USAID | AFGHANISTAN

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

META-EVALUATION

(SEPTEMBER 2015 – JANUARY 2016)

Meta-Analysis of Final Evaluations of USAID/Afghanistan Projects, 2010 - 2015

January 2016

This publication was produced at the request of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). It was prepared under contract with Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc. for USAID's Afghanistan "Services under Program and Project Offices for Results Tracking Phase II" (SUPPORT II) project.

This report was contracted under USAID Contract Number: AID-306- C-12-00012. Afghanistan Services Under Program and Project Office for Results Tracking Phase II (SUPPORT II). This Activity was initiated by the Office of Program and Project Development (OPPD) through Mr. Muhammad Sediq Orya, COR/SUPPORT II.

Assignment Title: Meta-Analysis of Final Evaluations of USAID Projects Implemented in Afghanistan, 2010-2015

Team Members: Jim Purcell, Daryl Martyris, Naseema Noor and Aimee Rose

Activity Start Date: September 1, 2015

Completion Date: January 10, 2016

Michael Lechner, Chief of Party

Waheed Ahmadi, Deputy Chief of Party

Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc.

Kabul, Afghanistan

Disclaimer:

The views expressed in this report are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, or any other organization or person associated with this project.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acronyms 5

Glossary 7

Executive Summary 11

Evaluation Purpose & Evaluation Questions 15

Evaluation Methods & Limitations 14

Findings, Conclusions & Recommendations 16

- Background of Projects 16
  - Project Composite Ratings 23
  - Discussion of Project Ratings 26
- Effectiveness 28
  - Definition of and Challenges Assessing Effectiveness 28
  - Effectiveness Across Common Project Objectives 29
    - a. Capacity Building 29
    - b. Promoting Women and Girls 35
    - c. Civic Engagement/Public Outreach 36
    - d. Introduction or Reform of Systems 39
    - e. Introduction or Reform of Policies and Laws 40
    - f. Job Creation and Livelihood Improvement 40
    - g. Increase Revenues 41
  - Factors that Influence Effectiveness 41
    - a. Quality of Human Resources 41
    - b. Coordination with Counterparts 42
    - c. Insecurity 43
    - d. Conservative, Traditional Culture 44
    - e. Other Factors 44
- Efficiency 45
  - Defining and Challenges in Assessing Efficiency 45
  - Comparing Alternative Approaches 46
  - Inefficiencies as a result of Project Design 46
  - Discussion 48
- Sustainability 51
  - Defining Sustainability 51
  - Challenges Assessing Sustainability 52
- Utlization of Evaluation Recommendations 54
- Recommendations 59

Annexes 62

- Annex I: Evaluation Statement of Work 62

Annex II: Methodology and Limitations 66
Annex III: Bibliography 69
Annex IV: Project Details 72
Annex V: Explanation of Project Ratings 77
Annex VI: Disclosure of Any Conflicts of Interest 83

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: USAID/Afghanistan Projects Considered in this Meta-Evaluation 17
Table 2: Performance of Office of Agriculture Projects 24
Table 3: Performance of Office of Democratic Governance Projects 24
Table 4: Performance of Office of Economic Growth Initiative Projects 25
Table 5: Performance of Office of Project and Program Development Projects 26
Table 6: Performance of Office of Social Sector Development Projects.. **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
Table 7: Acceptance of Evaluation Recommendations by Project..... 55
Table 8: Utilization of Recommendations by Category 56

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACAP II	Afghanistan Civilian Assistance Program II
ACE	Afghanistan Credit Enhancement Program
ASAP	Accelerating Sustainable Agriculture Program
AESP	Afghan Engineering Program
AMDEP	Afghanistan Media Development and Empowerment Project
ASMED	Afghanistan Small and Medium Enterprise Development Program
BLT	Building Livelihoods and Trade Project
CAWSA	Commercialization of Afghanistan Water and Sanitation
CTAP	Civilian Technical Assistance Program
DDP	District Delivery Program
DEWS	Disease Early Warning System
EGGI	Economic Growth and Governance Initiative
EQUALS	Engineering Quality Assurance and Logistical Support
FAIDA	Finance Access for Investing in the Development of Afghanistan
HEP	Higher Education Project
HSSP	Health Services Support Project
IDEA-NEW	Incentives Driving Economic Alternatives – North, East, and West
ILGNRM	Improving Livelihood Governance through Natural Resource Management
IPACS II	Initiative to Promote Afghan Civil Society II
KCI	Kabul City Initiative
LARA	Land Reform in Afghanistan
LCEP II	Learning for Community Empowerment Program II
MISPA	Ministry of Women's Affairs Initiative to Strengthen Policy and Advocacy
OAG	Office of Agriculture
OSSD	Office of Social Sector Development
OEGI	Office of Economic Growth Initiatives
OPPD	Office of Program and Project Development
ODG	Office of Democratic Governance
PBGF	Performance-Based Governance Fund
RAMP-UP	Regional Afghanistan Municipalities Program for Urban Populations
RSL-F	Rule of Law and Support Project – Formal
RLS-I	Rule of Law and Support Project – Informal
ROMCB	Road Operations and Maintenance Capacity Building Program
RPRA	Rehabilitation Projects at Regional Airports
SPR-SEA	Strategic Provincial Roads – Southern and Eastern Afghanistan
SPS	Strengthening Pharmaceutical Systems
SNG	Support to Sub-National Governance
Tech-Serve	Technical Support to the Central and Provincial Ministry of Public Health

SUPPORT II	Services under Program and Project Offices for Results Tracking Phase II
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

GLOSSARY

Activity: Actions taken or work performed through which inputs, such as funds, technical assistance and other types of resources are mobilized to produce specific outputs.

Related term: development intervention.

Baseline study: An analysis describing the situation prior to a development intervention, against which progress can be assessed or comparisons made.

Benchmark: Reference point or standard against which performance or achievements can be assessed.

Note: A benchmark refers to the performance that has been achieved in the recent past by other comparable organizations, or what can be reasonably inferred to have been achieved in the circumstances.

Beneficiaries: The individuals, groups, or organizations, whether targeted or not, that benefit, directly or indirectly, from the development intervention.

Related terms: reach, target group.

Conclusions: Conclusions point out the factors of success and failure of the evaluated intervention, with special attention paid to the intended and unintended results and impacts, and more generally to any other strength or weakness. A conclusion draws on data collection and analyses undertaken, through a transparent chain of arguments.

Development objective: Intended impact contributing to physical, financial, institutional, social, environmental, or other benefits to a society, community, or group of people via one or more development interventions.

Effectiveness: The extent to which the development intervention's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance. Note: Also used as an aggregate measure of (or judgment about) the merit or worth of an activity, i.e. the extent to which an intervention has attained, or is expected to attain, its major relevant objectives efficiently in a sustainable fashion and with a positive institutional development impact.

Related term: efficacy.

Efficiency: A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results.

Evaluation: The systematic and objective assessment of an ongoing or completed project, program or policy, its design, implementation, and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfillment of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability. An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the

incorporation of lessons learned into the decision-making process of both recipients and donors.

Evaluation also refers to the process of determining the worth or significance of an activity, policy, or program.

Note: Evaluation in some instances involves the definition of appropriate standards, the examination of performance against those standards, an assessment of actual and expected results and the identification of relevant lessons.

Related term: review.

Finding: A finding uses evidence from one or more evaluations to allow for a factual statement.

Impacts: Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.

Indicator: Quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achievement, to reflect the changes connected to an intervention, or to help assess the performance of a development actor.

Inputs: The financial, human, and material resources used for the development intervention.

Key finding: A finding that responds to or attempt to answer the specific evaluation questions presented in the evaluation scope of work. The second level of key findings are those that respond to any questions described as the objectives or focus of the evaluation, which were also found in the evaluation scope of work. And finally, a key finding might be something new and important that the evaluators learned, but which had not been specifically identified in the scope of work.

Lessons learned: Generalizations based on evaluation experiences with projects, programs, or policies that abstract from the specific circumstances to broader situations. Frequently, lessons highlight strengths or weaknesses in preparation, design, and implementation that affect performance, outcome, and impact.

Logical framework (Log frame): Management tool used to improve the design of interventions, most often at the project level. It involves identifying strategic elements (inputs, outputs, outcomes, impact) and their causal relationships, indicators, and the assumptions or risks that may influence success and failure. It thus facilitates planning, execution, and evaluation of a development intervention.

Related term: results-based management.

Meta-evaluation: The term is used for evaluations designed to aggregate findings from a series of evaluations. It can also be used to denote the evaluation of an evaluation to judge its quality and/or assess the performance of the evaluators.

Off-budget: Donor financial assistance that is processed outside of the government's normal recurring budget.

On-budget: Donor financial assistance that is processed through the government's normal recurring budget.

Outcome: The likely or achieved short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention's outputs.

Related terms: result, outputs, impacts, effect.

Outputs: The products, capital goods, and services that result from a development intervention; these may also include changes resulting from the intervention that are relevant to the achievement of outcomes.

Partners: The individuals and/or organizations that collaborate to achieve mutually agreed upon objectives. Note: The concept of partnership connotes shared goals, common responsibility for outcomes, distinct accountabilities, and reciprocal obligations. Partners may include governments, civil society, non-governmental organizations, universities, professional and business associations, multi-lateral organizations, private companies, etc.

Project or program objective: The intended physical, financial, institutional, social, environmental, or other development results to which a project or program is expected to contribute.

Purpose: The publicly stated objectives of the development program or project.

Relevance: The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities, and partners' and donors' policies.

Note: Retrospectively, the question of relevance often becomes a question as to whether the objectives of an intervention or its design are still appropriate given changed circumstances.

Results framework: The program logic that explains how the development objective is to be achieved, including causal relationships and underlying assumptions.

Related terms: results chain, logical framework.

Results: The output, outcome, or impact (intended or unintended, positive and/or negative) of a development intervention.

Related terms: outcome, effect, impacts.

Stakeholders: Agencies, organizations, groups or individuals who have a direct or indirect interest in the development intervention or its evaluation.

Sustainability: The continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed.

Target group: The specific individuals or organizations for whose benefit the development intervention is undertaken.

Terms of reference: A written document presenting the purpose and scope of the evaluation, the methods to be used, the standard against which performance is to be assessed or analyses are to be conducted, the resources and time allocated, and reporting requirements. Two other expressions sometimes used with the same meaning are "scope of work" and "evaluation mandate."

Validity: The extent to which the data collection strategies and instruments measure what they purport to measure.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT BACKGROUND

This report is a meta-evaluation of the 35 final evaluations of USAID projects conducted in Afghanistan between 2010 and 2015.

EVALUATION PURPOSE AND EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of USAID/Afghanistan's past portfolio of projects, as well as the use that was made of evaluation recommendations in Mission decision-making.

The assignment's key evaluation questions are:

1. What are the key findings of the component evaluations relating to effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability?
2. How have the evaluation recommendations been utilized?

EVALUATION DESIGN, METHODS, AND LIMITATIONS

This meta-evaluation was a joint effort by the M&E staff of USAID/Afghanistan and a consultant hired by the SUPPORT II project. The meta-evaluation team read and analyzed the 35 final evaluations of USAID/Afghanistan projects conducted between 2010 and 2015, and sorted the evaluations' key findings by theme—effectiveness, efficiency, or sustainability. The evaluators also assigned each finding a rating of positive, negative, or mixed, based on the nature of the finding; these ratings were then used to assign projects composite ratings. Analysis of the findings identified recurrent project objectives, trends within and across sectors and factors influencing projects' effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, which are discussed in the report.

The evaluations were the primary information source for determining the effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the projects; thus, the meta-evaluation was limited by the nature and quality of the information presented in each report.

