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REGIONAL AFGHAN MUNICIPALITIES PROGRAM FOR URBAN POPULATIONS – REGIONAL COMMAND EAST

MONTHLY REPORT: DECEMBER 2010



December 2010 –Mahmude-i-Raqi citizens discussed with their Mayor the municipal tax collection improvement

JANUARY 2011

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development.

REGIONAL AFGHAN MUNICIPALITIES PROGRAM FOR URBAN POPULATIONS – RC EAST

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The authors' views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

Program Title: Regional Afghan Municipalities Program for Urban Populations – Regional Command East

Sponsoring USAID Office: USAID/Afghanistan

Contract Number: 306-C-00-10-00526-00

Contractor: DAI

Date of Publication: January 19, 2011

Author: USAID RAMP-UP East Project Staff

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ABBREVIATIONS & TERMS

AO	Assistance Objective
ACSO	Afghan Central Statistics Office
ACSS	Afghanistan Civil Service Support Program (USAID)
AIDAR	USAID Acquisition Regulations
AMSP	Afghanistan Municipal Strengthening Program (USAID/ICMA)
ANDS	Afghanistan National Development Strategy
ASI	Afghanistan Stability Initiative (USAID/DAI)
ASMED	Afghanistan Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise Development (USAID/DAI)
AVIPA	Afghanistan Vouchers for Increased Production in Agriculture (USAID)
ASGP	Afghan Sub-national Governance Program (UNDP)
AWP	Annual Work Plan
CAWSA	Commercialization of Afghanistan Water & Sanitation Activity (USAID/ICMA)
CDC	Community Development Council (established under NSP)
CDP	Community Development Plan
CERP	Commander's Emergency Response Program
CLIN	Contract Line Item Number
CO	Contracts Officer
COP	Chief of Party
COTR	Contracting Officer's Technical Representative
DoS	Department of State
DAI	Development Alternatives Incorporated
DCOP	Deputy Chief of Party
DMA	Department of Municipal Affairs (Office within IDLG)
DDA	District Development Assembly
DoWA	Department of Woman's Affairs
EA	Embedded Advisor
EDC	Education Development Center, Inc. (USAID Implementing Partner)
FAF	Foreign Assistance Framework
FIRUP	Food Insecurity Response for Urban Populations (USAID)
FOB	Forward Operating Base
FPO	Field Program Officer (USAID officer within the PRT)
GDA	Global Development Alliance
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
GIS	Geographic Information System
HO	Home Office
IARCSC	Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission
ICMA	International City/County Management Association (RAMP UP East Subcontractor)
IDLG	Independent Directorate of Local Governance
INF	Infrastructure (project)
IP	Implementing Partner
IR	Intermediate Result
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force

LGCD	Local Governance and Community Development Project (USAID/DAI)
LOP	Life of Project
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MIS	Management Information System
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
MIP	Municipal Improvement Plan
MUDA	Ministry of Urban Development Affairs
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NINF	Non-Infrastructure (project)
NSP	National Solidarity Program
O&M	Operations and Maintenance
PAR	Public Administration Reform
PDC	Provincial Development Committee
PMP	Performance Management Plan
POP	Period of Performance
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
RAMP UP	Regional Afghan Municipalities Program for Urban Populations (USAID Program)
RC (E,W,N,S)	ISAF Regional Command East, West, North, South
SMAP	Strategic Municipal Action Plan
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
SMGA	Senior Municipal Governance Advisor (RAMP UP East Key Personnel)
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SWM	Solid Waste Management
SO	Strategic Objective
TAMIS	Technical Assistance Management Information System
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
VET/CBSD	Vocational Education and Training and Community Based Skill Development Program (USAID program)

Terms

<i>gozar</i>	Neighborhood
<i>nahia</i>	Municipal District
<i>wakil or kalantar</i>	Nahia or gozar representative
<i>Mustoufiat</i>	Sub-national representative office for Ministry of Finance
<i>Tashkeel</i>	administrative structure of a GIRoA entity
<i>Safayi tax</i>	service charge and property tax
<i>Sharwali</i>	Municipality
<i>Moqarara</i>	Regulation

ABOUT RAMP UP EAST

The Regional Afghan Municipalities Program for Urban Populations, Regional Command East (RAMP UP East) started in June 2010 with the purpose of creating effective, responsive, democratic, transparent, accountable, municipal governance in the fourteen provinces that comprise the International Security Assistance Force's (ISAF's) Regional Command East. RAMP UP East is comprised of three distinct components, each tied to a specific goal:

Component 1 ~ Capacity Building of the GIRoA officials at the municipal level: All activities under this component will directly contribute to enhancing the capacity of municipal officials, managers and technicians to perform their core municipal management responsibilities. Based on an empirical understanding of the skills, capabilities, and knowledge of municipal staff, RAMP UP East provides a combination of on the job mentorship, training, and advising to enable more visible, responsive, and accountable governance at the municipal level.

Component 2 ~ Support to the GIRoA to provide responsive, effective, and visible municipal service delivery programs: Activities carried out under Component 2 support municipalities in delivering visible, tangible, and desirable services to citizens in the form of municipal service delivery projects (Municipal Projects). These projects simultaneously serve two purposes: (1) municipal projects provide citizens with marked improvements in daily life, helping them to gain satisfaction and greater confidence in their municipal government; and (2) in executing projects hand-in-hand with municipal officials, RAMP UP East builds capacity with a clear learning-by-doing approach, strengthening the GIRoA's capacity to sustainably deliver services to citizens in the long term.

RAMP UP East Target Municipalities

RAMP UP East works in all 14 provincial capitals—save Kabul city—in the provinces comprising ISAF Regional Command East (RC-E):

- **Asadabad (Kunar) **** Mahmud i Raqi (Kapisa)
- **Bamiyan (Bamiyan)** **Mehterlam (Laghman) ****
- **Charikar (Parwan)** **Meydan Shar (Wardak) ****
- **Gardez (Paktya)**** Panjshir/Panjshir (Panjshir)
- **Ghazni (Ghazni)**** Parun (Nuristan)
- **Jalalabad (Nangarhar) **** **Pul-e-Alam (Logar) ****
- **Khost (Khost)**** **Sharana (Paktika) ****
- ****Key Terrain Districts:** In the April 2010 Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan, the U.S. Government, ISAF and the GIRoA jointly defined 80 districts across Afghanistan as “Key Terrain Districts”. Key Terrain Districts are defined as those districts “where the bulk of the population is concentrated, and that contain centers of economic productivity, key infrastructure, and key commerce routes connecting such areas to each other and to the outside world.” Nine of the 14 target municipalities for RAMP UP East are located within Key Terrain Districts, as of October 2010.

Note: As of September 2010, RAMP-UP Parun Municipality activities are on hold.

Component 3 ~ Support to the GIRoA to improve economic development and revenue generation at the Municipal level: Activities implemented under this component directly support the growth of local economic development and strengthens revenue generation, and thereby the municipality's ability to finance its public services and operating costs. As RAMP UP East activities under Components 1 and 2 strengthen municipal capacity and service delivery, activities under Component 3 use the developed capacity, service improvements, and infrastructure to facilitate business growth and job creation.

RAMP UP EAST OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

The overall objective has three expected outcomes: Increasing the capacity of GIRoA municipal officials; markedly improving the delivery of municipal services to citizens in target municipalities; increasing municipal capacity to enable, support, and sustain economic growth.

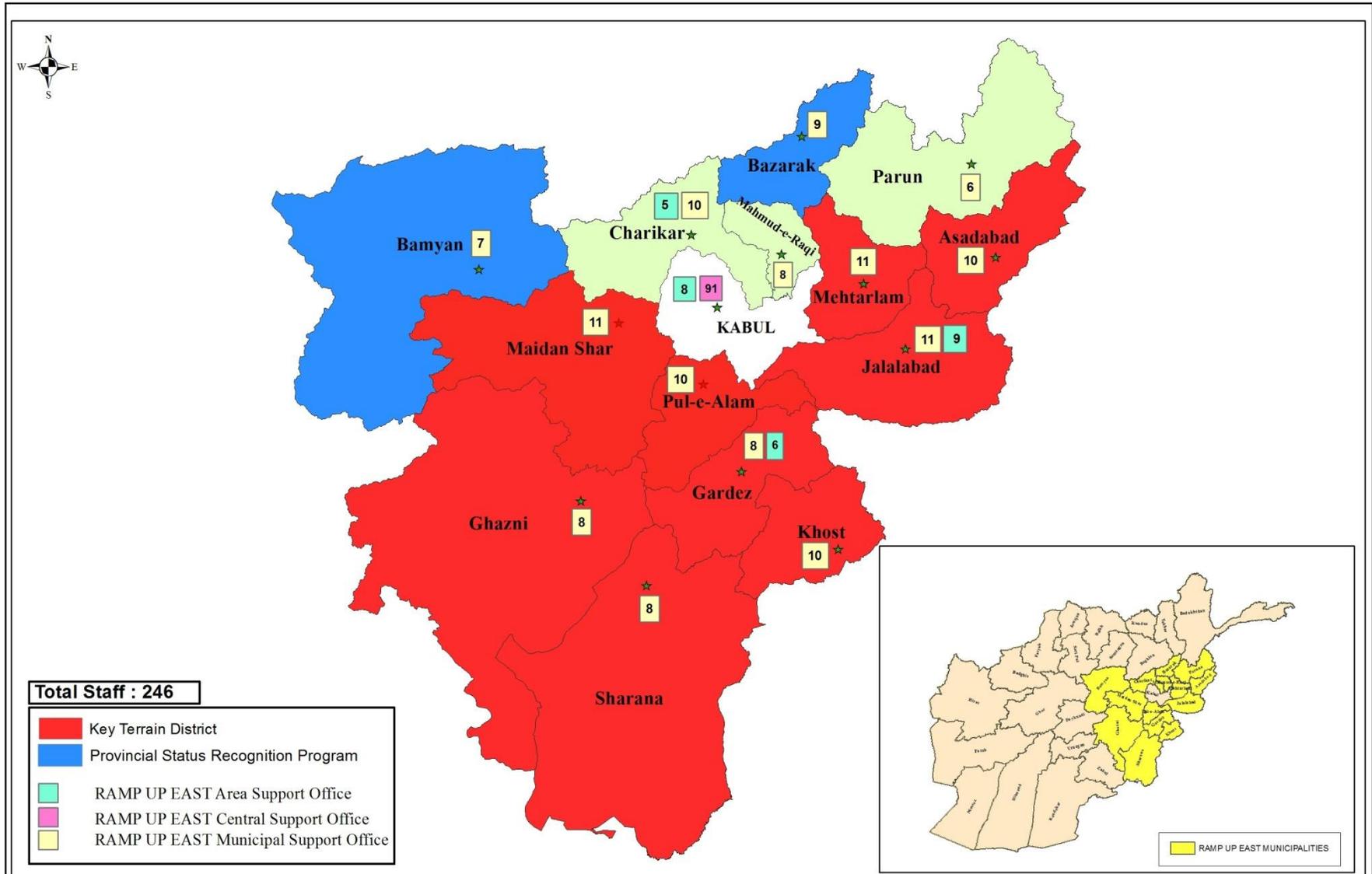
RAMP UP East's impact is measured by the degree to which Afghan citizens see local governance structures as legitimate. The perception of legitimacy is tied to receiving better services, understanding the responsibilities of municipal leaders, and playing an active role in municipal decision making. Delivery of essential services to citizens and businesses will foster a stronger revenue base more likely to comply with taxation requirements, generating greater revenues that enable a government to more effectively sustain, and potentially expand and improve, essential services. Measurement of RAMP UP East impact is a central tenet of our approach with accompanying requirements for data collection, measurements, and documentation to ensure outputs, outcomes, and impacts are clearly documented and duly analyzed.

