media, are most interested in what he says about environmental protection and he is second only to the President in this regard. Stakeholders will all expect the Director General to be present at important meetings. They will also want to see him personally. It is important to bear this in mind when planning events to achieve maximum impact. This is why all-important initial meetings of stakeholder dialogues should be addressed by the Director General, and for successive meetings and working groups to be chaired by the Deputy Director General or Chief of Staff and other senior NEPA officials. For press conferences, the media will always want to see, hear and interview the Director General above all others.

NEPA should communicate with stakeholders using the following main tools:

- Meetings, and other events
- The media: press releases, and press conferences, interviews and discussion programs as the basis for broad credible coverage directly from NEPA, especially over the main radio stations.
- A nationwide commercial outreach campaign, which will incorporate radio, television and print.
- The website, with intranet and external site In Dari, Pashto and English (some parts)
- A regular newsletter, including job postings - and other print materials

Each tool is discussed below:

6.1 Meetings and Events

Face-to-Face Interactions are a time-honored means of building up trust and understanding with stakeholder groups. A number of different types of meetings are suggested as follows for different stakeholder groups:

NEPA Workshops are intended primarily for NEPA staff. They should be regular and frequent. They should be directed by the Spokesperson/Director of Information and should be attended by the Director General and/or Deputy Director General, and Division Directors. In addition to power-point presentations discussing communications flow, other aids may include films.

Ministries Communications Working Group will be for the Ministries PR and Communications Departments, as well as the Office of the Spokesman of the President and other government officials and donor communications advisers. This is meant to be the focal point for developing and establishing public outreach campaigns for all of the government ministries. Coordination and information sharing will lead to synthesis of effort and will make the entire government communicate more directly and clearly to the stakeholder groups around the country.

Provincial, District and Village-level Workshops will include role-playing by participants, mobile cinema (showing films of NEPA), mobile theatre, local art shows, and other creative tools, which will be used to build up a relationship between the general population and the government. Active participation on the local level is important for learning purposes, especially for those who are illiterate. A key element of local level workshops will be to encourage the national media to attend and report on these activities. They will be interesting stories that the media will be keen to cover. The arithmetic of this approach is quite clear. There are about 30,000 villages around Afghanistan, so it will only be possible to hold workshops in a small percentage of these villages. Radio Free Europe, as an example, has an audience of at least six million Afghans each week in Dari and Pashto all around the country. If the key details of a workshop at one village are reported on just Radio Free Europe, the impact for thousands of other villages around Afghanistan is very clear indeed. And if other workshops, for instance, are reported on other radio stations, the messages of NEPA could get all around the country very quickly.

Other Meetings: The Director General, Deputy Director General, Spokesman and other senior figures should be very proactive in message delivery, taking every opportunity to promote the NEPA and its issues. Meetings should be held with all the stakeholder groups. It is very important that the Director General himself reaches out and meets people, internally and externally -- in the provinces as well as in Kabul. The message the Director General sets cannot be overstated. Whenever he holds an important meeting or visits a province NEPA Information Department must ensure that a press release is issued in advance and that the key national media are invited to the event. His participation in such meetings should be arranged such that there is a regular flow of information coming out from NEPA in this way. This will make NEPA credible for the audience all around Afghanistan.

6.2 The Media

The media in Afghanistan is very active and diverse. It is the key means of getting information around the country. As such it is a very important tool for all Afghan Government information campaigns.

Radio is the most important of the media in this regard. It is the best means of getting information all around the country, and fast. This is because virtually all villages in Afghanistan have radios. Villagers have listened to the radio as a lifeline over the past decades. Radio can reach illiterate Afghans with as much ease as those who can read and write. The radio stations vary enormously in credibility and reach. The stations that are most believed and trusted by the audience are (according to the 2005 Altai media study) the BBC, Radio Free Europe and VOA (in Pashto, Dari). The BBC also broadcasts in Uzbek. The state radio (RTA) is also respected. These stations broadcast all around the country on medium and short wave, and they have increasing reach on FM too. As they are the most trusted stations, they are the best for conveying serious messages. Both men and women have wide access to radio, even in rural areas, but they are not listening at the same time of the day and each have different preferences about which types of programs they prefer. Again, according to the Altai Study – men prefer news-type

programs and generally listen to the radio in the evenings, while women prefer serials and stories and are more apt to be listening to the radio in the daytime.

Television is increasingly important in urban areas, with most main towns and cities now having television broadcasts on several channels, which include the national television (RTA) and several commercial channels. Rural areas don't tend to have electrical power yet.

Print: There are many newspapers and magazines, mostly published in Kabul, but in other urban centers too – Herat, Kandahar, Jalalabad and Mazar-i-Sharif and other regional cities. They tend to have circulations, however, of only a few thousand copies per week or month. As such, the print media has much less influence than radio and television. However, it shouldn't be ignored for the purposes of government information campaigns. Detailed information that the government wants to impart can be printed out at length in newspapers and magazines – as well as billboards. Print primarily influences the educated class of Afghans as well as the media. These groups are very influential in Afghanistan and therefore it is important not to ignore this tool – despite the weak distribution network.