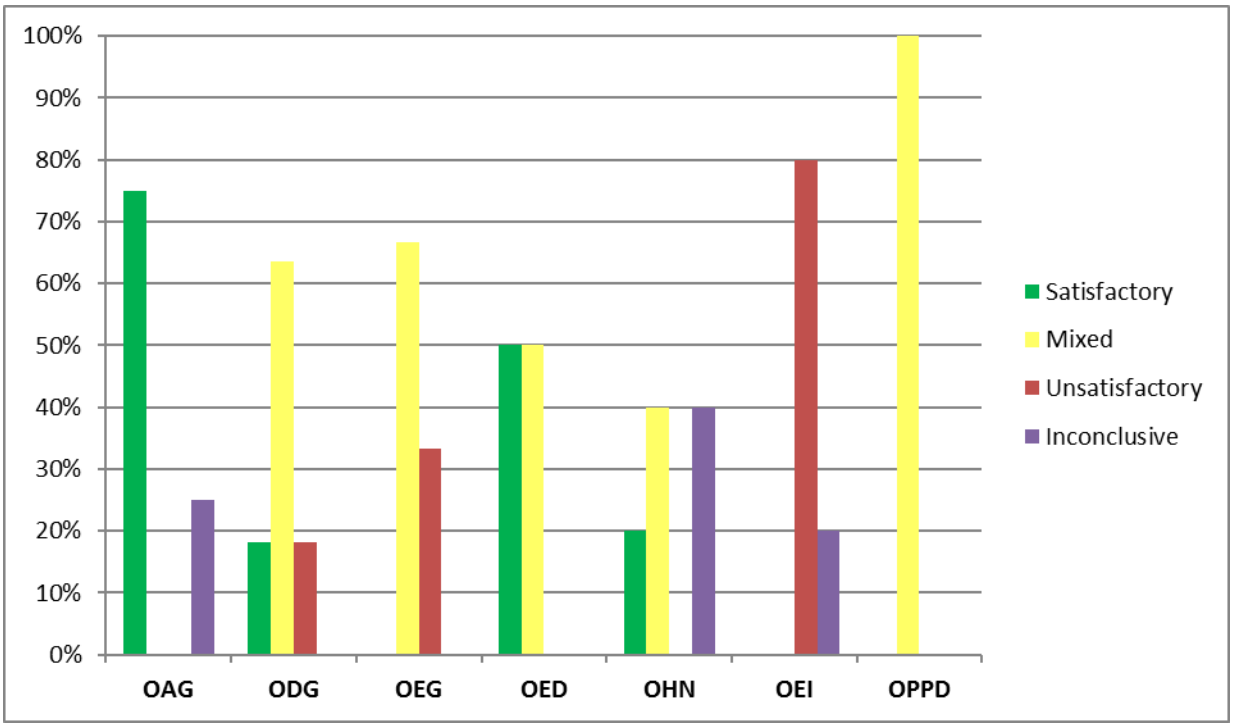
FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Overall Performance

A plurality of the 35 projects, 16 (45.8%), received a mixed rating, meaning they had both positive and negative key findings. Nine projects (25.7%) were deemed unsatisfactory and seven

(20%) satisfactory. Last, three projects (8.6%) could not be rated based on their evaluations alone. Looking at the project ratings by USAID technical office and sector provides some suggestions of trends. The Office of Agriculture's projects were generally implemented well: three of four agriculture projects received satisfactory ratings. The Office of Economic Growth Initiative, on the other hand, did not have any projects considered satisfactory, and the majority of this technical office's projects (six) were judged unsatisfactory. Also, four of five infrastructure projects were deemed unsatisfactory. However, it should be kept in mind that the technical offices did not implement the same number of projects, nor were the projects the same in size or scope.

Figure 1: Performance of USAID/Afghanistan Projects by Tech Office



Effectiveness

By examining the evaluations' key findings, the meta-evaluation team identified common project objectives and factors influencing their effectiveness. The most common objective, pursued by all projects, was capacity building. Projects largely sought to achieve this objective through training and mentoring/coaching; several projects also had internship/apprenticeship components and study tours that aimed to build capacity. Other major objectives were gender promotion and civic engagement/public outreach. In addition, a number of projects attempted to reform or introduce administrative and management systems, policies, and laws; create jobs and improve livelihoods; and increase government revenues.

The projects varied in their ability to achieve these objectives, as the composite ratings above show. In general, the projects seemed to be effective in introducing administrative and management systems to government institutions, building their institutional capacity to to carry out work, creating some jobs and improving livelihoods of beneficiaries. Capacity building at the individual level, gender promotion, and civic engagement/public outreach had mixed results. Broadly, projects that attempted to increase revenues were less successful.

A number of factors influenced the projects' effectiveness, including the drawdown of international forces in Afghanistan and the presidential elections in 2014. The lengthy and contentious political transition delayed and otherwise negatively impacted development work, as it affected coordination with the government and other stakeholders. Other factors outside of the projects' control that affected their performance included the country's insecurity; its conservative culture; the high levels of corruption/lack of transparency; the dearth of electricity, Internet, and other basic resources; the poor capacity of the Afghan government; and high staff turnover at USAID. Insecurity was particularly problematic for the infrastructure projects, as they were located outside of major cities and were more difficult to manage, while the conservatism of the Afghan culture especially affected projects that attempted to engage women.

Efficiency

Efficiency of the projects was difficult to assess because only a handful of the evaluations' scopes of work included a question related to efficiency, such as the projects' cost-effectiveness. Efficiency was sometimes discussed in the evaluations, with the general conclusion that the projects were cost-efficient; little, if any, analysis was provided. Of the evaluations asked to address cost-effectiveness, a few stated that they could not do so because financial and other data necessary for the analysis was unavailable or inaccurate. A few of the evaluations attempted to answer the question by comparing the projects' approaches to alternatives, but this only yielded broad conclusions.

In general, the governance and infrastructure projects appeared to be the most inefficient. This is because these projects worked directly with, or were implemented by, Afghan government institutions that are bureaucratic and perceived to be mismanaged and corrupt.

Sustainability

Although sustainability is increasingly cited as an explicit goal of development efforts and remains a widely-touted global concern, not all of the evaluations' scopes of work included questions about sustainability. Of the 35 evaluations, 27 had major findings related to sustainability, while eight (nearly 23%) did not produce major sustainability findings. Trained

personnel and adequate, sustained financial resources were the most frequently noted sustainability elements that were lacking, followed by strengthening organizations and enacting new or improved laws, policies, and regulations. In all cases, sustainability questions narrowly focused on project achievements or the results of specific project components and not the entire project.

Recommendations Utilization

The Office of Program and Project Development (OPPD) tracked how the recommendations from 12 of the 35 evaluations were utilized. Based on self-reported information from Contracting Officer's Representatives (CORs), and Agreement Officer Representatives (AORs) the majority of recommendations were addressed through adjustments in USAID activity management, changes in IP program management, or, in the case where activities were completed (the majority of cases), in the design of follow-on activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on these findings, the evaluation team recommends the following:

1. Standardize evaluation SOWs by defining the concepts effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. Ask evaluators straightforward questions addressing these issues.
2. Key activity personnel should utilize monitoring data throughout the project so that if there are problems with capturing data or the M&E system more broadly, they are discovered early.
3. USAID/Afghanistan should continue to prioritize timeliness of evaluations. In fiscal year 2014, only 33% of evaluations were done on time; in fiscal year 2015, 75% were timely. Where useful, independent midterm performance evaluations should be conducted to enable course-corrections to occur.
4. USAID/Afghanistan should continue to prioritize population of the recommendation utilization template by CORs immediately following the completion of the evaluation report.
5. OPPD should ensure that Program Development Officers use recommendations to inform new activity/project design by requiring evaluation utilization to be part of all new activity reviews, as well as portfolio reviews.
6. To determine whether recommendations may warrant a change in scope of existing activities, Office Directors should be encouraged/required at a minimum to attend evaluation exit briefings (if not to sign off on the recommendation tracker).

EVALUATION PURPOSE & EVALUATION QUESTIONS

EVALUATION PURPOSE

This is a comparative desk evaluation of 35 final evaluations conducted by USAID/Afghanistan between 2010 and 2015. The purpose of this meta-evaluation is to identify and inform the Mission of the effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of its portfolios, as well as the use that was made of evaluation recommendations in Mission decision-making.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The assignment's key evaluation questions are:

1. What are the key findings of the component evaluations relating to effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability?
2. How have the evaluation recommendations been utilized?

EVALUATION METHODS & LIMITATIONS

This meta-evaluation was a joint effort of representatives of the M&E staff in the USAID/Afghanistan Mission and a consultant and staff of the SUPPORT II project. The analysis is based solely on component evaluation reports and interviews with some CORs; no project documents were reviewed, including grant agreements, progress reports, or reports of activities completed, nor were additional qualitative or quantitative data collected. The focus of the meta-evaluation focused solely on what the evaluation reports revealed about the effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the projects.[1]

Key Findings: The evaluators reviewed the evaluation reports, and consolidated the key findings that addressed the projects' effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, as determined by the following questions[2]:

1) To what extent did the USAID program or project achieve its objectives? What were the major factors cited in the evaluation report influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?
2) According to the evaluation reports, were program/project objectives achieved efficiently, that is on time and with good use of resources?
3) To what extent are the benefits of the USAID program or project likely to continue after USAID funding ceased? What were the major factors cited in the evaluations that influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the program or project?

The team also reviewed the evidence presented in the evaluation reports that provided the basis for those findings. There were cases in which evaluation SOWs included questions on effectiveness, efficiency, or sustainability, but the corresponding final evaluation report did not—in the professional judgment of the meta-evaluation team—adequately answer these questions. In such cases, the meta-evaluation team offers insights from its review of the evaluation report (e.g., relating to aspects of evaluation timing or management, project design, project management decisions, monitoring/documentation, and so forth) regarding the reasons for identified shortcomings.

---

[2] Based on the criteria of the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD for evaluating development assistance

[2] Based on the criteria of the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD for evaluating development assistance

For each key finding, the evaluators assigned a rating of positive, negative, or mixed that reflected the project's performance. The tabulated and consolidated results were then analyzed by the evaluators to find patterns in the evaluation reports by sector and technical office. In addition, in reviewing each of the 35 evaluations, the reviewers looked for common themes across the evaluations, such as coordination with other donors, government offices and ministries, human resources, gender, training, technical advisors/consultants, and factors outside the projects' control.

Methodological Limitations: The evaluations were the sole information source for determining the effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the projects; thus, the meta-evaluation was limited by the nature and quality of the information presented in each report.

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

This meta-evaluation examined 35 final evaluations of USAID projects that were implemented in Afghanistan between 2010 and 2015. These evaluations did not cover all USAID/Afghanistan projects implemented during this period; a few projects were excluded because almost the entirety of their period of performance fell before the designated five-year period. A few other projects did not have final evaluations.

BACKGROUND OF PROJECTS

Of the selected projects, four were managed by USAID/Afghanistan's Office of Agriculture (OAG), 11 by the office of Democratic Governance (ODG), six by the Office of Economic Growth (OEG), five by the Office of Energy and Infrastructure (OEI), two by the Office of Project and Program Development (OPPD), two by the Office of Education (OED), and five by the Office of Health and Nutrition. (OHN).

Table 1 on the following pages provides background details on the projects, including the sectors they covered, their implementing partners, periods of performance, and geographic scope/coverage areas.

As the table indicates, the projects covered 20 sectors. The largest number fell in the governance and infrastructure sectors, followed by agriculture, economy, and public administration. Many projects worked in more than one sector. Almost all of the projects were off-budget and implemented by development and non-governmental organizations, private companies, and a few others, such as United Nations agencies. Four projects were on-budget, implemented directly by Afghan government agencies. The majority of the projects were active in a large number of provinces of Afghanistan, if not nationally. Several focused on specific regions of the country, or specific cities and locations. The projects' periods of performance fell between January 2006 and April 2016, and their budgets ranged from $4.6 million to $270 million.