RAMP UP EAST IMPLEMENTING PRINCIPLES

The RAMP UP East team is guided by six primary principles that are applied throughout all program activities:

- **Afghan Ownership:** RAMP UP East will be seen as an extension of the GIRoA, not as an increased foreign presence and must work within Afghan structures.
- **Afghan First:** RAMP UP East will work using Afghan regulations and systems and ensure that the project will use existing Afghan resources and assets to perform the stated objectives.
- **Demand Driven:** RAMP UP East assistance will be deployed at the Kabul and sub-national levels in accordance with the needs of the IDLG and the municipalities in which we work.
- **Long-term Capacity of GIRoA:** RAMP UP East will focus on institutional development of municipalities in the long term while helping the municipalities deliver specific outcomes in the short term.
- **GIRoA Empowerment:** RAMP UP East will report to both the GIRoA and USAID on the impact of its work. All reports submitted to USAID will be shared with the IDLG, and GIRoA institutions that will be the lead voice to guide programmatic activities.
- **Learning-by-Doing:** The best approach to capacity-building of municipal officials, managers, and technicians is integrated training and on the job mentoring that provides the required follow-up support needed to avoid training disconnects. RAMP UP East will apply classroom training with day-to-day, on-the-ground assistance to municipal staff, to help solve real problems in the communities.

USAID RAMP UP EAST OFFICE AND STAFF LOCATION



USAID RAMP-UP EAST DECEMBER 2010 HIGHLIGHTS

On December 5th, the Mayor of **Assadabad** led a project closing ceremony celebrating the completion of a 1,300 meter long roadside drainage ditch construction project. This project connected the Chaghan area of Assadabad to the city's main drainage system and will be operated and maintained by the municipal Department of Public Works. Project implementation was led by the municipality and served to build the capacity of municipal officials in the area of public works, project management and municipal revenue generation, with the support of USAID RAMP-UP East.



Dec. 5th, Assadabad Mayor and Provincial Governor led the ribbon cutting ceremony of the municipal drainage ditch project

From December 6th to 8th, RAMP-UP East central support office in Kabul convened a three day municipal public relations and outreach basic skills training for twenty-seven participants who included nine GIROA municipal staff members and seventeen RAMP-UP East embedded advisors. The three-day workshop reinforced the capacity of participants to engage in effective municipal public relations and outreach activities, such as convening inclusive municipal citizen forums and producing municipal newsletters.

On December 20th, The Mayor of **Charikar** convened a monthly citizen forum with the participation of nineteen citizen representatives that included youth. The Mayor discussed the delay in the Safayi tax payments and proposed an improved tax collection mechanism that ensures timely tax payment by citizens and businesses. This event received extensive local media coverage. For example - Dunya local radio station in Charikar organized a discussion with the Mayor about municipal tax collection and how these collections are linked to municipal services improvements.

On December 21st, the Acting Mayor of **Maidan Shar** in Wardak province led a public discussion with fifty-five citizens who learned about the municipality's preparations for the winter season. The municipality put in place an emergency coordination plan to address the risk of flooding and shared action-points with citizens for public emergency awareness and risk reduction purposes.

On December 22nd, The Mayor of **Pul-e-Alam** in Logar province convened a monthly citizen forum and discussed with twenty-eight citizens the role of citizens in municipal sanitation and tax payments. Community representatives also shared with the Mayor their concerns about municipal services.

On December 26th, the Mayor of **Ghazni** city presented the new 2013 city master plan to community representatives and he provided an update on municipal coordination with donor agencies and line ministries.

On December 28th, the newly appointed Mayor of **Sharana** in Paktika province briefed community members about his approach for municipal activities in Sharana and led a public discussion about the inappropriate behavior of some citizens who disposed of garbage in main streets, which leads to public hygiene problems in the city.



Dec, 21st, shopkeepers of Maidan Shar discussed with the Mayor the necessity for bus stop & improved city sanitation

On December 28th, the Mayor of **Mehterlam** in Laghman province held a discussion with community representatives to plan citizen participation to address the clearing of the Alishang roadside that has regular access problems because of the accumulation of mud due to the turbulent wet weather conditions. Community representatives proposed a ditch clearing program and offered to mobilize volunteers to participate in the planned public activity.

On December 29th, The Mayor of **Gardez** in Paktya province convened a monthly citizen forum meeting with the participation of twenty eight community representatives. The Mayor gave a public speech about the citizens' obligation to pay taxes on time to support municipal operations. Participants also discussed with the Mayor other issues of concern, such as access to municipal services and emergency response plans for the winter season.

THE MUNICIPAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRESS

On December 26 & 27, RAMP-UP East Municipal Team Leaders from thirteen participating cities assembled in Kabul for a 2-day workshop on the finalization and implementation of the Municipal Improvement Plans (MIPs). Each Municipality's MIP forms the backbone of efforts and planning to improve and institutionalize good practices in municipal governance in the areas of GIROA capacity building, economic development, revenue generation and public service delivery.

The workshop provided an opportunity for the Team Leaders to meet with technical specialists and advisors based at the Project's central office to review and update the proposed capacity building and service delivery improvement projects listed in the plan.

During the workshop, the participants reviewed and validated the activities in the MIPs, fine-tuned their descriptions and phasing, and improved the overall presentation of the plan. The output of the workshop was an improved and updated MIP for each of the participating municipalities.



Dec. 26th - 28th, Kabul, Municipal Improvement Plan Training

The Team Leaders returned to their duty stations with a better understanding of the purpose, content and timing of the agreed activities and of the tools, training and other resources available to support the municipalities in implementing the plans. The Team Leaders will discuss any proposed changes in the content of the MIP with each municipal Mayor for the final endorsement of the MIPs.

PROGRAM PROGRESS CHALLENGES

Since the RAMP-UP East program began in June 2010, the program encountered some challenges that constrained progress. These challenges originated from the decades of war in Afghanistan that interrupted municipal governance development which led to: insufficient human resources, technical knowledge, depleted municipal service delivery capacity and weak central government communications with municipalities.

This report states the main problems that were encountered over the last seven months as follows:

1- Communications between IDLG and the municipalities was insufficiently developed:

This led to some municipalities not being fully versed about RAMP UP East and meant that further discussions to orientate municipalities fully about the partnership between IDLG and RAMP UP East had to be undertaken to explain IDLG -RAMP UP East supported activities to the municipalities.

2- Mayoral appointments and delegated authorities: There have been a few instances where Acting mayors were appointed but were unable to exercise their full authority or roles. For example, the citizen forums and radio roundtables were not organized in a few locations as the

acting mayor did not want to speak to the public – as they felt unable or not authorized to make decisions on behalf of the municipality while serving as acting mayors.

3- The challenge of public communications and access to information: The program faced challenges in convincing some mayors about the value of citizen participation and public communications. The mayors of some cities were reluctant to meet with citizens and to share with the public municipal information especially with regards to municipal budgets and tax revenues – such measures in transparency were felt to be new concepts not previously done and therefore were met with resistance in a few cases.

4- The challenge of predominantly elderly municipal human resources: Many senior municipal staff are elderly and had little interest in learning about new approaches with regards to core and functional skills. A large number of municipalities have no young municipal officers and therefore succession of skills and knowledge and the motivation to undertake training for these has been problematic.

5- Insufficiently developed financial accountability: The lack of institutional financial transparency – for example – proper records, computerization, regular accountable reporting for tax collection and budget management impacted on the program activities. This meant some municipalities were not confident about sharing municipal financial data with the public.

6-Land disputes: Some of the municipal service delivery projects selected by the public and municipalities were delayed because of land disputes. Afghanistan's past conflicts have led to the loss of data, proper documentation, and this can manifest itself with land disputes where legal land ownership maybe contested. Some of the municipal service delivery projects site allocations and designs had to be revised several times because of land dispute issues between the government and community.