6.2.1 Using the Media

The media can be used for outreach of Afghan Government messages to the country at large in two main ways:

- by news-led coverage
- and by commercial means.

For the latter, companies are employed to produce radio and television spots, films for mobile cinema, radio dramas, printed material, billboards and so forth.

6.2.2 News-led Coverage

This is the main time-honored way that the Director General of NEPA will speak to the Afghan audience, and exert his authority and that of NEPA. The best way of dealing with the media is to issue a press release the day before any event or press conference. The release should include details of the event, comments from the Director General, Chief of Staff, or the Deputy Director General, messages that pertain to that event, and any useful background information, up to a maximum of one page. The press release can be sent to the national and international media via email, along with an invitation to the event. A plan should be put in place by the Information Department such that there are regular events and press conferences, so that there is a continual flow of interesting information for the media, and thus the Afghan audience around the country, from NEPA. In this way NEPA will be able to get its messages across. The point of holding a press conference is that all the media are welcome to participate. Keep the media interested with good stories. Covering Provincial, District or Village- level workshops would certainly, for instance, be an interesting story, especially if there is a senior NEPA figure to be interviewed for the news story. Once the media have become engaged with NEPA, they will expand their

activities to include increasing numbers of interviews and also the discussion groups by radio and television stations.

A list of Frequently Asked Questions and Answers (FAQs) needs to be prepared for use by the Director General and senior officials to help them with their interviews and interactions with both the media and other stakeholder groups. The FAQ approach needs to be extended to the Ministries as well. The overall aim for sustainable coverage is to get all the media, especially the main radio stations, interested in all issues concerning NEPA.

The financial cost to the NEPA for all this the news-led information campaign is minimal, compared to the cost and effort of producing commercial radio and television/TV spots, films and printed matter, and delivering these around the country. But, until capacity within the NEPA Information Department is built up, the commercial information campaign will be necessary. The commercial outreach campaign will only be possible, however, so long as foreign aid assistance is available. This is why training on communications within the NEPA Information Department will be so important as soon as possible.

There is also a clear policy of the Afghan Government to build up a free and independent media. This policy is hampered when the government effectively pays radio stations to carry its messages. A free and independent radio station will find it difficult to question the activities of an Afghan government body if that body is paying the station to carry its messages. The BBC, Radio Free Europe and VOA all refuse, for instance, to carry paid advertisements. However, if the messages are factual, rather than political, in nature this problem is somewhat eased.

6.3 Commercial Outreach Campaign

Radio Spots and Serials: As already discussed, radio is the most important medium and this is as true for commercially produced radio spots and serials.

Television Spots and Films: – Television spots and films can be effective for Afghan audiences in urban areas. NEPA has obtained a \$205,000 grant from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) for a 30-minute film and several spots as well as 6 advisors on the project. While it is admirable that NEPA received this grant – a different department obtained it and it is recommended that future media grants go through the Information Department. Also, six advisors are attached to this project as full-time consultants, which effectively cut the production funds down considerably. The need for this many consultants should be evaluated for future projects to see if that was a wise use of the funds.

Mobile Cinema: The television spots and films can also be used by mobile cinemas, which consist of four-wheel drive vehicles that are outfitted with screen and projector, and which travel to rural villages for their shows. These have proved very popular, and local-level workshops can be designed around the mobile cinema. The cinema will only be able, however, to reach a fraction of the country's 30,000 or so villages. So it will be important that encouraging news coverage of the mobile cinemas on the radio enlarges their effective audience. In other words it

is very important to make sure that the media come and see the mobile cinema shows in the villages.

6.4 Website

NEPA's website is not yet functioning. It is important to make it functional as soon as possible:

- For communications within NEPA, the website should have an internal section, called the intranet. As a most important tool for internal communications, it should be updated regularly and be accessible only to NEPA staff, who will retrieve their emails on the intranet. The intranet will have various headings, including for instance job advertisements. The content should be in Dari and Pashto.
- In addition, the website will also have a standard external section with more general information about NEPA. Job advertisements will also be available on this external site. This section should also present relevant information for the international community in English
- All press releases and printed matter issued by NEPA should clearly contain the NEPA's website address.

6.5 Printed Material

Newsletter and other printed materials: Printed material currently includes a newsletter and magazine. While these publications can be important – currently they are only reaching about a thousand people – far less than is necessary. It is recommended that NEPA continue with its printed material – it is far more important to utilize radio in particular to spread messages. Given the difficulty in transporting materials in Afghanistan in a timely way the development of the internet and website should help the print distribution considerably as publications can be sent electronically and printed locally.

Branding: The brand for the NEPA, which is such a central body within the Afghan Government, is primarily the Afghan government crest. It is recommended that this government crest be used for all NEPA branding.