Table 1: USAID/Afghanistan Projects Considered in this Meta-Evaluation

No	Title	LOP Budget $ millions	Implementing Mechanism	Implementation Period	Implementing Partner(s)	Sector(s)	Geographic Scope
1	Accelerating Sustainable Agriculture Program (ASAP)	133.7		Nov. 2006 – Nov. 2011	Chemonics International, Inc.	Agriculture	National
2	Afghan Civilian Assistance Program II (ACAP II)	64	Cooperative Agreement	Sept. 2011 – Feb. 2015	International Relief & Development	Humanitarian and Technical Assistance	National but with a focus on the south, southeast, and west
3	Afghanistan Engineering Support Program (AESP)	63	Task Order	Nov. 2009 – Nov. 2014	Tetra Tech/ARD	Energy, Infrastructure, and Water and Sanitation	Kabul
4	Afghanistan Media Development and Empowerment (AMDEP)	22	Cooperative Agreement	Nov. 2010 – Jan. 2012	Internews Networks, Inc.	Media	National
5	Afghanistan Small and Medium Enterprise Development (ASMED)	114		Oct. 2006 – March 2012	Development Alternatives, Inc.	Economy and Private Sector Development	National
6	Agriculture Credit Enhancement (ACE)	150	Task Order	July 2010 – Jan. 2015	Development Alternatives, Inc.	Agriculture and Economy	National
7	Building Livelihoods and Trade (BLT)	10.6	Cooperative Agreement	Nov. 2008 – Nov. 2015	Turquoise Mountain Trust	Education, Arts, and Restoration	Kabul
8	Cash Transfer Assistance Agreement for Civil Service Reform (CTAA)	15	Government-to-Government Award	Oct. 2011 – July 2014	Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission	Public Administration	National

9	Civilian Technical Assistance Program (CTAP)	41.3, (30 from USAID)	Government-to-Government Award	Oct. 2009 – Dec. 2012	Ministry of Finance	Technical Assistance and Capacity Development	Kabul
10	Commercialization of Afghanistan Water and Sanitation (CAWSA)	14.2	Cooperative Agreement	Nov. 2008 – May 2014	International City Managers Association	Water and Sanitation	Balkh, Nangarhar, Ghazni, Gardez, Kandahar, Helmand, Nimroz, and Laghman
11	Disease Early Warning System (DEWS)	12.7		Sept. 2008 – June 2014	World Health Organization,	Health	National
12	District Delivery Program (DDP)	40	Government-to-Government Award	Aug. 2010 – Feb. 2013	Independent Directorate of Local Governance	Public Administration and Governance	13 districts in three provinces: Wardak, Kandahar, and Nangarhar
13	Economic Growth and Governance Initiative (EGGI)	92.4		Aug. 2009 – Aug. 2013	Deloitte Consulting, LLP	Economy and Public Financial Management	National
14	Engineering Quality Assurance and Logistical Support (EQUALS)	96.8	Contract	April 2011 – April 2016	International Relief and Development	Infrastructure, Transportation, and Water and Sanitation	Sites in Kandahar, Gardez, Khost, Badakhshan, Nangarhar, Balkh, Jowzjan, Faryab, Bamyan, Wardak, Kabul, Parwan, Paktika and Helmand
15	Financial Access for Investing in the Development of Afghanistan (FAIDA)	108.2		Feb. 2011 – Feb. 2016	Chemonics International, Inc.	Agriculture and Economy	National
16	Health Service Support Project (HSSP)	62	Associate Award	July 2006 – Oct. 2012	Jhpiego	Health	21 provinces

17	Higher Education Project (HEP)	40	Cooperative Agreement	March 2006 – June 2012	Academy for Educational Development, University of Mass	Higher Education	18 universities in Badakhshan, Baghlan, Balkh, Bamyan, Faryab, Herat, Jowzjan, Kabul, Kandahar, Kunduz, Nangarhar, Parwan
18	Improving Livelihood and Governance through Natural Resources Management (ILGNRM)	14	Cooperative Agreement	April 2010 – Dec. 2013	Wildlife Conservation Society	Natural Resource Management	Badakhshan and Bamyan
19	Incentives Driving Economic Alternatives – North, East, West (IDEA-NEW)	156.9	Cooperative Agreement	March 2009 – Feb. 2015	Development Alternatives, Inc. w/ACDI/VOCA, Mercy Corps	Agriculture and Economy	19 provinces: Nangarhar, Kunar, Laghman, Kabul, Kapisa, Panjshir, Parwan, Balkh, Jawzjan, Samangan, Sari Pul, Faryab, Badakhshan, Takhar, Kunduz, Baghlan, Nuristan, Badghis, and Herat
20	Initiative to Promote Afghan Civil Society II (I-PACS II)	45	Cooperative Agreement	Oct. 2010 – Sept. 2013	Counterpart International, Inc. with International Center for Not-for-Profit Law	Civil Society	Kabul, Parwan, Paktia, Paktika, Uruzgan, Zabul, Kapisa, Panjshir, Kunar, Nuristan, Laghman, Nangarhar, Logar, Wardak, Helmand, Bamyan, Daikundi
21	Kabul City Initiative (KCI)	45	Contract	Oct. 2010 – Sept. 2013	Tetra Tech/ARD	Governance and Public Administration	Kabul
22	Land Reform in Afghanistan (LARA)	41.8	Contract	Jan. 2011 – Nov. 2014	Tetra Tech/ARD	Governance and Land Reform	Kabul and Nangarhar

23	Learning for Community Empowerment Program II (LCEP II)	48	Cooperative Agreement	March 2008 – Jan. 2013	UN-Habitat	Education	20 provinces: Kabul, Kandahar, Farah, Herat, Bamyan, Balkh, Kapisa, Parwan, Panjshir, Nangarhar, Ghor, Baghlan, Kunduz, Jawzjan Helmand, Laghman, Logar, Saripul, Takhar and Paktia
24	Ministry of Women's Affairs Initiative to Strengthen Policy and Advocacy (MISPA)	7.2		Jan. 2006 – Jan. 2011	The Asia Foundation	Women and Governance	Dept of Women's Affairs in Kabul, Bamyan, Herat, Kandahar, Balkh, and Nangarhar
25	Performance-Based Governance Fund (PBGF)	48.9	Cooperative Agreement	Nov. 2009 – July 2013	The Asia Foundation	Governance	33 of 34 provinces (exception was Kabul, which had a separate project)
26	Regional Afghanistan Municipalities Program for Urban Populations (RAMP-UP)	270 in 4 projects	Contract	Various start dates – March 2014	Development Alternatives, Inc. (East, North, West) and Chemonics International, Inc. (South)	Governance	33 of 34 provinces (exception is Nuristan)
27	Rehabilitation Projects at Regional Airports (RPRA)	30, (6 from USAID)	Government-to-Government Award	Dec. 2010 – July 2012	Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation, Tetra Tech, IRD	Infrastructure and Transportation	Badakhshan and Faryab

28	Road Operations and Maintenance Capacity Building Program (AIRP TO#14)[3]	59.3	Task Order	Nov. 2007 – Oct. 2011	Louis Berger, Inc./Black &Veatch	Infrastructure and Transportation	National
29	Rule of Law and Stabilization Program – Formal (RLS-F)	33.8		May 2010 – May 2012	Tetra Tech DPK Consulting, Inc.	Justice and Governance	National
30	Rule of Law and Stabilization – Informal (RLS-I)			Oct. 2012 – Jan. 2014	Checchi & Company Consulting, Inc.	Justice	Logar, Kunar, and Kandahar (Phase 3)
31	Strategic Provincial Roads – Southern and Eastern Afghanistan (SPR-SEA)	269.4		Nov. 2007 – Dec. 2011	International Relief and Development, Inc.	Infrastructure and Transportation	Ghazni, Khost, Kunar, Laghman, Nangarhar, Paktika, Paktya, Helmand, Kandahar, and Uruzgan
32	Strengthening Pharmaceutical Systems (SPS)	34.3	Cooperative Agreement	Aug. 2011 – July 2017	Management Sciences for Health	Health	13 provinces including Kabul, Herat, Nangarhar, Badakhshan, Kandahar, Paktika, Baghlan, and Takhar,
33	Support to Sub-National Governance (SNG)		Cooperative Agreement	June 2008 – Sept. 2013	National Democratic Institute	Governance	National
34	TB CARE I – Afghanistan	4.6		July 2011 – Dec. 2014	Management Sciences for Health	Health	17 provinces: Kabul, Bamyan, Baghlan, Badakhshan, Jowzjan, Faryab, Herat, Farah, Nimroz, Helmand, Kandahar, Zabul, Maidan Wardak, Ghazni, Paktika, Paktiya, and Khost

[3] This is a component of the larger Afghanistan Infrastructure Rehabilitation Program

35	Technical Support to the Central and Provincial Ministry of Public Health (TECH-SERVE)	100.6		July 2006 – Aug. 2012	Management Sciences for Health	Health and Public Administration	17 provinces: Kabul, Bamyan, Baghlan, Badakhshan, Takhar, Jowzjan, Faryab, Herat, Farah, Nimroz, Helmand, Kandahar, Wardak, Ghazni, Paktika, Paktiya, and Khost

PROJECT COMPOSITE RATINGS

In order to address Evaluation Question 1 regarding the effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of USAID's Afghanistan portfolio, the meta-evaluation team rated each project. This section outlines the methodology used to develop the ratings, presents the projects' scores by USAID technical office, and discusses the key findings of several projects.

a. Methodology

The meta-evaluation team developed a broad overview of the projects' performance by rating them based on their evaluations' key findings. In order to minimize subjectivity, the scale used was simple: satisfactory, mixed, and unsatisfactory. A rating of inconclusive was given to projects whose evaluations did not provide enough qualitative information to allow for an overall judgment. The tables on Pgs. 23-25 show the project ratings by USAID technical office.

As explained in the methodology section of the introduction, the evaluations were deconstructed and analyzed according to key findings related to performance. If most or all of a project's key findings were positive, it was given a composite rating of "satisfactory." Projects were rated satisfactory if, for the example, they met their performance indicator targets, were rated well by participants and beneficiaries, had sustainable results, and so forth. If, however, most or all of the key findings were negative, the projects were scored "unsatisfactory." These projects tended to be poorly designed, failed to build capacity, and experienced conflict among staff or with stakeholders, among other deficiencies. "Mixed" evaluations had both positive and negative findings, and projects with poor evaluations that that did not allow overall judgments to be made were rated "Inconclusive." Annex V provides the key findings for each project.

b. Ratings

Overall, a plurality of the projects, 16 (45.8%), received a mixed rating. As the ratings tables on the following pages show, nine projects (25.7%) were deemed unsatisfactory and seven (20%) satisfactory. Last, three projects (8.6%) were not be rated, as the evaluations were not judged to be conclusive enough. Looking at the project ratings by USAID technical office and sector provides some suggestions of trends. OAG's projects were generally implemented well: three of four agriculture projects received satisfactory ratings. OEG, OEI, and OPPD, on the other hand, did not have any projects rated satisfactory. In fact, OEI had the most projects (four of five) of the technical offices that were judged unsatisfactory. However, it should be kept in mind that the technical offices did not implement the same number of projects, nor were the projects the same in size or scope.