7- Service Delivery Projects support: It was noticed that some Mayors did not want to support small scale municipal service delivery projects that could serve to provide on the job training to municipal staff. Their preference instead was for large scale, prestigious, construction projects which do not fit within the RAMP UP East program of support. This led to delays in reaching consensus about the proposed projects in some cases.

8- Lack of properly developed reporting systems: RAMP-UP/E Embedded Advisors faced daily challenges with regards to access to municipal information. This challenge was due to the absence and or lack of proper reporting systems. The municipal data tends to be done through manual hand-written and uncategorized records, sometimes written with lack of clarity especially for financial data and for the decisions made by the Mayors.

The above points serve to illustrate some of the challenges encountered since the start of RAMP UP East. However, despite these RAMP UP East program progressed overall with the successful interactions involving citizens and municipal authorities.

MUNICIPAL PROGRESS REPORTS

CENTRAL AREA: BAMYAN, MAIDAN SHAR, PULI ALAM

PULI ALAM MUNICIPALITY

Province: Logar

MUNICIPAL SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Citizens of Puli Alam city and their Mayor received good news this month with regards to the donor approval to support the municipality in implementing the following three service delivery projects:

- 1- Car parking lot 1
- 2- Car parking lot 2
- 3- Solid waste collection management

The municipal staff members of Puli Alam commenced the project's design and drafting of project concept notes as first steps towards actual project implementation. The parking lots on-site construction will begin in March 2011 after the winter season when the weather conditions permit construction activities. The solid waste management project is set to start by the end of February 2011.

MUNICIPAL CAPACITY BUILDING

FUNCTIONAL TRAINING AND IMPACT

The municipal finance officer of Puli Alam was trained by RAMP-UP East during December to undertake the following activities and job tasks:

- Developing an action plan for the finance department
- Understanding the financial flow chart
- The standardization of procurement and accounting procedures
- Using financial journals for accounting
- Recording and categorizing quarterly revenues
- Computerizing revenue records.

The municipal Head of Finance Department for Puli Alam municipality appreciated the training and was cited as saying “the training received will definitely help us to modernize the municipal accounting system and impact on the municipal performance.”

In addition, RAMP-UP East Public Works Advisor provided training to his municipal counterpart during the reporting period. The training was on how to estimate and develop bills of quantity for the service delivery projects.



Dec. 2010, Puli Alam, data computerization basic skills training

The Municipal Economic Development Officer with support from RAMP-UP East received on the job training to develop an economic profile for Puli Alam city. The on the job training included data collection from line Ministry departments and the local government office. The municipal staff member was also trained to design municipal assets templates and began working to identify, register and utilize the unused assets to enhance revenue generation opportunities.

CORE SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

The Municipal Administration Department Head learned about basic management skills and reporting procedures. During this month, the organizational chart of Puli Alam Municipality was finalized and shared with the different departments. Each department was provided with a copy of the organizational chart.

The municipal key-team officers learned also how to computerize municipal documents for each department and how to keep track of municipal data for information management.

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Puli Alam Municipality Emphasizes Strong Community Representation at the Citizen Forum

On December 22nd, twenty-eight citizen representatives participated in the municipal led citizen forum of Puli Alam. The Youth, Wakil e Gozar and shopkeepers were among the participants. The public meeting emphasized the need for active citizen participation at municipal meetings to improve GIROA and citizen communications.



Dec. 22nd, Mayor of Puli Alam asked citizen collaboration to keep the streets clean.

The Deputy Mayor led a participatory discussion about the citizens' role in municipal sanitation and tax payments. Citizens also expressed their views about municipal activities and the reasons why some citizens do not pay the Safayi Tax.

With regards to city sanitation, the Deputy Mayor explained that the municipality had prepared a good plan for city cleaning but cautioned everyone that the plan will not succeed without citizen collaboration to keep the streets clean and dispose of garbage properly in allocated trash collection sites.

Moreover, the Deputy Mayor called upon influential local leaders and Wakil e Gozar to regularly participate in the municipal forum. He said that the citizen forum allows citizens to get an update about their municipality's activities and for the municipality to share information with the community to overall improve collaboration and communication between the government and citizens.

██████████, one of the Wakil Guzar representatives, explained that the tax collection mechanism is a serious challenge faced by the municipality. He requested donors to support organizing extensive training for municipal officers to improve the Safayi tax collection and to improve municipal revenue generation. ██████████ pointed out that the municipality should upgrade and maintain shop's entrances in business areas to help convince shopkeepers to pay the tax based on their perceptions of satisfactory municipal service delivery. The proposal was welcomed by the Deputy Mayor who took note of this suggestion.

Citizens were also provided with an opportunity to publicly express their views about the municipality which also led to some criticisms about the municipality. This enabled both the municipality representatives and citizens to engage in constructive dialogues even though there were issues for the municipality to address. For example, ██████████ was quoted as saying "I blame the municipality and NGOs for not implementing projects they promised the public. I don't see that the actual project work has started in the city. This is a reason why citizens do not attend or are disinterested in the citizen forum gathering." The Deputy Mayor responded by explaining the role of the citizen's forums and how these meetings can serve to enable meaningful municipal and citizen cooperation. He said: "This type of discussion is a prime key for sharing information and views about the municipality so let's support our government and make it responsible."

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

The Puli Alam Municipality officials participated in the Provincial Development Council meeting on December 19th that was held at the Governor's Office compound. The Deputy Governor mentioned the children's park project and stated that RAMP UP East had completed the site survey and the prepared proposed project documents had been submitted to the donor for review and approval.



Dec 19th. Puli Alam, meeting with USAID Activity Managers

RAMP UP EAST – USAID COORDINATION

On December 19th and December 23rd, RAMP-UP East held a brief meeting with the USAID Activity Manager and gave a brief overview about the municipal support program and progress of activities in Puli Alam. Both parties discussed the revenue generation module of the planned municipal service delivery projects.

MAIDAN SHAR MUNICIPALITY

Province: Wardak

MUNICIPAL SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Maidan Shar Drainage Ditch Construction to Temporarily Stop Due to Harsh Winter Weather Conditions

Due to the severe cold weather in Wardak province, RAMP-UP East and the Maidwan Shar municipality jointly agreed to temporarily stop the construction work for the 1,100 meter drainage ditch and culvert project. It was agreed to resume the construction work next season but no later than March 30th. By the end of December, 80% of the project's work had been completed and forty-eight laborers had benefited from cash for work opportunities.

The construction of the drainage ditch will address the problem of excessive ground surface water caused by rain-water run-off or snow melt – which leads to flooding in the market area. This problem results in unhygienic ground conditions and discourages local citizens from shopping in the Bazaar. In the past, the market area flooding impacted negatively on shopkeepers' revenues and led to citizen dissatisfaction with municipal performance as the maintenance of public shopping and business areas in the town is a municipal responsibility. According to the municipal engineering team - the project is necessary to eliminate health hazards and avoid flood damage to the market shop building foundations.

The project will assist in providing a clean and improved environment for local communities and shopkeepers. This will enable local economic development by encouraging new businesses to open for trade in the Bazaar.

The Maidan Shar Municipal Office will use the winter period to developed project concept notes for municipal service delivery projects that were identified by citizens during the MIP participatory planning process undertaken earlier. It was agreed that RAMP-UP East will provide in-house training for the concept notes development until the drainage ditch construction work is resumed.



Dec. 12th, Maidan Shar Acting Mayor and Head of Engineering Department visited the drainage ditch construction site.

MUNICIPAL CAPACITY BUILDING

FUNCTIONAL TRAINING AND IMPACT

The Public Finance Advisor was recruited on December 14th. The Embedded Advisor started working with his municipal counterpart on the development of a financial filing system, reviewed the existing files, and discussed the Municipal budget and Ministry of Finance chart of accounts and payment procedures that the municipality must comply with.

Furthermore, the Municipal Head of the City Sanitation and Greening Department prepared a site plan of garbage dump sites and bin locations. The municipal officer was provided with on the job training to understand the environmental standards of dump sites, site design principles to enable preparation of project designs. It was observed that Maidan Shahr municipality had no site plans or standards in place for the solid waste management project.

Based on the discussions at the municipal citizen forum held in December, RAMP-UP East helped the municipal staff prepare an action plan for disaster emergency responses for the winter season.

In addition, the municipal revenue generation officer was trained by RAMP-UP East to develop a work plan for the revenue department and to computerize municipal income data. The

officer was also trained to map municipal assets and collected information for preparation of the economic profile of Maidan Shahr municipality.



Dec. 24th, Maidan Shar, the Finance Department started general review of the municipal accountancy documentation system.

CORE SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

The RAMP-UP East Public Administration Advisor shared information with his counterparts with regards to organizing citizen's forum and the agenda development. The municipal officers who had not attended the public outreach training held on December 6th were able to gain an understanding of the citizen forum concept and of the significance of public communications as a means to improve public confidence in government and to improve

municipal public accountability. The municipal officers prepared the proposed citizen forum agenda and discussed it with the Acting Mayor.



Dec. 25th, Maidan Shar, Head of the Hygiene and Greenery Department worked on site plan for the solid waste collection project.

During the reporting period, the municipal administrative department received on the job training and prepared TORs for the Administration Manager and for the Head of the Revenue Generation Department positions. Note that the activities are currently on-going to finalize the organizational chart of Maidan Shar municipality.

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

In Maidan Shar: The Women’s Participation Record in the Citizen Forum Reaches the Highest Ever

The date of 21st December was noteworthy as fourteen women representatives recorded the highest ever participation in the municipal citizen forums supported by RAMP-UP East. The citizen forum of Maidan Shar led by the Acting Mayor consisted of approximately fifty-five community representatives including the Shopkeepers Association, the Youth Department and GIRoA Department for Women’s Affairs in addition to community elders and local government officials.



Dec. 21st, Maidan Shar, the Acting Mayor answered Citizens’ questions with regards to budgetary issues.

The Acting Mayor of Maidan Shar led the discussion about the disaster emergency response plan prepared by the municipality. It was noted that the municipality was concerned about potential flooding and had made efforts to reduce risks and to protect citizens in case of severe weather conditions that may cause damage to houses and risk to life. The Acting Mayor stated that the citizen forum helped in raising public awareness about actions to be taken in the event of disasters and that the municipality along with other GIRoA Departments is responsible for coordinating disaster emergency responses.

During the discussion, citizens received an explanation from the Acting Mayor with regards to public concerns over budget management issues that were raised in the previous citizen forum meeting held in November. In addition, commenting on the active participation of women in the citizen forum, Mina Ahmadi of, GIRoA Department of Women’s Affairs was quoted as saying “such meeting is important for women to exercise public speech and have their opinion heard about municipal issues.”



Dec 21st, Maidan Shar, MoWA’s representative spoke about the active women’s participation in the forum

Another citizen participant [REDACTED], a local carpenter, speaking on behalf of the Maidan Shar Shopkeepers Association, raised issues for the municipality to address and was quoted as saying “Why the municipality doesn’t provide services for us? I have two main problems to discuss. The first problem is the city cleanness and the allocation of proper garbage collection sites. The second problem is the construction of a proper bus stop for transport to Kabul to be based in Jalriaz and Chak District.”

The discussion finished with an explanation from the Acting Mayor about the new planned solid waste management project and financial problems encountered for the bus stop construction that required donor support and further planning.

MUNICIPAL MEDIA EVENTS:

Markets sanitation Issue Discussed on Radio at Maidan Shar.

On December 29th, The Acting Mayor of Midan Shar along with the representative of the Shopkeeper's Association and director of the Environmental Department discussed the state of sanitation in the bazaar. The live broadcast provided the Mayor with access to hundreds of listeners and targeted shopkeepers. The radio presenter asked the Mayor about the existing system for garbage collection from the bazar site.

The Acting Mayor explained that the municipality had twenty-five laborers who were tasked with garbage collection; he also explained municipal plans for spraying water on the bazaar streets to reduce dust levels and the distribution of twenty-five mobile garbage bins across the city.

The discussion also included good public practices as tips for shopkeepers to keep the bazar clean and how environmental conditions such as public hygienic impacts on the state of public health and also on revenue generation.

RAMP-UP EAST – USAID COORDINATION

During this month, RAMP-UP East held a series of coordination meetings with the USAID Activity Manager and PRT. The meetings were arranged on December 7th, 21st, 22nd and 29th. The Acting Mayor of Maidan Shar took part in the meeting on 22nd December and briefed USAID on the RAMP-



UP East project progress and the capacity building support undertaken.

Dec. 19th, Maidan Shar Acting Mayor, RAMP-UP East & USAID FPO held a coordination meeting.

On December 29th, RAMP-UP East Kabul Area Director gave a program presentation for the PRT with the goal of keeping the US PRT up to date on the program progress and to improve coordination between RAMP-UP East, the municipality, USAID and the US PRT.

BAMYAN MUNICIPALITY

Province: Bamyan:

MUNICIPAL SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Bamyan Citizens to Access Solid Waste Collection Project

At the recent participatory discussions held at the Bamyan monthly citizen forum, citizens requested that the municipality implement a solid waste management project for the city.

The project proposal was approved for funding during December and the municipality began the preparation of concept notes and site surveys. The program management is also working on plans to implement standard environmental procedures to be undertaken during the project implementation.



06th Dec. Bamyan, site survey of Public Latrines project

The actual project implementation is set to start at the soonest when the environmental procedures implementation plan is completed and approved by USAID.

MUNICIPAL CAPACITY BUILDING

FUNCTIONAL TRAINING AND IMPACT

The Municipal Finance Manager and Accountant were trained in producing financial flow charts, accounting journals, budgeting, the use of performance based budget techniques and expense recording for financial reporting and accountability. The Embedded Advisor provided class room training on the GIRoA procurement law that municipalities must comply with.

The municipal Public Works Engineer received on the job training provided by RAMP-UP East to undertake sub road project design, construction of public latrines, and project management of public works like pavement construction.

CORE SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

The Municipal Administrative Officer was trained on basic team management skills and activities coordination between each municipal department. The theoretical discussion provided by RAMP-UP East was put into practice through learning-by-doing approach. The Administrative Officer organized weekly and monthly staff meetings during this month and learned how to design the meeting agenda and administrative action points in response to the discussed points at the meeting. Furthermore, the administrative officer received training on how to organize a citizen forum and produce an internal work activities report. The municipal Administrative Officer was responsible for coordinating the citizen forum that provided him with a good understanding to learn about social inclusion and public communications.

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Bamyan Citizens Urged to Actively Participate in the City Cleaning Initiative

On December 27th, forty-four community representatives received an update from the Mayor about the imminent start of the solid waste management project implementation. The Mayor also announced a municipal initiative for the city cleaning where citizens come together to clean their streets and share food during the city cleaning day. The Mayor explained the value and the necessity for an active community participation in this voluntary work day that brings people together to jointly improve the state of their city through initiatives jointly undertaken by citizens and their municipality for the benefit of everyone in Bamyan.

At the meeting discussions, there was a general agreement and a widely held understanding amongst most citizen participants to work cooperatively for the benefit of their city. These sentiments were illustrated by the comments made by various meeting participants who are quoted here. The citizens gave the municipality helpful suggestions to be considered by the municipality. A few of these suggestions are enumerated below:

One of the citizen representatives, a human rights activist, ██████████, noted the importance of the citizen forum in enabling citizens to become active players in the municipal decision making process. ██████████ said “the municipality should expand its public activities to gain the people’s confidence and collaboration. I also suggest that businesses should be classified and should obtain work permits from the municipality. This will enable an improved revenue generation mechanism to support public services.”



Dec. 27th, Bamyan citizens discussed with the Mayor the city cleaning initiative

██████████ a shopkeeper’s representative welcomed the number of trash bins being placed across the city as part of the new solid waste management project. He said, “People are ready to participate in the voluntary city cleaning day but they need to dispose o garbage in the bins. The increase in the number of trash bins will help change and improve public hygiene behavior as they will have greater access to trash collection sites.”

██████████ suggested additional measures to promote public awareness. He said: “The city cleaning day should be a collective social activity and to sustain it, mosques, radio and TV should be regularly used to raise public awareness about sustainable city sanitation.”

Ms. Ozra Mohammadi, the representative of GIRoA Women’s Affairs Department commented; “I suggest that the municipality and people should establish a city cleaning committee in each neighborhood. The public participation will help change attitudes about city cleaning.” She also added: “The residential areas should be included in the city cleaning project so that people appreciate their municipality public services and keep the city clean as they will be the beneficiaries.”

The mayor noted the helpful suggestions made by the citizen at the meeting and will discuss the citizen suggestions made with the governor in order to undertake the necessary next steps as actions.

STAKEHOLDER & DONORS COORDINATION

On December 6th, the Mayor of Bamyan along with other municipal officers participated in the Municipal Coordination Committee meeting. The main topic of the meeting was planned service delivery projects and public activities. Selected governmental line directories, USAID-FPO and other international stakeholders attended this meeting.

RAMP-UP EAST USAID COORDINATION

The Municipal team of Bamyan held a meeting with the USAID Activity Manager. The meeting focused on the Mayor and municipal officials' involvement in civic education and public awareness activities including the citizen forum and the radio roundtable discussions about municipal affairs led by the Mayor with the participation of citizen representatives.

CHARIKAR AREA OVERVIEW: CHARIKAR, PANJSHIR, MAHMUD RAQI

CHARIKAR MUNICIPALITY

Province: Parwan

MUNICIPAL SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

The Solid Waste Management project underway in Charikar provides for daily garbage collection and waste dumping at the municipal waste landfill site. Municipal workers received training on operations and maintenance of municipal infrastructure for maintenance of drainage ditches and for garbage collection.

The department of public service for the municipality for Charikar has become fully responsible of project management. The garbage collection service is provided six days a week using three dump trucks and three tricycles most of which are old and have surpassed their operational service life. Municipal authorities estimate that only 50% of waste generated each day is collected and 50% is deposited in unauthorized garbage dumpsites.

Project public feedback:

Some citizens of Charikar seem to be more knowledgeable about the municipal activities. This public knowledge was not acquired through promotional or educational materials but was obtained through the public perceptions about the municipality's performance of its public service delivery and positive changes being observed in the city, for example – street cleanliness and municipal leadership.

According to some local citizens in Charikar city, before the solid waste management project started and expanded, some citizens had no expectations for the municipality or did not have access to trash bins.

Citizen ██████████ noted the changes that have been occurring in the city. He was quoted as saying “The public observes that positive city hygiene changes have happened in the city. This should get better and better.”

Local citizens also noted that the municipality must work closely with businesses and construction workshops to improve revenue generation and to improve municipal service delivery performance and public satisfaction.

Labor information table		
Activity	Number of labor	Man days
Trash	22	545
Ditch Cleaning	8	199
Land filled	4	97
Total	34	841



Dec. 22nd, Charikar municipality cleans the drainage ditch on semi-regular basis.

MUNICIPAL CAPACITY BUILDING

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

The Administration and Finance Training programmed for the counterparts of each advisor has been in progress since September 2010 in Charikar. The training program focused on improving the understanding and skills of municipal staff to deliver the required administrative, financial and secretarial support services to the municipality.

The training included the modernization of Municipal Accounting Systems and Functions according to Ministry of Finance / IDLG Guidelines and development of Municipal Operations and development budgets using performance based budgeting techniques.

The Municipal Finance Officer, Said Wali, commented on the on the job training, “I used to use carbon papers for multi-copying of letters but now I can provide all copies in one with the data being computerized.”

During this month, the municipal engineering team learned how to prepare a maintenance plan for municipal assets and how to systematize the municipal property rental records. Moreover, the Economic Development and Revenue Generation Officer started preparation of the Municipal Economic Profile with support from RAMP-UP East.