Table 1: Performance of Office of Agriculture Projects

Project	Overall Objective(s)	Overall Rating
ACE	Provide holistic support to advance agricultural modernization through financing, technical assistance, and policy reform	SATISFACTORY
ASAP	Revitalize and improve regional competitiveness of the agriculture sector	UNSATISFACTORY
IDEA-NEW	Support stabilization and transition by expanding the licit agricultural economy in the northern, eastern, and western regions	SATISFACTORY
ILGNRM	Build Afghanistan's capacity to conserve and sustainably manage natural resources	SATISFACTORY

Table 2: Performance of Office of Democratic Governance Projects

Project	Overall Objective(s)	Overall Rating
I-PACS II	Enable Afghan citizens to more effectively participate in the political process, solve community problems, and demand satisfactory governance from their leaders	MIXED
DDP	Strengthen the credibility and build capacity of sub-national government to provide public services	UNSATISFACTORY
KCI	Increase the capacity of the Kabul municipality to improve the delivery of services and generate and account for revenue	MIXED
PBGF	Deliver capacity building and financial support to Provincial Governors and their offices to enable them to fulfill their key functions and provide essential services to their respective constituents.	MIXED
RAMP-UP	Increase the capacity of key municipalities to improve delivery of services and support economic growth	MIXED
SNG	Strengthen the capacity of provincial councils to represent constituent interests and oversee implementation of development activities	MIXED
ACAP II	Provide assistance to Afghan families and communities suffering losses as a result of international military operations	SATISFACTORY
RLS-I	Build the capacity of informal justice actors to increase access to justice and strengthen stability in conflict-affected areas	MIXED
RLS-F	Strengthen the formal judicial system and the public's view of and willingness to use it	MIXED
AMDEP	Ensure the existence of a strong, independent, pluralistic media sector that provides accurate, trusted news and information for audiences around the country	SATISFACTORY
CTAA	Build the internal capacity of IARCSC and support the institutionalization of civil service reforms	UNSATISFACTORY

Table 3: Performance of Office of Economic Growth Projects

Project	Overall Objective(s)	Overall Rating
BLT	Undertake urban regeneration, community development, education, and business development in Murad Khane, an historic district of Kabul	MIXED
ASMED	Increase opportunities for trade, employment, and investment by improving private sector productivity	MIXED
FAIDA	Expand access to credit and improve the human and institutional capacity of the financial sector and the regulatory environment for finance	UNSATISFACTORY
LARA	Support the government in implementing the National Land Policy by developing a robust, enduring, Afghan owned and managed land market framework	MIXED
EGGI	Strengthen the MoF's capacity to develop and implement economic and regulatory policy and improve the private sector enabling environment	MIXED
CAWSA	Establish a viable business model for water service delivery by enhancing both the technical and commercial operations at the AUWSSC	UNSATISFACTORY

Table 4: Performance of Office of Education Projects

Project	Overall Objective(s)	Overall Rating
HEP	Improve instructional quality at 18 Faculties of Education and assist MoHE and university leadership in developing a national quality assurance system	MIXED
LCEP II	Improve the livelihoods through innovative, integrated, and sustainable literacy and job skills interventions	SATISFACTORY

Table 5: Performance of Office of Health and Nutrition Projects

Project	Overall Objective(s)	Overall Rating
DEWS	Contribute to the reduction of the morbidity, mortality, and disability due to various health related problems	MIXED
TB Care I	Decrease morbidity and mortality by improving case detection and treatment success rates of TB	SATISFACTORY
SPS	Provide technical assistance and support to the MoPH to improve the pharmaceutical system	MIXED
Tech Serve	Improve the capacity of the MoPH to plan, manage, supervise, monitor, and assess barriers to access quality BPHS and EPHS services	INCONCLUSIVE
HSSP	Improve the quality of health services provided to women of reproductive age	INCONCLUSIVE

Table 6: Performance of Office of Energy and Infrastructure Projects

Project	Overall Objective(s)	Overall Rating
AESP	Provide architect and engineering technical services to USAID-supported infrastructure projects	INCONCLUSIVE
SPR	Increase stability and security by rehabilitating provincial roads and improving subcontractor capacity to build and maintain roads	UNSATISFACTORY
EQUALS	Provide independent quality assurance for ongoing and planned construction, and design and maintenance projects	UNSATISFACTORY
AIRP/ TO#14	Develop the capacity of the MoPW to maintain its national and provincial road system	UNSATISFACTORY
RARP	Complete rehabilitation work on the Maimana and Faizabad regional airports to meet FAA standards	UNSATISFACTORY

Table 7: Performance of Office of Project and Program Development Projects

Project	Overall Objective(s)	Overall Rating
MISPA	Assist the MoWA in fulfilling its mandate to meet the needs of women in Afghanistan	MIXED
CTAP	Strengthen the capacity of the staff and key ministries to better deliver services to the public	MIXED

DISCUSSION OF PROJECT RATINGS

The discussion below is intended to demonstrate how the meta-evaluation team established ratings. Because nearly half of the projects were judged to have mixed results, two examples are of mixed-rated projects. There is an example each of satisfactory-, unsatisfactory-, and inconclusive-rated projects.

Support to Subnational Governance Structures Project - SNG (Mixed)

SNG aimed to strengthen the capacity of Provincial Councils (PC) to represent constituent interests in government decision-making and oversee the implementation of local development initiatives. Overall, the final evaluation found that SNG's training of PCs was generally effective in providing members with the knowledge, skills, and tools required to fulfill their responsibilities. SNG supported a large number of site visits, public hearings, NGO briefings, stakeholder interactions, workshops, etc., for PCs to learn and carry out their duties. Its internship program was widely seen as a success.

However, it did not cover training in mediation and conflict resolution. According to the SNG final evaluation, this was a major shortcoming because responding to the public's request for help in resolving problems occupied the majority of PCs' time, in some cases

more than 80%.[4] In addition, the PCs' effectiveness was also sometimes limited by the PC Law and the varying quality of relationships with governors, ministers, and other government officials.

Land Reform in Afghanistan (Mixed)

LARA was designed to promote a legal environment conducive to the development and stabilization of the land market, and to develop a reformed system of land registration and titling. According to its evaluation, LARA succeeded in upgrading Arazi as the major land agency of Afghanistan, strengthened its leadership, and integrated the cadastral unit formerly located in Afghan Geodesy and Cartography Head Office into the agency. LARA upgraded and formalized settlements in Jalalabad, with the result that nearly every property holder is on track to receive a formal deed. The project established a road map for formalizing settlements and registering deeds throughout the country.

While LARA reported extensive training of Arazi staff, the evaluation found it was incomplete and questionable in its effectiveness. Arazi staff had stopped using the Arazi Land Records Management Information System software. An independent study found LARA's public awareness campaign on women's land rights had a negligible impact.

Accelerating Sustainable Agriculture Program (Unsatisfactory)

ASAP strived to strengthen the agriculture sector by increasing production, sales, and exports, generating new jobs, and introducing modern technologies. According to the ASAP final evaluation, the project grew a handful of agribusinesses and established a number of agriculture depots and veterinary field units. In addition, agriculture sales and exports reportedly increased over the course of the project.

However, the evaluation found little evidence of a sustained attempt to build the capacity of and incorporate the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (MAIL) in the planning, management, and implementation of many project activities. A number of trainings and demonstrations were one-offs, with no follow-up to assure farmers were practicing the skills taught. Some farming activities were not transitioned to MAIL, making their sustainability unlikely.

TB Care I (Satisfactory)

TB Care I assisted Afghanistan's National Tuberculosis Program in improving detection and treatment of tuberculosis. The project was rated satisfactory because of clear indications of its success. TB Care I's final evaluation found improvements in all of the selected indicators;

---

[4] Andy Tamas et al, *Performance Evaluation of the Support to Subnational Governance Structures Program* (Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., February 2013), pg. 17-18.

case findings, New Sputum Smear Positive, and TB Success Rates all increased under the project. Using statistical analysis of treatment and non-treatment provinces, the evaluation could attribute the success directly to TB Care I. The evaluation approved of the project's use of Direct Observation Treatment – Short course, called DOTs, because of its international reputation, cost-effectiveness, and ability to reach the poorest and most remote locations.

Afghanistan Engineering Support Program (Inconclusive)

AESP provided architectural and engineering services to USAID-supported infrastructure projects. While the project's evaluation provided some insight into the design and implementation of the infrastructure project, it faced severe constraints in assessing whether or not it met its objectives, due in part to security conditions around the election, which led to a premature end to data collection. The evaluation reviewed only six of 158 work orders, the Implementing Partner failed to provide adequate documentation and prohibited many interviews, and stakeholders did not return any survey questionnaires. At least two of the seven evaluation questions were not answered. These research constraints rendered a fair judgment of the project difficult.

EFFECTIVENESS

The effectiveness of USAID/Afghanistan projects was addressed to some extent in the previous section on the overall performance of the projects based on key findings presented in their evaluations. This section analyzes the effectiveness of the projects across common objectives, such as building capacity, and then discusses the factors that influence effectiveness, including those outside of the projects' control.

DEFINITION OF AND CHALLENGES ASSESSING EFFECTIVENESS

The Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development defines effectiveness as "a measure of the extent to which a project attains its objectives."[5] In evaluating the effectiveness of a program or project, the DAC recommends considering the following questions: "To what extent were the objectives achieved or are likely to be achieved? What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?"[6]

There are a number of challenges in measuring effectiveness, and particularly in comparing it across projects of different sizes, scopes, and sectors. As the meta-evaluation team found, only a few of the project evaluations explicitly defined what they meant by effectiveness or a

---

[5] "DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance," Office of Economic Cooperation and Development, accessed May 29, 2016, http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm
[6] Ibid.

related term, such as performance. Thus, it can be assumed that not all of the evaluations used the same implicit definition. The meta-evaluation was further constrained by the innate subjectivity of the evaluations, as mentioned in the limitations section. That is, what one evaluator finds effective may be judged more critically by another. In other cases, evaluators may agree about the effectiveness of various elements but disagree about their respective importance in the overall project. The perceived importance of various elements affects how results are presented and the overall conclusions.

Another major problem relates to the presence and quality of the data used for M&E purposes. The evaluations for almost a third of the 35 projects noted that data was missing data for at least some of the indicators. Some evaluations mentioned that the project had failed to collect baseline data, while others questioned the validity and reliability of the data collected. A few projects discussed the flaws in the projects' M&E systems, including a lack of project management plans, indicators being changed too frequently, and data not aligning with the indicators. Without valid and reliable data, it is much more difficult to assess whether a project was effective in achieving its objectives. In these cases, the evaluators used other, usually qualitative research methods, such as interviews, to arrive at findings regarding the project's effectiveness. As discussed in the methodology section, the findings were assigned ratings of positive, negative, and mixed, and were then tabulated to give the project a composite rating for overall effectiveness.

EFFECTIVENESS ACROSS COMMON PROJECT OBJECTIVES

A. CAPACITY BUILDING

As almost all of the projects had a capacity building component, capacity building was the most common objective across the 35 projects. The Civilian Technical Assistance Program (CTAP), which placed technical advisors in key Afghan ministries to build their capacity to deliver public services, was the only project whose entire mandate was capacity building. Its evaluation distinguishes between capacity building and capacity development. Capacity building is "The process of building the capability of individual staff members to be able to undertake their assigned roles/tasks," while capacity development is "the process of building the capability of both individual staff members and their organizations to operate and deliver their mandated functions, services, products and other 'outputs'."[7]

While CTAP's goal was the latter, most projects focused on building the capacity of individuals, such as project staff, participants, and other beneficiaries. Some projects targeted government agencies, NGOs, and even their subcontractors for organizational development. According to the projects' design, capacity building of individuals typically took the form of

[7] *Final Performance Evaluation of the Afghan Civilian Assistance Program II* (Management Systems International Ltd., February 2015), pg. V.

training, either in classrooms or on-the-job instruction. Other tools for capacity building involve coaching and mentoring, internships or apprenticeships, and participation in study tours. The following sections describe these tools and discuss their effectiveness.

Training

The USAID/Afghanistan Mission has historically made large investments in training, each year supporting the training of thousands of local Afghan counterparts. Training consists of either short-term technical training or longer-term, degree-earning academic education for mid-level to high-level professionals from the public and private sectors. Almost all of the 35 projects featured some sort of training program.

One of the best examples of an effective training program was implemented by the Improving Livelihood and Governance through Natural Resource Management (ILGNRM) project. ILGNRM, which received an overall satisfactory rating, sought to build the government's capacity to conserve and manage natural resources, specifically the Band-e Amir National Park in Bamyan province and the Wakhan Corridor in Badakhshan province. The project designed and delivered wide-ranging technical capacity training to the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (MAIL) and the National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA), as well as to local actors such as Para veterinarians and park rangers.