The municipal economic team and the Embedded Advisor assembled all the necessary economic profiling data, which will be consolidated, coordinated and incorporated in the economic profile. The Economic Development Officer was also trained to develop the municipal economic plan, property



registration, and revenue generation plan and that included assets mapping of Charikar municipality.

Dec. 15th, Charikar, the municipal Staff received on the job training of solid waste collection

The municipality has also semi-completed the 5 years annual comparative analysis of municipal revenues which will enable the municipality to gain an understanding of the last previous five year’s revenues and scale up the current progress towards the municipality’s future plans.

CORE SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

In December 2010 the Municipal Administrative Officer continued to receive training in general management skills, filing systems and public meetings coordination. Municipal staff member Haji Abdul Malik said: “The municipality didn’t have proper records and most of the documents were lost. Now I learned to record the data and prepare administrative staff meeting notes.”

In addition, the Mayor of Charikar was trained to use the computer and internet to communicate with governmental organization and learn about regional municipal experiences.



Dec. 23rd, Charikar organizational chart discussion

The mayor quoted about the training he received “In the past, I would take a lot of time and effort to get in touch with people as I used to rely on manual ways to send and receive documents. Now I can easily make contact through my email and it is easy, fast, and free.”

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Shopkeepers Ask the Municipality for Commercial Area to Expand Business

The Charikar citizen forum was held on December 20th with the participation of nineteen citizens including five youths. The Mayor of Charikar provided an update about the implementation of the annual development plan and shared with citizens the municipality’s concerns with regards to the delay in the Safayi tax payment. The Mayor also explained that the citizen forum allows the municipality to understand the public needs, to share challenges and to follow up on discussed issues which improve GIROA’s relations with the public. The following quotes illustrate some of the sentiments expressed by citizens at the meeting:

Citizen ██████ commented on the solid waste management project. He said, “The city looks cleaner than before, but the road conditions are still quite bad especially during the winter as we couldn’t easily access our homes because of the mud. The municipality should partner with private sector companies and make sure the road construction project is listed in the next New Year’s budget.”



Dec. 15th, Charikar, shopkeepers requested the allocation of commercial area to expand business.

The city expansion and the need for an urban master plan was also mentioned by the shopkeepers who complained about the lack of space for their business. The head of the Shopkeeper’s Union was quoted as saying “Our daily business and marketing is done on the road. Our shops, hotels, private car parking are very close to the road and the road is always blocked. The municipality should pay attention to this issue and provide us with a suitable environment for living so we pay the tax.”

█████ requested the PRT to help citizens of Charikar in paving the road between Bagram Airbase and their city. He was quoted as saying “we are very close to Bagram Air Base and the PRT supports road construction all over Afghanistan but the road between Charikar and Bagram is not paved yet.”

The Mayor responded to some of these citizen concerns and was quoted as saying “the municipality is planning to allocate 550 plots of land in Gul Ghondai for residential purposes. This will improve the economic development.” He explained that the municipality did not have sufficient commercial land area available and promised to discuss this issue at the next Provincial Development Committee (PDC) meeting.

The citizen forum was followed by a local radio interview with the Mayor. Dunya Radio held a public broadcast discussion with the Mayor on 25th December. The topics discussed included the service delivery projects selection and prioritization, public private partnerships and the increase of the price of food in Charikar.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

The Municipality of Charikar participated in the Provincial Development Committee (PDC) meeting held on December 15th at the Governor's Office compound. Participants included GIRA, NGOs and USAID. The discussion focused on provincial development affairs and municipal services.

The Mayor's Representative discussed the city sub-roads construction and municipal landfill project, which will be developed with the technical assistance of the RAMP UP East program.

In addition, the governor recommended that the municipality to allocate and develop an industrial area with the leadership of the municipal staff members.

STAKEHOLDER & DONORS COORDINATION

Charikar Mayor Requests support for gender based training activities

On December 14th, the Mayor of Charikar had a meeting with USAID, IDLG and PRT representatives. The guests were briefed by the Mayor, about the municipal project's progress and the RAMP-UP East capacity support.

During this meeting, the Mayor requested RAMP-UP East to implement its planned gender support activities and involve women in the municipal work. The Mayor stated "the municipality and our women need to have professional training for women in the areas of economics, education, healthcare and municipal work."

On December 28th, the Mayor participated in the UN-HABITAT meeting. UN-Habitat plans to support the National Solidarity Program (NSP) to conduct activities at the city center in Charikar. The Mayor provided a brief overview of the current city construction and districts managed by the Charikar municipality which will help NSP to understand and design plans for the targeted areas.

RAMP-UP EAST USAID COORDINATION

On 21 December 2010, the Deputy Ambassador of the US Embassy, DFPO, USAID Activity Managers, and USAID implementing partners held a meeting at the Provincial Governor's house.

A RAMP UP East representative made a presentation about the program's three components and the activities underway and support provided to Charikar municipality. It was mentioned in the meeting that the capacity building component is a key priority for the municipality.

BAZARAK MUNICIPALITY

Province: Panjsher

MUNICIPAL SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Bazarak Municipality of Panjsher province continued to receive support for solid waste collection from RAMP UP East. This support comprises of technical assistance in project management and fuel supply for municipal owned vehicles. The project covers the areas of Anaba, Rukha, Central Panjshir and Parakh area of Panjshir City.

Commenting on the state of the city cleanness, [REDACTED], a butcher in the city, had significant advice for the municipality and said: “It is very good that the municipality is leading the garbage collection efforts but these efforts have to be sustainable and to continue further.” Note the municipal solid waste management project collected 110 cubic meters of solid waste during December.

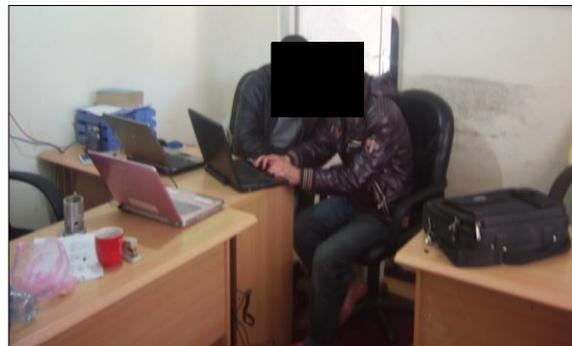


Dec. 6th, Bazarak City , Anaba Market

MUNICIPAL CAPACITY BUILDING

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

The municipal Finance Manger at Bazarak municipality received on the job training this month with a focus on operational and development budget review and implementation as planned in the Municipal Improvement Plan (MIP). The municipal officer has begun working on preparations of forms and computerization. The forms include M12, M41 procurement forms, overtime form, Bazarak municipality guest house



check list and registration forms. In addition the municipal construction manager began on the job training on how to use Auto CAD and GPS.

Dec. 14th, Bazarak, practical session of AutoCAD engineering software training

During this reporting period, RAMP-UP East Planning and Economic Development Advisor focused on supporting the municipal counterpart to start implementing the municipal action plan that was prepared in November 2010.

The achieved work included drafting the municipal assets mapping template and completing an estimated 25% of the municipal economic profile. Moreover, the municipality prepared initial concept notes for service delivery projects including the proposed landfill project.

The Municipal Revenue Generation Officer, Mr. Najibullah, advised that he is planning to register the existing active income sources and new revenue sources with the assistance and mentorship of the program embedded advisor.

CORE SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

In this month, the Municipal Land and Property Manager, Said Masoud, learned about the administrative filing system that supports service delivery project implementation and progress. Furthermore, the Administrative Officer learned how to prepare an organizational chart that clarifies management and authority interrelationships. Masoud commented on his training: “Now there is clarity for each staff member about tasks, organization structure and reporting line”.

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

On December 6th, approximately fifteen citizens participated in the Bazarak municipality monthly citizen forum. The short meeting included an update from the Mayor about municipal service delivery projects, future plans and an explanation about the delay in implementing the drainage ditch construction project supported by RAMP-UP East.

The Mayor mentioned that the private security firms issue and the submission of project environmental standards documents had contributed to the project delay. He also announced that the PRT will support the potable water network project and will support recruiting around 200 laborers who will benefit from cash for work opportunities.

STAKEHOLDER & DONORS COORDINATION

In December, municipal officials held three meetings with USAID FPO and PRT. The meetings focused on maintaining active public participation in city development and public services delivery.

The meeting participants discussed the PRT small project’s grant provided to the municipality. It was agreed that RAMP-UP East will provide technical support as needed for the municipality and the implementing partner Community Development Councils (CDCs).

MAHMUD RAQI MUNICIPALITY

Province: Kapisa

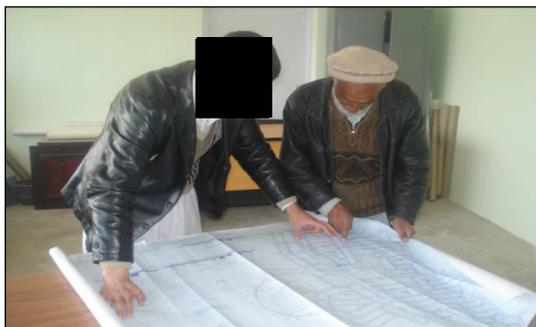
MUNICIPAL CAPACITY BUILDING

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

The head of the Finance Department at Mahmud-i-Raqi municipality in Kapisa received on-the-job training that for this month comprised of: financial filing systems, accounting, and book keeping. A learning-by-doing approach was applied during the practical training of the financial system review and computerization.

In addition, the municipal Engineering Department received training in public works to address project site surveys and design. The municipal engineers were also trained to design municipal buildings for future use.

The municipal property registration team received support from RAMP-UP East to develop a revised list of municipal property. The list will enable the municipality to apply control on tax collection and identify new revenue generation opportunities.



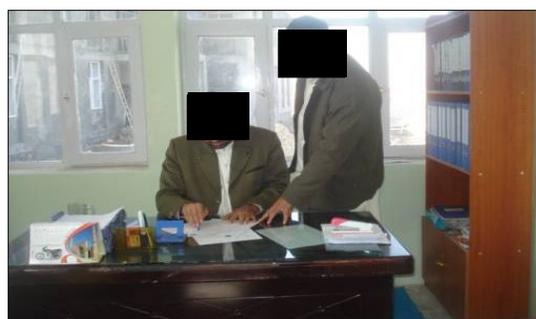
Dec. 20th, Mahmud-I-Raqi Municipality engineer was trained on project survey and design

For Municipal Revenue Generation - team members were given guidance on incorporating municipal economic data to prepare the municipal economic profile. The team learned key economic assessment skills' such as how to identify revenue generation resources, municipal asset registration and how to undertake tax collection assessments in order to increase the overall municipal revenue income. The municipal property registration team also received training on how to develop a revised list of the municipal assets map.

CORE SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

The Administrative Manager of Mahmud-i-Raqi municipality was trained on municipal administrative skills such as record keeping and creating filing systems for each municipal department.

Mahmud-i-Raqi, the Municipal Administrative Manager commented on the training: "The training provided will help the municipality to classify the municipal documents in an easier way and will save time."



Dec 20th, Mahmudi Raqi, RAMP-UP East provided Record-training for the municipal administrative manager

The work has also started to transform municipal records from hand written municipal records into electronic computerized documents. This will assist the municipality in improving overall information management, administrative transparency and administrative efficiency for the municipality.

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Citizens Call the Municipality for Transparent Use of the Safayi Tax Income

Mahmud Raqi municipality organized its second monthly citizen forum on December 21st 2010. Forty-three participants, including nine women received detailed information from the Mayor about the municipal performance and the planned service delivery projects. The following quotes reflect some of the opinions voiced by citizens at the forum meeting:

A member of the Provincial Council, Ms. Razia Sadat Habibi asked the Mayor during the meeting “Why does RAMP UP East work only in central cities without paying attention to other districts? The Mayor explained USAID made a decision to support 14 municipalities in central cities and he hoped that the program will be extended to include other municipalities at the district level.”

Mawlawee Gul Muhammad, Head of the Religious Clerics commented on the municipal planned projects and said: “The service improvement delivery projects have to create an impact that is seen by everybody and the municipal income should be collected in a transparent mechanism to use this money for public service improvements.”

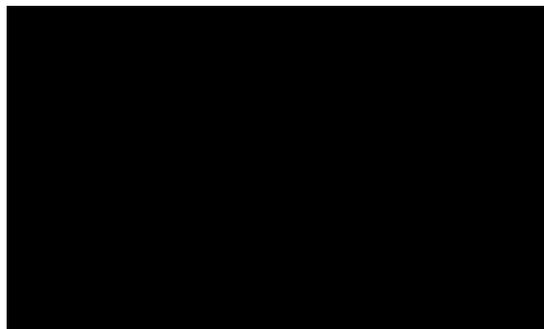
The mayor, Mahmud Raqi explained that the municipality was focused on revenue generation based projects like coffee shops, public parks and public latrines and municipal guest houses.

An issue of concern to some citizens was discussed at the citizen forum – this was the problem of land disputes and land allocations. The Mayor, who was only recently appointed, advised that illegal land ownership plus land grabs of government land were common issues that contributed to this problem. He pointed out that the municipality is following up on this issue for further clarifications.

STAKEHOLDER & DONORS COORDINATION:

On 5th December 2010, the Mayor held a meeting with the Head of Mercy Corps in Kapisa. The meeting focused on the ongoing work of upgrading the city park that is located near the main city mosque.

The mayor requested that Mercy Corps should help in greening the park with artificial grass, the request was initially accepted by the organization.



Dec 21st, Mahmud-i-Raqi. Citizens emphasized on revenue generation projects

JALALABAD AREA OVERVIEW: JALALABAD, MEHTERLAM, ASSADABAD

JALALABAD MUNICIPALITY

Province: Nangarhar

MUNICIPAL CAPACITY BUILDING

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

The municipal finance department officers received on the job training this month on how to process the staff payroll in MS Excel. Previously, the hand written payroll process would take approximately 10 days of municipal officer time to manually prepare the payroll. The computerization will help the municipality to speed up this process and result in a systematic, computerized payroll system being established. The staff members were also briefed about the performance based budgeting and revenue collection templates.

Mr. Fazal Mohammad, the Head of Finance and Revenue Generation Department, summed up the advantages the new approach brings, saying “The templates will make it easier for staff members to prepare salary sheets, keep comprehensive revenue records and produce accurate budgets.”

During December, 2010 the Municipal Engineering Department officers were trained by RAMP-UP East to prepare the municipal city map and work plans for each department.

The planning department members received on the job training and learned how to develop various municipal documentary forms for tax collection, revenue registration, and municipal assets. In addition, the economic profile and economic development plan was discussed between RAMP-UP East, the planning department and the Mayor.

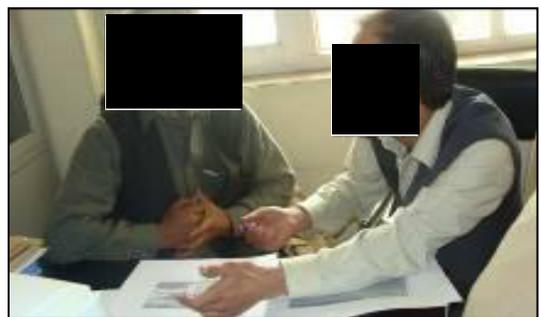


Dec 18th, Nangarhar, Eng. Noor Agha & Noor Mohammad were trained to prepare the city map

CORE SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

The Municipal Administration Department of Nangarhar municipality developed a computerized filing and record keeping system in December.

The municipal Engineering Department also received further training by RAMP-UP East on undertaking project site surveys, project design and preparation of concept notes. The trainer used an example of a culverts project design as an example for practical training.



Dec 13th, J'bad, discussion about the property registration form development.

Engineer [REDACTED] commented on the modern project design approach, he said “the computerized engineering maps and forms enable us to quickly bring about changes or revisions and improvements to the design drawings rather than requiring the re-drafting the whole project which had to be done before.”

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Jalalabad First Citizen Forum is launched

On December 15th, the Jalalabad municipality launched its first monthly citizen forum with the participation of fifty citizen representatives including two women and representatives of the local business association and the Youth Department.

The Deputy Mayor led the public discussion that focused on the city sanitation and citizens' obligations towards their city. The citizen forum launch was welcomed by the participants including the youth's representatives who promised youth collaboration with the municipality to ensure that citizens enjoyed living in a clean city. The Wakil e Gozar stressed the need to organize the citizen forum on a regular

basis to ensure that citizen's voices were heard and municipal problems were discussed and sorted out.



Dec 15th, Jalalabad municipality launched its first citizen forum led by the Deputy Mayor

Haji. Mir Ahmad Mama, Chief of the community council (Wakil-i- Guzar) said: "This is the first time that we are involved in making decisions for municipal services improvement." He also requested a follow up of action points at each citizen forum – a suggestion that was welcomed by the municipality.

In the absence of Nangarhar Mayor, community representatives requested the municipality to make sure the mayor is present at the citizen forum meetings. The participants said that the discussion is quite important for the public and Mayor must lead the forum.



Dec 15th, Jalalabad, community representatives requested the Deputy Mayor for an update on the revenue status.

The participants requested the Deputy Mayor to update them about the municipal revenue status. The Deputy Mayor said "the municipality had made significant improvements in the tax collection and the municipal budget in the year of 1387 Hejri which increased from 88 million AFA to 199 million AFA."

The Deputy Mayor also discussed the use of Pakistani rickshaws with the business representatives. He advised the meeting that Jalalabad municipality will not permit any more importation of the rickshaws from Pakistan because of the air pollution and noise caused by the badly manufactured rickshaws. The meeting finished with significant public appreciation of the citizen forum for citizens to voice their opinions and to discuss municipal concerns.

RAMP-UP EAST – USAID COORDINATION

On December 1st, RAMP UP East Jalalabad Municipality Team Leader briefed Jalalabad USAID Activity Manager about the progress made by the program including the capacity building activities. The Team Leader shared with USAID the list of planned service delivery projects including the proposed parking lot. RAMP UP East requested the USAID Activity Manager to include the Mayor in future discussions to enhance coordination and gain further support of the program activities.



Dec. 20th, Coordination meeting at Ningrahar PRT

The meeting discussed the prioritization of the

planned service delivery projects. RAMP UP East explained to the USAID Activity Manager that local citizens were keen to quickly have the parking lot while it was considered impossible to construct the landfill site in the first year of the program.

The USAID Activity Manager laid emphasis on proper capacity building efforts and coordination between RAMP-UP East and other implementing partners. The program was asked to ensure that training duplication was avoided and to regularly report to USAID on the ongoing capacity building activities at Nangrahar municipality.

On December 8th, the Jalalabad PRT hosted an economic growth meeting with the participation of local GIROA officials and Directorates Heads along with RAMP-UP East and other USAID implementing partners.

The discussion included an update on the power supply from Jalalabad city to the industrial park and water and drainage ditch system construction and maintenance. In addition, the Director of Agriculture explained the new procedure for land leasing to private investors. The meeting discussed the current status of private sector investment in Jalalabad and public-private sector partnerships.

During this meeting, a RAMP-UP East representative shared with the participants the Economic Development Plan for Jalalabad Municipality.

On December 19th, RAMP-UP East participated in the USAID-Jalalabad PRT meeting that discussed GIROA capacity building support. Ten USAID implementing partners attended the meeting and received an update on the ongoing efforts of RAMP-UP East to support the institutional capacity of the Jalalabad municipality.