The training was offered at all levels (national, provincial, and district), was both classroom- and field-based, and was followed by ongoing mentoring. Training activities included wildlife conservation and ranger training; Geographic Information System and Global Position System training; English language, basic computer, and management courses; and para veterinarian training on vaccines, disease diagnosis, and other livestock health services. According to the project evaluation, the training activities were generally on track against its work plan. The evaluation found the training component effective for the following reasons:

> *The most striking features of the project's capacity building support are the degree to which training activities are jointly implemented by the ministries and the project, and the emphasis on "learning by doing." The parties jointly identify training topics, develop curriculum, draft plans, policies and laws; facilitate community participation, manage the livestock-wildlife interface, and conduct field work. A third striking feature is the project's commitment to Government ownership and empowerment. The Project Team serves as advisors and facilitators and encourages ministry staff to make key decisions. This approach helps ensure that "best practices" are not applied without adapting them to fit local conditions. It also enhances the level of capacity development achieved.*[8]

The Regional Afghanistan Municipalities Program for Urban Populations (RAMP-UP) trainings were also successful. The project aimed to increase the capacity of key

---

[8] Abelardo Rodriguez et al, *Performance Evaluation of the Integrated Livelihoods and Governance through Natural Resource Management Project* (Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., August 2013), pg.15.

municipalities to deliver services and support economic growth. Although RAMP-UP received a mixed rating overall, its evaluation found that, with the exception of the North, municipality employees were generally applying the skills and knowledge they received from project training. The most widely-used and highly-regarded trainings were on computer use (e.g., Microsoft Office), budgeting, and revenue generation.

RAMP-UP's evaluation attributed the effectiveness of the training to a "two-pronged approach" that combined classroom training with mentoring and coaching:

> *Formal classroom training was provided in so-called Core (basic) subjects and specialized (Functional) training for more advanced subjects. Classroom instruction introduced municipal officials to the subject matter and established a foundation that prepared municipal employees to work with [implementing partner] technical advisors embedded in, and working daily, from municipal offices… [The Independent Directorate of Local Governance] had also determined that the best approach to capacity building of municipal officials managers, and technicians was integrated training and on-the-job mentoring that provided the required follow-up support needed to avoid training disconnects.*[9]

A relatively ineffective training program was implemented by ASAP, which, as mentioned in the previous section, received an unsatisfactory project rating. ASAP conducted field trials, demonstrations, and trainings for thousands of farmers on a wide range of topics, including cashmere combing and applying post-harvest technologies. Officials from the Department of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (DAIL) and extension agents were invited to participate in these activities. In addition, ASAP supported the training of veterinary field units and agriculture depots. The latter received training in marketing, product handling, and product stewardship.

ASAP trainings appeared to be ineffective because the project failed to follow-up with and mentor farmer beneficiaries who had participated in its training activities. As the ASAP evaluation report states,

> *The shortcoming of these demonstration programs was that there are no records of a follow-up and mentoring program for the participants in these one-off trainings and demonstrations. In the absence of follow-up surveys, there is no record, other than anecdotal observations, that production or yields have increased on individual farms.*[10]

Another major flaw in the design of ASAP's training is that MAIL was largely excluded. While individual DAIL staff may have benefited from participating in the trainings, MAIL did not have ownership of any of ASAP's activities, including the trainings, until they were transitioned to the ministry, and therefore missed out on possible capacity gains. The

---

[9] James Purcell et al, *Performance Evaluation of the Regional Afghan Municipalities Program for Urban Populations-South, North, East, and West* (Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., August 2013), pg.17.

[10] Robert Ressigue et al, *Final Performance Evaluation of the Accelerating Sustainable Agriculture Program* (Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., April 2012), pg.15.

evaluators observe:

> *While officials praise many of the activities that ASAP undertook, there were almost none that felt any attempt was made to incorporate the ministry in the planning, management and implementation of the many activities undertaken by the project. Not until the transition plan was implemented with ministry officials were most aware of the complete nature of the project.*[11]

A review of project performance indicators shows that, in general, they were input-oriented rather than outcome-oriented. Increasingly, USAID has recognized that training does not have an impact until the knowledge or skills acquired by the trainees have been successfully applied to a specific work situation, which, in turn, results in a measurable improvement in performance.

Mentoring/Coaching

Thirteen projects featured a mentoring or coaching program that placed advisors with individuals whose capacity they were to help build. CTAP, which received a mixed overall rating, is the most relevant example of this approach. The project placed technical advisors (TAs) in Afghan ministries to build the capacity of staff and, by extension, the ministries to better deliver public services. Between 2009 and 2012, the project recruited 111 TAs, half of whom are Afghan expatriates, and placed them at more than ten ministries for a period of two years. According to the CTAP evaluation, most of the TAs were well-qualified and provided some capacity gains, but there were cases of inappropriate individuals being recruited.

The evaluation found that the TAs were effective in building the capacities of their Afghan counterparts when: 1) The ministries had correctly identified their capacity weaknesses; 2) CTAP recruited TAs with the appropriate skill set to address the capacity weaknesses; 3) The ministries appropriately managed the TAs; and 4) The ministries appointed counterparts who were willing and able to engage with the TA. When any one of these requirements were not met, there was a break in cause-and-effect chain, and the ministries experienced less-effective results – e.g., skills were not transferred.

The break most often came in the form of an inappropriate TA being recruited, according to the evaluation. Sometimes the TAs did not have the cultural or personal skills to interact with their Afghan counterparts, did not understand the constraints posed by organizational cultures and the bureaucracy of Afghan institutions, or did not correctly understand CTAP's capacity development focus. The evaluation found that a great strength of CTAP was the recruitment of Afghan TAs, which addressed the challenge of cultural barriers, as they could speak Pashto and/or Dari and engage locals better.

---

[11] Ibid 19.

In a few other cases, the use of TAs was less effective because it became a form of capacity substitution rather than capacity building. That is, the TAs embedded in government ministries and offices sometimes did core governmental work for the *tashkeel* rather than improving their capacity do it themselves. The evaluations of the Economic Growth and Governance Initiative (EGGI) and the Ministry of Women's Affairs Initiative to Support Policy and Advocacy (MISPA) both mention this. The EGGI evaluation, in particular, noted "comments about a shift from providing technical assistance to building the capacity of *tashkeel* staff to meeting deadlines, regardless of the participation of those staff."[12]

An unsuccessful example of the mentoring/coaching approach to capacity building was employed by the Afghanistan Small and Medium Enterprise Development (ASMED). The project, which received a mixed rating overall, sought to increase trade, employment, and investment opportunities by strengthening the private sector. Rather than use TAs, ASMED had a mentorship program that matched young professionals with senior business executives as mentors. According to the evaluation, the mentoring program failed because the Afghan mentors were unfamiliar with the concept of mentorship, and the mentees had no specific measure of success. A secondary objective to create new employment was not met, since most of the mentees were already employed. The implementers considered this program expensive, unsuccessful, and discontinued it in 2008.

Internships/Apprenticeships

Eight of the 35 projects featured an internship or apprenticeship component that placed young people in jobs, allowing them to gain practical work experience. The Commercialization of Afghanistan Water and Sanitation (CAWSA) project, for example, embedded interns at water utilities and provided them with on-the-job and classroom training. The Economic Growth and Government Initiative (EGGI) project's Women in Government recruited female university graduates to intern in government offices. The ASMED project's sub grantees provided graduates with three months of training in English, computer skills, and basic management and entrepreneurship and placed them in at companies throughout Afghanistan.

An effective apprenticeship program was implemented by the Learning for Community Empowerment Program (LCEP) II. The program, which aimed to improve the livelihoods of poor communities through literacy and job skills training, received an overall satisfactory rating. In its mid-term review, LCEP II's "productive skills" program was criticized as supply-driven and ineffective for improving incomes. The implementer, UN Habitat, replaced the skills program with an apprenticeship program more suited to the needs of the market.

---

[12] Lynda Rhoades et al, *Assessment of Afghanistan's Public Financial Management Roadmap and Final Evaluation of the Economic Growth and Governance Initiative Project* (Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., November 2014), pg. 48.

According to the LCEP II evaluation, the apprenticeship program was successful because it used a bottom-up strategy to locate recruits and potential jobs:

> *The implementation strategy for LCEP II apprenticeships is for Village Facilitators in conjunction with [community development councils] to identify appropriate trades at the community level, select the "most promising" trainees from among the local literacy graduates, match trainees with a master trainer, monitor trainee progress, and report to UN-Habitat. Trainees are selected on the basis of motivation (attendance at literacy classes), interests in the skill area (demand), talent (some ability in the chosen trade), their intelligence, family income level and perhaps most importantly whether a real opportunity exists in the market for the skill.*[13]

The evaluation team surveyed 323 apprentice trainees, two-third of whom are female, in 23 communities.[14] It found that 100% of them were earning additional income; the average additional earnings equaled 3,600 Afghanis (about $75 at the time), a significant sum for poor households.[15] The most common apprenticeships were in embroidery, beading, carpentry, tailoring, bakery, curtain making, and carpet weaving. Eighty percent of the trainees were interviewed had become self-employed, and about 14% of them had enrolled in public schools part-time.[16]

Study Tours and Visits

Eight of the projects featured study tours and other visits to foreign countries for learning opportunities. The Rule of Law and Stabilization (Formal) Program's Legal Education Component took Afghan professors from law and *sharia* faculties to Egypt and Turkey to learn new teaching methods, update their curricula, and build relationships with legal clinics. The Engineering Quality and Logistical Support (EQUALS) project sent officials from Afghanistan's national electricity company (Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat, DABS) to South Korea and India for short training courses. The Higher Education Project (HEP) funded 19 members of Afghan Faculty of Education members to obtain master's degrees from universities in the US.

Unfortunately, the analysis of study tours and visits in the evaluations is insufficient to draw solid conclusions about lessons learned. The only relevant finding seems to be that the longer-term study tours had a greater effect on participants' capacity building than short tours. According to the HEP evaluation, 16 of the 19 graduates of master's degree programs in the US returned to Afghanistan and are working in the higher education sector.[17] Five

---

[13] Peter Gillies et al, *Learning for Community Empowerment Program Phase II Final Evaluation (*Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., November 2011), pg.19.
[14] Ibid 22.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Gerald R. Boardman et al, *Final Evaluation of the Afghanistan Higher Education Project* (Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., April 2012), pg. 35.

have been promoted to management positions, and three decided to pursue PhDs.[18] On the other hand, according to the EQUALS evaluation, DABS complained that the four-day trips to India and South Korea were too short and rushed. These seem to have increased participant's exposure rather than facilitated any skills transfer.

B. PROMOTING WOMEN AND GIRLS

Advancing gender equality has become an increasingly important objective to the USAID/Afghanistan Mission. This is reflected in the Mission's requirement that data be disaggregated by sex to assess projects' differential effects on women. In addition, as of 2010, almost all projects featured a gender component or attempted to mainstream gender in their activities.

The Ministry of Women's Affairs Initiative to Support Policy and Advocacy (MISPA), which received an overall mixed rating, was designed to improve the capacity of the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA) to address women's needs. A relatively new ministry at the time of the project, MoWA faced many challenges, particularly a lack of infrastructure for provincial offices and the low competency of its staff. MISPA provided training in management, English language, computer use, and proposal and report writing, as well as mentoring by technical advisors. With MISPA's aid, the ministry conducted public awareness campaigns about women's rights and violence against women, drafted policy papers, and participated in TV roundtable discussions. Other assistance included providing equipment, making infrastructure improvements, and upgrading IT to the ministry's Kabul office.

While the evaluation found areas of improvement and concluded the MISPA investment was worthwhile, it noted that "MISPA fell short of reaching its goal to build the capacity of MoWA to serve as an effective agent for policy and advocacy."[19] MoWA continued to struggle to carry out its mandate. According to the evaluation team, communications between MoWA and its provincial directorates were weak, staff competency remained an issue because of high turnover and a lack of qualified female staff, and provincial MoWA offices still lacked basic amenities such as electricity and heat for fuel.

Unlike MISPA, most projects addressed gender through separate components or by including women in their regular activities (mainstreaming). One effective example of a separate gender component was the Women in Government (WIG) "work stream" of the EGGI project, which placed female university graduates in six-month internships at government offices and private sector organizations and supplemented the work experience with skills building workshops. By the end of EGGI, 446 women had graduated from the

---

[18] Ibid 36.

[19] Judy Benjamen et al, *Final Project Evaluation of the Ministry of Women's Affairs Initiative to Strengthen Policy and Advocacy* (Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., June 2010), pg. 6.

internship program, 73% of whom had been placed in jobs afterwards.[20] According to the EGGI evaluation,

> *Interviews with the line ministries and relevant gender units were positive that the WIG program was worthwhile, not only for the interns, but it also supported the policy objective of increasing the presence of qualified women within the departments. The WIG project also provided the additional benefit of introducing new knowledge and technical skills to the workplace.*[21]

WIG was somewhat less successful outside of Kabul. In Balkh, Herat, and Nangarhar provinces, recruiting female interns and placing them in jobs was more difficult. Yet, as the evaluation found, this was less because of a willingness to hire women than the unavailability of transportation. Long distances, heavy snow, and other dangers of traveling to work seemed to discourage women from working.