On December 19th, a follow up meeting was held between RAMP-UP East and USAID Activity Manager for an update on service delivery project's approval. The Team Leader explained that the parking lot project was still awaiting USAID approval. The Activity Manager stressed that the landfill project should be implemented as soon as possible by RAMP-UP East.

MEHTERLAM MUNICIPALITY

Province: Laghman

MUNICIPAL SERVICES DELIVERY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

The conceptual work of the planned solid waste management project of Mehterlam began in December. The Public Works Department staff members prepared the project design and concept note. On December 11th, the project documents were further developed and shared with the Mayor and the Engineering Department for further discussion before the final submission to RAMP-UP East and USAID.

MUNICIPAL CAPACITY BUILDING

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

The Municipal Finance Officer of Mehterlam municipality continued to receive on the job training for financial management. As a result, the Finance Department has an established systematic filing system that will be in use starting January 2011. In addition, the Finance Officer was trained on how to prepare monthly and quarterly financial reports and develop financial reporting systems for the Revenue Generation Department.

The Finance Department Manager, Mr. Abdul Wali, was quoted as saying “The computerized filing system will enable my department to report on finance accurately and systematically.”

Furthermore, RAMP UP East Public Works Advisor continued providing the on job training for his counterpart on the use of AutoCAD and project design. The Public Works Officer was also prepared to produce a monthly work plan for the Engineering Department.



Dec 2010, Mehterlam. The municipal filing system was re-established

CORE SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

For the core skills training, the Municipal Administrative Officer of Mehterlam began receiving basic administrative skills training including the filing system and organizational structure.

Mr. Mohammad Tahir, Administration Officer, explained to RAMP-UP East that labeling the documents will allow him to easily search for and track files. He mentioned that the filing system was negatively criticized by the internal auditors but as a result of the training he was more confident that the system could be improved to serve the municipal beneficiaries.



Dec 2010, Mehterlam. The municipal filing system. Before & after

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Mehterlam Mayor Requests Citizens to Participate in Cleaning Up the Alishang Ditch

On December 28th, Mehterlam Mayor led a monthly citizen forum with the participation of twenty-five community representatives. The main topic discussed at the forum was the citizens' obligation towards city cleanliness and the problem of Alishang Roadside ditch that was blocked by accumulated mud.

The Mehterlam Mayor made a public speech at the forum. He said “the city is the home for every one of us. Please struggle for its cleanliness. This is not only the municipality’s responsibility; citizens have the same and equal obligation of keeping the city clean.”

The issue of Alishang roadside ditch cleaning was also mentioned by the Mayor “the municipality cleaned the drainage ditch and soon after it got full of mud again, we are here to discuss how citizens and shopkeepers can keep the ditch clean.”



Dec. 28th, Mehterlam. The citizen forum received TV coverage

One of the participants suggested “Each citizen should be told to clean the road in front of the house. This action will reduce the garbage collection at the drainage ditch.”

One of the women participants commented “we should organize public awareness campaigns for the shopkeepers and citizens to change their behavior about throwing away the garbage in the drainage ditch.”

During this meeting, representative of Radio and Television of Afghanistan (RTA) announced a

planned interview with the Mayor to discuss municipal affairs. The presenter said “the radio will organize a one hour live radio broadcast program this week. The radio will host the Mayor and community representatives to discuss municipal issues that need citizen collaboration.”

The Mayor closed the forum by explaining that the municipality will remove the mud from the drainage ditch. He added “we will get the elders to educate citizens to clean the drainage ditch. The municipality will also work closely with Community Development Council (CDCs) and make announcements via the mosque.”

STAKEHOLDER & DONORS COORDINATION

On December 21st, Mayor of Mehterlam had a meeting with USAID DFPO at Laghman PRT compound. The Mayor briefed USAID on the current municipal support by RAMP-UP East. The Mayor advised that the MIP process and projects selection by the public are factors that will increase public confidence in GIROA and improve revenue generation opportunities.



Dec 21st, Mehterlam. meeting between the Mayor and USAID at Laghman PRT

On December 23rd, Laghman Governor hosted a meeting with the Mayor and USAID. The Governor expressed concern over the delay of implementing service delivery projects by RAMP-UP East. The Team Leader explained the technical reasons behind the delay. The DFPO said “I will share your concerns with the USAID official.”

ASSADABAD MUNICIPALITY

Province: Kunar

MUNICIPAL CAPACITY BUILDING

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

During this month, Assadabad municipal Financial Officer learned about financial accounting, municipal budget computerization. The Finance Officer commented on the training “I was not familiar with the financial accounting or even its meaning. I have learned new skills for accounting that will help increase my work effectiveness and responsibility.”



Dec. 29th, Assadabad municipal Engineer started using the GPS and AutoCad software.

The Assadabad Municipality Engineering Department received on the job training that included budget estimation, project design, monitoring and AutoCAD and GPS software use.

Furthermore, the Revenue Generation Officer was trained to produce a quarterly report of the municipal assets. The Municipal Economic Profile development was also initiated by the revenue department staff with support from RAMP-UP East and completed 20% of the profile.

The Revenue Department Officer said “The municipal assets template will help us determine how many assets our municipality owns and in what condition they are in.”

CORE SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

The Municipal Public Administration Officer was trained this month to computerize the municipality payroll and time sheets for all municipal employees’ salaries which helped the municipality to have an accurate calculation of the salaries total monthly amount.

The Administrative Officer commented on the payroll computerization “I faced serious problems with the salaries calculation in the past. Now I enter the data into the excel sheet and get an accurate calculation of each staff member’s salary.”

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Assadabad Citizen Forum Enjoys GIRoA Political Support

The Assadabad monthly citizen forum held on December 5th enjoyed the participation of thirty citizens and a high presence of GIRoA officials including the Governor and IDLG representative in addition to the Head of UNAMA’s office in Kunar and PRT.

RAMP-UP EAST USAID COORDINATION

RAMP UP East Team met with USAID FPO and DFPO on December 14th and discussed the Kerala 2Km gravel road constriction. RAMP UP East provided technical answers to some questions related to the mentioned project.

Following up on the meeting, USAID, RAMP-UP East and the Mayor had a meeting at the Provincial Governor's office on December 16th for further discussion about the road construction project. The Governor and the Mayor requested the USAID FPO support to propose the project funding by USAID.

On Dec. 23rd, USAID FPO asked RAMP UP East Engineering Team to re-survey the Andar Sir road. The survey was completed and the design is being prepared.

GARDEZ AREA OVERVIEW: GARDEZ, KHOST, SHARANA, GHAZNI

GARDEZ MUNICIPALITY

Province: Paktia

MUNICIPAL SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Locals: The Internally Displaced People (IDPs) increase causes more solid waste in the city

In December, Gardez municipality continued to receive RAMP-UP East technical and project management assistance for the city's solid waste management program. The project consists of garbage collection and dumping at the landfill site. The support included the supply of fuel for

municipal vehicles and fee for twenty eight laborers engaged in the solid waste collection project.

Gardez Mayor commented on the project "the laborers number is not enough to keep the city clean and collect the waste." He requested RAMP-UP East to contribute towards 40 laborer's wages instead of 28.

The instability in the region seems to have impacted the city's cleanliness due to the large number of IDPs moving into Gardez. Haji Dost Mohammmd explained to RAMP-UP East that he was concerned about the increased solid waste in the streets. He added "the municipality has to collecte the garbage on a daily basis. Citizens had addressed the municipality several times and had not been heard and no action had been taken yet."



Dec. Gardez, the solid waste management project continued through December.

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Gardez Municipality to Put Preventive Procedures Against Illegal Construction

On December 29th, The Mayor of Gardez in Paktya province convened a monthly citizen forum and made a public speech about the Safayi Tax collection mechanism and citizens' obligation to pay tax on time to support municipal operations.

The Mayor commented on the city cleanliness "we the municipality and citizens of Gardez should both work as a team. We can never be successful without your assistance to keep the city clean."

The delay in tax payment was also discussed and citizens were asked to raise community public awareness about the tax contribution to municipal services.

The illegal commercial markets built in Gardez city and preventative measures to control this issue was also highlighted by the Mayor as warning for businesses who illegally started shop construction.

The Mayor gave a brief about the completed projects by Gardez Municipality during 2010 and requested RAMP-UP East to foster the implementation of the planned service delivery projects.

These monthly citizen forums served to improve citizen engagement and public participation in municipal affairs, thereby enhancing transparency and accountability in municipal decision making.



Dec 29th, Gardez Mayor discussed with citizens the delay of tax payment and streets cleanliness.

GHAZNI MUNICIPALITY

Province: Ghazni

MUNICIPAL SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Upon the completion of the median improvement project in early December, RAMP UP East received comments from the Ghazni Governor through USAID regarding the costs of the project.

The concern raised by the Governor, as reported by the USAID Activity Manager based at the PRT, was that the amount of funds spent on the implementation of the project was excessive. In response, RAMP UP East initiated an internal investigation into the implementation and cost of the project.

A report on the results of the internal investigation is expected to be completed within two months. The report will be shared with the COTR and discussed with the Governor and Mayor to draw lessons and improve the preparation and implementation of other RAMP UP East supported projects in Ghazni.

MUNICIPAL CAPACITY BUILDING

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

The Municipal Finance Department officers at Ghazni municipality received basic finance skills training by RAMP-UP East. The training included accounting cycle, Excel Sheets, filing system, Basics of Budget items, computerized municipal budget templates and computerized assets inventory.

In addition, the Municipal Economic Development counterparts received basic training in revenue recording and economic profile data collection.

CORE SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

After making a basic analysis of the existing management system of Ghazni municipality, it was observed by RAMP-UP East that the municipality is in an urgent need for management training. Therefore, RAMP UP East has established a plan for basic management training for the municipal officials to be organized over the next two months.



Dec 10th, Ghazni. Site survey training

Currently, the Municipal Public Works Officers are in charge of the Kandahar Ada Median maintenance and quality assurance committee.