Rather than designing a special activity or component for women, some projects mainstreamed female participation in their activities. One example is CAWSA, which was designed to strengthen the technical and commercial operations of the Afghanistan Urban Water Supply and Sewage Corporation. In fact, the project received an overall unsatisfactory rating because its mainstreaming was so thorough, it attempted to involve women in fields in which they did not traditionally participate (water and sewage).

CAWSA attempted to empower women by hiring them as paid interns at several water utilities. To assure better cooperation between men and women in mixed-sex environments, the project offer one-day "trainings" to staff focused on gender. To assure that it could in fact recruit women for the positions in conservative locations, CAWSA hired *mahrams* as well. In Ghazni, for example, CAWSA created brother-sister meter-reading teams.[22] The evaluation noted that managers "highly praised" the work of the female staff.[23] On a related note, it found that women produce better billing results because they can enter homes more easily during the day than men. Despite these advantages, the utilities could not retain the female staff because CAWSA paid them salaries they could not match after the project ended.

C. CIVIC ENGAGEMENT/PUBLIC OUTREACH

Almost half of the projects intended to engage the public or certain groups, such as women and youth, to meet their broader objectives. The media project AMDEP, for example, supported local radio stations that produced programming intended to increase citizens'

---

[20] Rhoades et al, 56.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Albana Vuji et al, *Final Evaluation of the Commercialization of the Afghanistan Water and Sanitation Project* (Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., August 2014), pg. 48.
[23] Ibid.

awareness about national and civic issues. The Performance-Based Governance Fund (PBGF) project aimed to build provincial governor offices' capacity to do public outreach so they could better provide constituent services and improve their legitimacy. The ILGNRM project reached out to communities living in or near Band-e Amir and the Wakhan Corridor to encourage community ownership and governance of protected areas.

The only project of the 35 that worked entirely in the civil society sector, the Initiative to Promote Afghan Civil Society (IPACS) II, received a mixed rating overall. IPACS II was designed to enable citizens to more effectively participate in the political process, solve community problems, and demand good governance from their leaders. The project had three objectives: 1) improve the legal enabling environment for civil society; 2) strengthen civil society's capacity for democratic processes; and 3) increase citizen mobilization and policy engagement. The project largely met these objectives through advocating for changes to legislation, providing training to civil society organizations (CSOs), and holding community and provincial dialogues.

IPACS II formed four working groups to address the legal and regulatory framework affecting civil society: Social Organization law, NGO law, Civil Society Legal and Accountability Framework, and a task force on Private Giving. With meetings called by a legal expert, these working groups discussed concerns about and potential changes to the laws. The groups included representatives from NGOs, including women, and government officials. Almost all of the concerns of the Social Organization law working group were addressed in the new law, and the Ministry of Economy accepted nine of the 14 changes proposed by the NGO law working group. According to the IPAC II evaluation, the working groups were successful because the process was led by a legal advisor, and because "government participation facilitated the adoption of desired amendments and legislation."[24]

To achieve the second objective, IPACS II provided training and grants to CSOs. The project adopted a "cascading" method to training, whereby IPACs II's international staff provided training to "key partner organizations" (KPOs) which then trained a large numbers of CSOs. Training was provided in community dialogue, human rights, gender, budgetary process, citizen's report card, income tax law, financial sustainability, strategic management, and monitoring and evaluation. Of the 191 organizations interviewed by the IPACS II evaluation, 80 percent believe they gained a great deal from the trainings.

The grant-giving component, however, was less successful. IPACS II gave KPOs funding to provide small grants to CSOs, which would, in turn, learn about the grant process and gain experience in writing proposals and budgets. The evaluation found evidence this process was poorly implemented; there were many complaints the three-month grant period was

---

[24] Saskia Ivens, *Project Evaluation of the Initiative to Promote Afghan Civil Society II* (Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., July 2013), pg.14.

too short to affect change and the funds arrived late, further shortening the implementation period. Part of the delays were attributed to USAID's complicated security vetting process. Factors influencing effectiveness that are outside of project control will be discussed in a later section.

Last, IPACS II required the KPOs to hold community- and province-level dialogues to reach citizens and encourage problems solving. According to the evaluation, all 19 KPOs held community dialogues, averaging 33 per KPO and exceeding the target, set by the PMP for 2013, of 350 dialogues.[25] Typically, a CSO set up the community dialogue, and the KPO facilitated it. The dialogues involved community members, including elders and women, discussing communal problems and possible resolutions. The dialogues general received positive reviews, but their continuation was uncertain. Sustainability of project outcomes will be discussed in a later section of the report.

The Strategic Provincial Roads- Southern and Eastern Afghanistan (SPR-SEA) project provides an example of ineffective community and public outreach. The project, which rehabilitated roads in insecure areas of Afghanistan to achieve stability, had a Community Outreach and Capacity Building (COCB) Component that, according to its evaluation, ultimately failed. SPR-SEA did not reach communities impacted by the road work because of failure to understand the socio-political dynamics:

> *The third element of COCB was community mobilization (CM). It was expected that CM teams would go to the communities affected by roads program before construction began. Our research found that CM teams played a secondary role and were often uninformed about new roads plans. CM activities usually concentrated on Community Development Councils and the formal political structure. They avoided the Shuras, which was perhaps due to COCB's poor understanding of traditional rural social and political structures.*[26]

The Land Reform in Afghanistan (LARA), which received a mixed overall rating, also had a relatively ineffective public outreach component. LARA was designed to help government implement the National Land Policy and improve the framework for the land market. LARA had a public information component that aimed to raise awareness about women's land rights and inheritance. The public awareness campaign was largely centered on billboards in Kabul and media events, but also included publishing and distributing booklets on women's inheritance rights.

According to LARA's evaluation, the public awareness campaign's "impact on the contractor and donor was probably more substantial than on the Afghan public."[27] This is because it

---

[25] Ibid 24.
[26] Aluiso Rosa-Borges et al, *Final Evaluation of the Strategic Provincial Roads- Southern and Eastern Afghanistan Program* (Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., August 2011), pg.15.
[27] Alan Decker et al, *Final Performance Evaluation of the Land Reform in Afghanistan Project* (Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., November 2014), pg. 18.

was not sensitive to the target audience; for example, the booklets had illustrated explanations, but most Afghan women are illiterate. As the evaluation states,

> *The awareness campaign needed better design, more in-depth penetration of its target audience, and intensive follow-up. The design of the billboards seems to have elicited more comment on the woman featured than on the message of inheritance rights. It was difficult to get any female, never mind an older Afghan woman, to appear on the billboard design. This should have been a cultural warning sign for LARA. The Afghan-American leader of the Afghan Women's Network suggested the billboard feature an older woman or a family that suffered from errant practices. She said the message should have been explicit, not implied.*[28]

D. INTRODUCTION OR REFORM OF SYSTEMS

About half of the projects aimed to introduce or reform target institutions' administrative and management systems in order to improve their effectiveness. The Disease Early Warning System (DEWS) project, for instance, helped the Ministry of Public Health implement a surveillance system to track specific diseases, health conditions and events. The Kabul City Initiative introduced and trained Kabul municipality officials in using a financial management information system in order to better manage finances. The HEP project provided technical support to the Ministry of Higher Education in order to create a quality assurance system for university education.

The CAWSA project introduced various work procedures and systems at four regional water utilities (in Jalalabad, Kandahar, Ghazni, and Laghman) that improved operations. These included both financial and customer service-related interventions. CAWSA, for example, developed a work program budgeting matrix and new financial reporting and controls procedures. The newly introduced financial procedures included many accounting forms and financial statements, profit and loss statements, balance sheets, sources and application of funds statements, billing and collection systems, and inventory management systems. In the area of customer service, CAWSA implemented customer awareness programs, customer hotlines, and complaints handling systems. In addition, CAWSA developed and implemented numerous databases to meet the specific requirements of individual water utilities, such as tracking systems for warehouse inventory transactions and balances, customer accounts, customer complaints and follow-up, infrastructure identification and management, asset depreciation, and maintenance management data.

In two short years, the four projects of RAMP-UP quickly and effectively installed modern accounting and financial management systems in most of the target municipalities. The reform process began with internal surveys of each municipality that identified administrative systems for improvement. Budget reforms that were adopted included

---

[28] Ibid.

establishing functional internal budget committees, developing and using a Chart of Accounts, followed by widespread automation of municipal accounting budget systems (e.g., payroll, budget formulation, tracking of revenues and expenditures, and budget reporting). Municipal personnel had been trained to use those systems, and had already demonstrated their effectiveness in producing, for example, budgets in electronic formats.

E. INTRODUCTION OR REFORM OF POLICIES AND LAWS

Five projects aimed to introduce or reform policies and laws. As discussed earlier in the section on public outreach, IPACS II formed working groups that included government officials, which managed to have their concerns addressed in the Social Organization and NGO laws. The LARA project worked with the worked with the Ministry of Urban Development and the Independent Directorate of Local Governance to revise drafts of the Land Management Law and Land Acquisition Law that, at the time of the evaluation, were before the Parliament for adoption.

The Improving Livelihood and Governance through Natural Resource Management (ILGNRM) project met or exceeded targets for the number of natural resource management-related policies, laws, agreements, or regulations that were drafted, reviewed, and implemented. By conducting research on laws in other countries, providing expert legal advice on Afghan law, and working closely with the National Environmental Protection Agency, MAIL, and the Ministry of Justice, the project identified appropriate solutions and strategies to achieve political support for proposed reforms.

F. JOB CREATION AND LIVELIHOOD IMPROVEMENT

At least eight projects attempted to create jobs or improve the incomes of beneficiaries. The Afghanistan Sustainable Agriculture Program (ASAP), for example, aimed to create jobs rural areas and, according to its evaluation, met its target of 7,948 full-time equivalent jobs created. One of the objectives of the Building Livelihood and Trade (BLT) program of Turquoise Mountain was to increase economic and livelihood opportunities of Afghans. However, its evaluation found that only 15% of the families in Murad Khane, where the project was active, reported an increase in income or prospects of finding a job. Turquoise Mountain's activities have had a similarly small impact on improving the livelihoods of its graduates and the start-ups with which it works.

In contributing to the modernization of Afghanistan agriculture, the Agriculture Credit Enhancement (ACE) project's borrowers created more jobs and earned higher incomes. Forty-five of the 62 direct borrowers surveyed reported creating a total of 18,263 new jobs. Of the 101 end-borrower households surveyed, 78 reported adding 1,651 new jobs; 80 earned more income and 71 reported higher profits.

The interventions of the FAIDA project created 5,396 full-time equivalent jobs, including 1,522 (28%) for women. Nearly 80% of the full-time equivalent jobs FAIDA generated were generated by a single financial institution, Oxus Afghanistan, indirectly through its loans to micro, small and medium enterprises. Oxus efficiently generated indirect jobs by using a $300,000 FAIDA grant to leverage a loan of $3 million from the Microfinance Investment Support Facility for Afghanistan. The other types of organizations supported by FAIDA only created between 19 and 349 jobs. It should be noted, however, that not all of FAIDA's interventions were intended to produce jobs.

G. INCREASE REVENUES

Four projects had a goal of increasing the revenues of government institutions – e.g., municipalities, utilities – to which they provided support. Increasing revenues turned out to be one of the more difficult objectives to meet, and it was extremely difficult to measure. For example, it was difficult to determine whether the Kabul City Initiative (KCI) improved Kabul Municipality's revenue generation due to the unreliability of the ledger system before KCI. As a result of KCI's intervention, the Revenue Department rapidly and effectively adopted an FMIS program and revenue climbed slowly over a six year period. But the municipality's revenue collection in the more recent years, and the increase in much of the revenue, had been through one-off sales of properties, tax arrears, and other non-recurrent revenue. The potential municipal tax base was noted to be modest at best. There never has been the concept of a resident's obligation to pay taxes in order to receive better roads, parks or sidewalks, trash collection, and other public services. The municipality continued to have little autonomy to devise its own revenue collection schemes, severely limiting the City's ability to raise funds.