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Ghazni Mayor Calls Upon Citizens to Participate in the Selection of City Development Projects

On December 26th, Ghazni Mayor led a citizen forum with the participation of 27 citizen representatives including 4 women. The main topic discussed at the forum was the citizen's role in keeping the city clean as a preparation towards the 2013 celebration of Ghazni as the Islamic world's cultural capital.

The Mayor, along with Wakil e Gozars, called upon citizens to take part in project selections that contributed to the development of Ghazni city. Abdul Hai said “in order to keep our city clean, I request all the forum participants to cooperate with municipality development programs.”

Director of the Public Health Department Dr. Zia Gul said “We need public toilets in the city; this will help us in keeping the city clean and antiseptic.”



Dec 26th, Ghazni. 27 citizens including 4 women participated in the monthly citizen forum

SHARANA MUNICIPALITY

Province: Paktika

MUNICIPAL SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Citizens of Sharana continued to benefit from the technical support provided by RAMP UP East to the municipal solid waste management project.

RAMP-UP East interviewed local citizen [REDACTED] who commented on the city cleanliness “The municipality has begun to take better care of the municipality through the solid waste collection. These efforts help to bring community satisfaction.”

Local shopkeeper [REDACTED] [REDACTED] told RAMP-UP East “I can see a change in the city cleanliness but laborers come to my area very late and sometimes work on one part of the city and ignore the rest.”



In the long term, the municipal officials will be able to prepare maintenance plans and manage the project budget and laborers as they receive training and as the municipal revenue increases.

The second service delivery project in Sharana city is the 1,000 m drainage ditch construction which was completed on November 28th. The project handover was still pending the new Mayor’s approval after the review of project documents and the quality evaluation. The drainage ditch construction began on August 20th 2010 and was completed by fifty-eight unskilled laborers and thirteen skilled laborers.

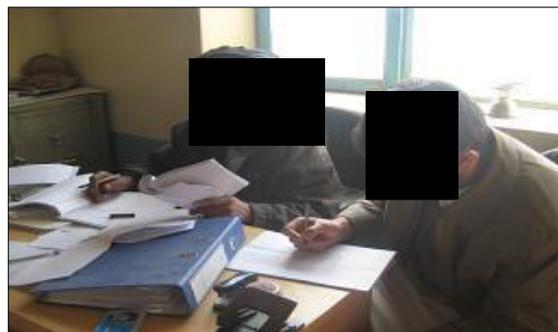
One of the shopkeepers in Sharana commented on the project in an interview with RAMP-UP East. He said: “The project helps citizens to have business without difficulties such as mud and dust that used to fill the shops.”

MUNICIPAL CAPACITY BUILDING

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

The municipal officers of Sharana took the initiative to request training from RAMP-UP East. In December the Public Works Officer was given training to prepare project drawings and concept notes in addition to estimations of bills of quantity.

RAMP-UP East Economic Development Embedded Advisor supported his counterpart in learning about the filing system, revenue data computerization and municipal assets forms.



Dec 19th. Sharana. Revenue generation documents review.

The municipal officers also learned about credits and debits and Excel Spreadsheet applications.

CORE SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

The municipal Administrative Department Officer was trained this month to document and computerize municipal data in addition to drafting a ToR and organizational chart that explained municipal authorities and reporting lines.

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Security Circumstances Impact Sharana Municipality Citizen Forum

After more than one month's delay in organizing the municipal citizen forum due to the unstable security situation in Sharana city, the municipality succeeded to have twenty-two citizens, including youth, businesses and community elders participating at the citizens' forum on December 28th.



Dec 28th, Sharana citizen forum was delayed for so many times due to security threat.

The newly appointed Mayor was presented to the public by his Deputy who led the forum. The new Mayor Mohammad Zaher was invited to speak about his approach towards municipal services improvement and revenue generation. Mr. Zaher promised to make positive changes at the municipality. He said: "I will work with my team to draft an action plan to increase the municipal revenue."

The discussion was closed with further planning for the next citizen forum led by the new Mayor. The Mayor will be expected to make a brief presentation at the next citizen forum about upcoming municipal activities.

RAMP-UP EAST – USAID COORDINATION

During December, RAMP UP East key-team members in Sharana had a meeting with USAID Activity Manager. The meeting focused on improving coordination between the program and USAID Activity Manager and how to overcome field work challenges and problems.

KHOST MUNICIPALITY

Province: Khost

MUNICIPAL CAPACITY BUILDING

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

During December, RAMP-UP East made a basic analysis of the municipal Finance Department system. The municipality documents financial transactions manually which limited transparency as data could not be tracked or monitored.

The Municipal Finance Officers received basic training from the RAMP-UP East Embedded Advisor with regards to the use of double entry systems, the importance of computerizing the filing system and the accounting cycle.

Senior Accountant, Mr. Mohammad Tariq, commented on the training, “the municipality will be able to keep up transparency once we get the new templates that reflect the credit and debit transactions.”

Furthermore, the municipal Greenery Manager and his staff members learned about greening the city and maintaining the city greenery. The training included site visits to greenery areas allocated as part of practical training. The municipal team had on the job training and learned how to trim some trees that were constraining the ease of traffic movement.

The Mayor of Khost was also involved in approving a new form for building construction applications and tax collections. Both forms were developed by the Revenue Generation Officer with RAMP-UP East mentoring.



Dec 9th, Khost. Review of municipal financial documents

CORE SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

The Municipal Administrative Officer received on the job training with regards to basic administrative skills. The training included drafting of property registration forms and drafting an organizational chart.

During this month, the Municipal Engineering Team started generating manual sketches of service delivery projects. However, this process was extremely slow due to the lack of proper record keeping for each project. The same team started to learn about AutoCad software use.

Municipal Engineer Ghulam Rasool commented on the training and said “I tried in the past to find a professional Engineer in Khost to teach me how to use the AutoCad program but I couldn’t get any help.” He added: “Now I’m ready to start using AutoCad very soon.”



Dec. 20th, Khost. Business Licenses registration training.

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Khost Mayor Announces Potable Water Supply Project for the City

The portable water network supply was the main topic discussed at the Khost monthly citizen forum led by the Mayor. On December 22nd, seventeen citizens discussed with the Mayor the municipal plan for the potable water network project that will deliver clean water to the residents' houses.



Dec 22nd, Khost Mayor announced the portable drinking water project for Khost city

Though the citizen forum topic was about the city cleanness, the Mayor was enthusiastic in encouraging the project to be shared with citizens. The Mayor requested citizens to be ready for paying for the water supply and municipal tax. He said: “the revenue generation will increase if Khost citizens pay the water supply tax. This income will allow the municipality to extend the project to further city districts.”

In addition, the Mayor briefed citizens about the previous month's municipal activities and future planned projects. He said “the municipality wants to construct park hotel, ditches, and car parking lot and provide road repairs.”

Local citizen Haji Janbaz closed the discussion by saying that the forum participants will encourage citizens to pay the water supply tax. He added that the potable water supply topic has to be discussed further with a larger public participation.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

On December 15th, Mayor Jihan Gull along with municipal officials held a meeting with the Provincial Governor Abdula Jabar Naeemi. The Mayor briefed the Governor about the progress of municipal work and RAMP-UP East support.



Dec 15th, Khost Mayor briefed the Governor on RAMP-UP East program progress

STAKEHOLDER & DONORS COORDINATION

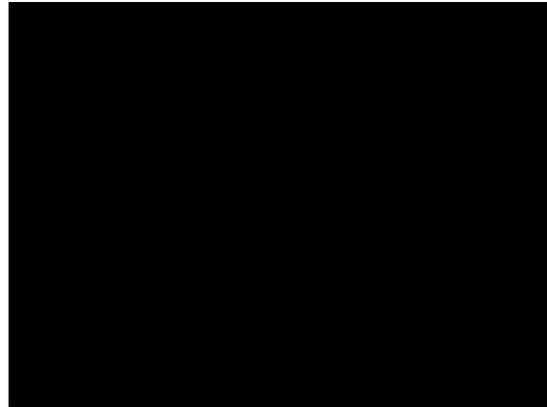
On December 26th, RAMP-UP East team in Khost briefed the US PRT representative about the planned municipal support activities between January and December 2011. The discussion included an explanation about the capacity building component mechanism and service delivery projects listed for approval. The US PRT representative expressed an interest to attend the next citizen forum. It was also agreed that he will receive an update on the planned agenda and date.

CENTRAL SUPPORT OFFICE MUNICIPAL CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES

PUBLIC OUTREACH & PUBLIC RELATIONS CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES

Public Outreach Training to Enhance Municipal Public Communication

From December 6th to 8th, RAMP-UP East central support office in Kabul convened a three day municipal public relations and outreach basic skills training for thirty participants – ten GIROA municipal staff members and sixteen RAMP-UP East embedded advisors. The three-day workshop reinforced the capacity of participants to engage in effective municipal public relations and outreach activities, such as convening inclusive municipal citizen forums and producing municipal newsletters. In addition to transferring knowledge and skills in



mechanisms that increase citizen participation and engagement, the workshop also focused on mechanisms to improve intergovernmental relations between municipalities and the IDLG and stakeholder relations between the municipality and donor agencies.

Dec 8th, Kabul, an Italian photographer volunteered to teach photography for the municipal officers

The training educated the municipal officers about providing citizens and media with access to information, understanding the values and impact of public municipal communication, producing communication materials that interest the public and not use it for promotional purposes. The training resulted in the production of a standard newsletter and check list for conducting interactive citizen forums. During December, 5 municipalities selected the newsletter name and initiated the licensing process that takes up to 2 months.

The purpose of these public relations and outreach activities is to improve GIROA municipal governments' legitimacy by institutionalizing public outreach and communication mechanisms that strengthen municipal governance, accountability, transparency and citizen participation.