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE EFFECTIVENESS

A. QUALITY OF HUMAN RESOURCES

About one-third of the project evaluations discussed the effect of human resources, including local Afghan staff and expatriate program staff, consultants, and experts, on project performance. Human resources appeared to be one of the most important factors influencing project effectiveness.

Several evaluations of projects that worked with Afghan civil servants (known as *tashkeel* staff), mentioned the widely-held belief that they are unmotivated, underqualified, and susceptible to turnover. The EGGI evaluation found that this reinforced a dependency on national and technical advisors. In some cases, the advisors did the work for the *tashkeel* staff rather than work with them to improve their capacity, resulting in capacity substitution

rather than transfer.[29] To overcome the abovementioned barriers of working with *tashkeel* staff, the Afghan counterparts paired with CTAP technical advisors were contracted national advisors, not *tashkeel* staff.

The evaluation of the Strengthening Pharmaceutical Systems (SPS) project found that some project activities could not be effectively implemented because of human resource shortages. For example, there are more than 16,000 pharmacies in Afghanistan but only 2,000 registered pharmacists. This shortage has resulted in community health workers, nurses, and physicians prescribing and delivering medicines. Unlike pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, these staff were not trained in rational medicine use, adverse drug reactions, and medicines safety.

The effect of absent staff, or a high turnover among them, on project performance extends to international staff as well. The SPR-SEA evaluation, for example, found that the average tenure for international staff, which included the chief of party, chief engineer, and managers, was 8.3 months.[30] The evaluation noted that this was relatively low, even considering the Afghanistan context, and no doubt made it difficult to manage the project effectively.

Human resource barriers during implementation of the CAWSA project prevented any significant improvement in the important Cost Recovery Ratios (CRR) in most of the Service Business Units (SBU) or Water Supply Departments (WSDs) the project aimed to improve. Data the evaluators obtained showed that the staff capabilities in finance and accounting were very low in all cases. The project assumptions and targets related to CRR were too ambitious given the limited capabilities of the utilities' personnel and infrastructure. Achieving higher CRR targets will require necessary infrastructure and other physical system improvement coupled with the provision of more qualified key staff.

B. COORDINATION WITH COUNTERPARTS

A cross-cutting policy of the US government strategy in Afghanistan has been the Afghan first policy, which promotes Afghan leadership and ownership, Afghan participation, Afghan capacity development, and Afghan sustainability. It is an integral part of ensuring Afghan leadership and capacity to assume the lead role in the development process.

Surprisingly, several of the USAID projects did little to involve local or ministerial counterparts in project planning or implementation. This may have been the case because, in previous years, USAID focused on delivering services to the public as soon as possible for stabilization purposes. Some projects may have knowingly sidelined Afghan ministries and other counterparts because of their limited capacity at the time.

---

[29] Rhoades et al, 58.
[30] Aluiso Rosa-Borges et al, 27.

According to the evaluators of the ASAP project, despite official praise for the many activities that ASAP undertook, almost no officials felt any attempt was made to incorporate the ministry in the planning, management and implementation of the many activities undertaken by the project. Not until the transition plan was implemented were most ministry officials aware of the complete nature of the project. One example was the National Agriculture Information System (NAIS), which officials said was of little use to the ministry when turned over because it was mostly based on support to ASAP activities, and there had been no coordination with the Ministry Statistical Office responsible for data collection. This was a major missed opportunity at capacity building within MAIL and undermined the potential sustainability of project achievements.

The EGGI project included one advisor who provided technical assistance to the Fiscal Policy Unit (FPU). Progress was deemed unlikely to be sustained because 1) EGGI did not request the FPU's input when designing assistance to be provided, and 2) at least at the staff level, there was no coordination between EGGI and the FPU. The EGGI advisor reported that the unit did not provide a receptive work environment or even a work space for him to use. Further, the FPU staff at times failed to participate in the training EGGI offered due to other job commitments.

The design of the Road Operations and Maintenance Capacity Building Program (AIRP TO14) was inadequate and involved little Afghan input. The resulting Task Order for AIRP issued to Louis Berger Group/Black & Veatch was incomplete and poorly drafted at the time it was issued and signed in November 2007. Negotiations between USAID and the contractor dragged on for months. The project's design and primary objective of creating a new organization within GIRoA did not reflect the priorities of MoPW or other GIRoA officials because they were not consulted. In addition, communication between TO14's key stakeholders was inadequate, with reports not being shared in a timely manner, resulting in confusion amongst stakeholders.

C. INSECURITY

The insecure conditions of Afghanistan influenced the ability of many projects to carry out activities; insecurity was likely the most important factor outside of projects' control, which influenced their effectiveness. Insecurity especially hindered road construction projects because they were often located in insecure areas, and were therefore hard to protect. But evaluations for other projects also discussed the negative impact of insecurity. The PBGF evaluation, for example, mentioned that insecurity in the districts prevented provincial governors from travelling and improving outreach. The evaluation for the Afghanistan Civilian Assistance Program II, which provided assistance to Afghans affected by military operations, found that ACAP II staff could not access some potential beneficiaries because they were located in very insecure areas.

In late 2009, the SPR-SEA project suffered from a substantial increase in insurgent attacks, which resulted in a proportionate increase in subcontractor security costs. SPR road crews suffered attacks during the entire program. These attacks resulted in the death of 127 staff, the injury of 258 staff, and the intimidation of numerous others. IRD's sub-contractor appeared to exploit security constraints, by controlling and sometimes restricting the access granted to IRD's engineers tasked with quality control. The result was that QA/QC was often not done.

The effectiveness of the SNG project was also limited by of factors outside of its control. Provinces and districts often became inaccessible due to insecurity, weather, impassable terrain and/or lack of transport. Moreover, Provincial Councils which SNG meant to assist were often targeted by insurgents, their offices were sometimes attacked, and Council members were reportedly targeted for assassination.

D. CONSERVATIVE, TRADITIONAL CULTURE

Another factor influencing effectiveness that is outside of project control is Afghanistan's culture. Afghan culture is conservative and traditional, and often poses limitations on what can be done. This can be seen most clearly in the case of projects that attempted to engage women. These projects were forced to come up with alternatives strategies to those used to engage men, as Afghan women's movement and access to opportunities is typically limited.

The Afghanistan Credit Enhancement (ACE) program, for example, created a separate financial product called *Zahra* specifically for women. *Zahra* has a lower lending limit that makes it easier for women, who often do not have the same collateral as men and are more risk-averse, to take out loans. ACE's evaluation found that *Zahra* was relatively popular, and has been important in opening up access to credit to Afghan woman. The Rule of Law and Stabilization (Informal) program financed housing for female students not from Kabul who were participants in a judicial training program. The provision of separate, secure housing for women enabled many to participate who otherwise would not.

E. OTHER FACTORS

Several other factors outside of project control influenced, largely negatively, effectiveness. These include corruption/lack of transparency; a lack of electricity, Internet, and other basic resources; and challenges working with the Afghan government or USAID. Several evaluations mentioned that possible corruption influenced the design of projects. For example, when a government office was perceived as very corrupt, a project might decide not to work with it. This was the case with ASMED and it affected effectiveness because the office may have had resources or advantages that the project had to go without. Sometimes, a lack of basic services, such as stable electricity, prevented projects from getting work done. Last, the bureaucracy of the Afghan government and USAID, which had to approve project activities, were noted to have hindered project performance in some cases.

EFFICIENCY

This section highlights and discusses findings from the evaluations that attempted to analyze the efficiency of USAID/Afghanistan's projects.

DEFINING AND CHALLENGES IN ASSESSING EFFICIENCY

Consistent with Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Development Assistance Committee (DAC) evaluation criteria, efficiency measures the qualitative and quantitative outputs in relation to the inputs.[31] An efficient project uses the least costly resources possible to achieve the desired results. This generally requires comparing alternative approaches to achieving the same outputs, to see whether the most efficient process has been adopted. This is not to suggest a focus on the least costly approach, but rather cost-effectiveness. When evaluating the efficiency of a program or project, DAC recommends considering the following questions: "Were the activities cost-efficient? Were objectives achieved on time? Was the program or project implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternatives?"[32]

Identifying key findings about project efficiency is a challenge because few of the evaluations' scopes of work included this fundamental evaluation concept. Efficiency was sometimes mentioned in the evaluations, with the general conclusion that the projects were cost-efficient, but they provided little, if any, analysis. Only a handful of evaluations, including those for the Building Livelihoods and Trade (BLT) program of the Turquoise Mountain, TB Care I, and Support to Subnational Governance Structures (SNG), were explicitly asked to address the issue of cost-effectiveness. A few other evaluations attempted to compare alternative approaches to achieving the same results, which will be discussed below.

Of the evaluations that were asked to analyze cost-effectiveness, a few directly stated they could not do so because financial data and other information necessary for this exercise was unavailable or inaccurate. For example, the TB Care I evaluation stated it "was not able to gain timely access to sufficient financial and personnel data to permit a detailed assessment of the 'cost-effectiveness'" of the program's intervention packages.[33] The SNG evaluation explained, "Without having access to information on other similar programs in comparable contexts, and the lack of data on expenditures that were directly linked to measurable results, it was not possible to carry out an evidence-based calculation of the project's cost effectiveness."[34] The evaluation for the Disease Early Warning System (DEWS) reported

---

[31] "DAC Criteria for Evaluation Development Assistance"
[32] Ibid.
[33] Robert Hagan et al, *Final Performance Evaluation of the TB Care I Program* (Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., December 2014), pg. 25.
[34] Andy Tamas et al, 11.

that financial information for the program was difficult to find or non-existent. For three years of the program, the implementing partners, the Ministry of Public Health and World Bank, had not reported financial information for DEWS in their annual reports. The budgets to which the evaluation had access were not well-defined or managed.

COMPARING ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES

Without necessary data, a couple of the evaluations resorted to other ways of assessing cost-effectiveness, such as comparing their projects to alternatives. SNG's evaluation, for instance, broadly and generally compared SNG to similar programs being implemented in Afghanistan, namely the Afghanistan Subnational Governance Program (ASGP) of the United Nation's Development Programme and GIZ's subnational development program. The evaluation found that, compared to these programs, SNG seems to have accomplished more with less. In addition, SNG's costs were generally in line with expectation for projects in Afghanistan, and the evaluation did not find evidence of extraneous or out-of-ordinary expenses. This led the evaluation to conclude, generally, that SNG appeared to be cost-effective.

The Learning for Community Empowerment Program II (LCEP II) evaluation also considered alternatives. It found no other programs in Afghanistan that offered the same mix of literacy/skills/microcredit. Some programs focused just on literacy (UNICEF, CIDA), others on vocational training (JICA), while other programs offered a combination of literacy and skills or a focus on finance. The LCEP II's integration of the three components of literacy, skills training, and microfinance made it a unique and highly innovative program. LCEP II also appeared to have a wide coverage as well as a strong positive effect on promoting gender equality.

While the SNG and LCEP II attempted to address the issue of cost-effectiveness by comparing their projects to alternatives, TB Care I's evaluation considered the same intervention package in other contexts. The evaluation pointed out that literature on TB Care I's health intervention, Community-Based DOTs, showed it was cost-effective in a wide range of countries, and found no reason to believe Afghanistan was an exception.

INEFFICIENCIES AS A RESULT OF PROJECT DESIGN

Although their scopes of work did not ask about efficiency, a small number of evaluations found flaws in project design that resulted in inefficiencies. Three examples are discussed below, according the project.

The District Delivery Program

DDP aimed to strengthen the credibility and build the capacity of sub-national governments to provide public services. The project's evaluation found that it was not well-designed, as it was based on two objectives (stability and governance) that, in its view, did not fit well together. DDP's funding of activities faced major delays, with USAID suspending the project

in March 2012.

DDP was supposed to develop and deliver "packages" addressing communal needs, such as O&M or small infrastructure projects, on behalf of district governments. The process of funding the packages proved to be flawed and cumbersome, and resulted in delays in implementing the packages. The district delivery working groups selected the packages, but they had to be approved by the line ministries, and funding them then moved from the Ministry of Finance (MoF), to the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG), to the *mustofiyats* (provincial departments of finance), which would then disburse funds to the districts.

The line ministries took too long to approve the packages, so DDP decided to bypass them. Even then, there were "snags" in getting the packages funded. The evaluation identified three: the Ministry of Finance running DDP through the development, rather than operating budget, which had a manual process; the IDLG using the Afghanistan Stabilization Program (ASP) as the financing agent. The ASP was incapable of carrying out the transactions in a timely manner; and the *mustofiyats* were ill-prepared to handle the new expenditures.

One consequence of this long, inefficient process was that the MoF could not report to USAID in timely manner on how the funds were disbursed. The MoF could not account for $840,000 of $1.3 million in funds to the DDP. After waiting months for the government to respond, USAID suspended the program.

Support to Subnational Governance Structures Program

Another governance project, SNG, had flaws in its training program that seem to dilute its cost-effectiveness. According to SNG's evaluation, the regional staff of its implementing partner, the National Democratic Institute (NDI), and provincial council (PC) members reported that, until recently, NDI placed much of its focus on training of individual PC members. This investment was largely lost to the institution when 70% of its members were not re-elected in the second round in 2009. This posed a problem for NDI, which needed to provide training to both newly-elected and former PC members after 2009.

Regional Afghanistan Municipalities Program for Urban Populations

The evaluation of RAMP-UP, which aimed to increase the capacity of key municipalities to improve the delivery of public services and support economic growth, found that its design and implementation fell short in a few areas. One was the funds available to cities. According to the evaluation, the project's budget was not allocated by population or capacity, but was simply divided by entity. This meant that, for example, Herat, with a population of over 400,000 was projected to receive about $2.35 per capita, over the program's three years while Chaghcharan, population 6,500, will receive over $235 during the same year. This was seen as particularly egregious by the larger city mayors in Herat, Mazar-e-Sharif, and Kunduz.

In the case of RAMP-UP and other projects with a base year/option design, the contract type can lead to inefficient use of resources. The implementing partner was faced with setting up facilities and security measures, and recruiting and training staff for a very short base period of one year, without any certainty that option years would be exercised. To responsibly implement its activities, RAMP-UP managers needed to solicit public input, obtain sound engineering designs, and conduct transparent bidding and issue subcontracts. Subcontracts couldn't be made past the one year base period, making larger projects impossible, despite the fact that they may have been the most cost-effective or logical. The benefits of longer-term contracts, including achieving economies of scale and relationship-building, were lost. If the longer contract period could have been counted on, RAMP-UP might have been able to operate more efficiently.

Projects required public input, engineering design, bidding, and construction, which took months. At a minimum, the months of December-March were not available for construction, and Ramadan/Eid was a five-week period of limited productivity. Most implementers reported a shortage of skilled subcontractors that could do the work. Moreover, contracts were signed but start-up delayed in the West and North due to security issues; therefore additional months from the base year were lost even before the program was on the ground. Having effectively a one-year contract also meant that subcontracts could not go beyond the end of the contract year, making larger contracts impossible to start. Thus, implementers were left with a lot of money to spend in a time span that was simply too short.

DISCUSSION

The sample projects below were selected because they speak to the issues of efficiency better than other evaluations. The evaluation for BLT was the only one that could conduct an adequate cost-effectiveness analysis because the implementer, Turquoise Mountain, provided detailed data. The Rehabilitation Projects at Regional Airports (RPRA) was perhaps the most inefficient project, according to its evaluation. And the Afghanistan Credit Enhance (ACE) project is highlighted because it managed to overcome a significant barrier that would have made implementation very inefficient.

Building Livelihoods and Trade of Turquoise Mountain Trust

The Turquoise Mountain Trust (TMT) is a British-registered non-profit that works to revitalize Murade Khan, a historic and artistic community in downtown Kabul. In 2008 and 2010, USAID awarded TMT grants totaling more than ten million to support urban regeneration, community development, education, and business development under the BLT program. The scope of work for BLT's final evaluation asked to assess whether Turquoise Mountain's three-year technical and vocational education was a cost-effective means of educating male and female handicraft professionals that are demanded by the Afghan market.

With data from TMT on education expenditures, as well as the number of students who have graduated, the evaluation found that it costs more than $20,000 to educate a student. This was deemed inefficiently high, particularly as only around half of the graduates remain in the craft trades to earn a living. Another indicator of cost-effectiveness and sustainability, according to the evaluation, is whether TMT was able to adhere to its plan to fund its operations completely from institutional donor revenue. In practice, the use of reserve funds to make up a shortfall at the end of the financial year became an established pattern. Since 2008, TMT transferred funds over $100,00 from reserves three times. According to TMT financial statements, the amount in 2013 ($1.98 million) transferred from reserves represented 45 percent of total expenditures. In 2011, 30 percent of expenditures were funded from reserves.

Afghanistan Credit Enhancement Program

ACE supported the agriculture sector by establishing the Agriculture Development Fund, which provided loans indirectly to agribusiness and farmers. According to its evaluation, ADF was supposed to act as wholesaler of credit to financial institutions (FIs), which would, in turn, lend these funds to farmers and other value chain actors in the agricultural sector. FIs would have provided ACE with established structures, including a ready client base, experience, and national outreach through their branch networks. As it turned out, FIs were unwilling to borrow from ACE. According to Da Afghanistan Bank (the Central Bank), commercial banks in Afghanistan are highly liquid and can mobilize resources at rates lower than the 5% offered by ACE.

In the absence of FIs willing to intermediate agricultural credit, ACE had to change from being a wholesaler to being both a wholesaler and a retailer of credit. ACE had to provide intermediate loans through NFIs (associations and cooperatives) and agribusinesses. According to its evaluation, working with FIs would have been more efficient than NFIs. This is because commercial banks, unlike NFIs, are able to absorb large borrowings, have the capacity to administer credit, are regulated by the Central Bank and have financial records available, and are well-established and have assets they can pledge as collateral for ACE/ADF loans. Without these advantages, ACE was forced to work with many more NFIs than it would have FIs, upgrade NFIs' technical and managerial skills to ensure the viability of their agricultural enterprises and their ability to administer credit, conduct credit analyses of its borrowers and provide crucial business and technical advisory services.

Nonetheless, the evaluation concluded that working with NFIs was an appropriate alternative. NFIs are already established, socially acceptable, and work with local communities, where people knew each other well. NFIs also have already-established business practice of giving seeds, fertilizer, and cash advances to their members that ACE/ADF could access. Although the NFIs and agribusinesses did not offer the same efficiency that FIs would have, in an environment devoid of agricultural credit, they were a good alternative through which farmers and other value chain players in the agricultural sector could access much-needed credit. By being proactive, ACE/ADF was able to open up,

test, and, through a high recovery rate, demonstrate efficiency in working with these alternative agricultural credit delivery mechanisms. Most importantly, working with NFIs and agribusinesses enabled the project to serve small-scale farmers and agricultural sector segments considered risky by FIs.

Rehabilitation Projects are Regional Airports

In 2005, the Afghan government received a loan of $30 million from the Asian Development Bank to rehabilitate regional airports in Faizabad, Badakhshan, Maimana, Faryab and two other airports to meet Federal Aviation Authority standards. That project went over its schedule and exceeded its budget. Rehabilitation Projects at Regional Airports (RPRA) provided a $6 million matching grant to the Ministry of Finance (MoF) in 2010 to finish the work, as well as build the engineering and construction capacity of Ministry of Transportation and Civil Aviation (MoTCA).

Even with an additional $12 million in funding and an extension of the project through 2011, the project, now RPRA, continued to perform poorly. The implementing partners, International Relief and Development and Tetra Tech, were hampered by a two-year land dispute on a section of new runway; past contractor non-payment issues of $1 million; design oversight for airport drainage systems, fencing, and runway marking; rain and winter weather putting work on hold; and the departure of the project management company FKH in July 2011. In addition, there were issues with leadership, quality control, and project reporting. For these reasons, RPRA was extended again, to August 2012.

RPRA's evaluation found that the Project Implementation Unit (PIU), made up of MoTCA officials, was particularly ineffective. The PIU did not have a full-time experienced project manager on the ground to coordinate, oversee, and evaluate field and office construction project management activity on a day-to-day basis. Moreover, the performance of the PIU's field management was impacted by the lack of field engineers. After FKH departed the project, the PIU fell behind in reporting requirements.

In its September 2012 report, RPRA reported that work at both airports had been substantially complete and was of acceptable quality. RPRA was no doubt inefficient for many reasons, including those that can be controlled, such as having a competent project manager. However, its evaluation recognized that the project was going to be inefficient from the outset because of problems it had inherited. It concluded, "The airport projects were already experiencing cost, scheduling, and design issues of such magnitude that it was unlikely that all issues could have been resolved with USAID's input only."[35]

---

[35] Ron Francis et al, *Final Performance Evaluation of the Rehabilitation Projects at Regional Airports* (Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., December 2013), pg. 20.

SUSTAINABILITY

DEFINING SUSTAINABILITY

Although the term "sustainability" is widely employed by development professionals, there is no clear, distinct, or wholly accepted meaning in the development community. "Sustainability" is primarily thought of in terms of continuing program activity beyond initial funding cycles via diversification of funding streams or institutionalization, in spite of the fact that it is an inherently "complex and contested concept." For the purpose of this evaluation and to capture the multiple dimensions of sustainability, we are defining it to mean: ensuring that the institutions supported through projects and the benefits realized are maintained and continue after the end of the project.

Several factors that either contribute to or detract from sustainability of development interventions include:[36]

- **Political sustainability**: government commitment, an enabling policy environment, stakeholder interests, and political influence/pressure;
- **Social sustainability**: social support and acceptability, community commitment, social cohesion;
- **Ownership**: whether or not communities, local government, and households accept and own the outcomes of the project in ways that are sustainable;
- **Institutional sustainability**: institutional support, policy implementation, staffing, recurrent budgets;
- **Economic and financial sustainability**: resilience to economic shocks, financial viability, reduced household vulnerability and increased capacity to cope with risks/shocks;
- **Technical sustainability**: technical soundness, appropriate solutions, technical training for operations and maintenance, access to and cost of spare parts and repairs;
- **Environmental sustainability**: a project's positive/negative contribution to soil/water/clean air preservation and management, resilience to external environmental shocks.

Not all of these factors were considered when assessing the sustainability of the 35 projects, so this evaluation is focused only on those four elements that were mentioned most often in the evaluations as having contributed to the sustainability or unsustainability of project achievements. These included:

1. Trained personnel;
2. Organizational strengthening;
3. Adequate and assured financial resources; and

[36] Paraphrased from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Annual Report on Results and Impact of IFAD Operations, Issues Note: Sustainability, 2007. p 3.

4. New or improved laws, policies, and regulations.

Sustainability in U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan

The 35 projects covered by this meta-evaluation were conceived, designed, and implemented under the strategies and results presented in the Post Performance Management Plan, 2011-2015.[37] Sustainability was a core principle of the U.S. Mission and was specifically cited in three of the Mission's eight Assistance Objectives. These included AO 5: A sustainable, thriving agricultural economy; AO 6: expanded, sustainable physical infrastructure; and AO 7: stability sufficient for basic governance and sustainable development. Moreover, the IR 7.3: Transition from stabilization assistance to sustainable development facilitated served as an overarching objective. The Plan also included the cross-cutting objective of Afghan First, a strategic approach to support Afghan leadership and capacity-building efforts. Finally, the plan committed USAID to supporting the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS) and GIRoA's priorities and program for sustainable development.

CHALLENGES ASSESSING SUSTAINABILITY

Identifying the key findings related to sustainability in the project evaluations is a challenge. Since evaluation judgments about sustainability refer to the future, evaluators are obliged to refer to the "prospects" for project achievements to be sustainable. This requires a significant number of subjective and qualified judgments. In addition, in cases where the evaluation scope of work did not pose a specific question about sustainability, the evaluators were unlikely to address this issue, when in fact the project may have had achievements that were likely to be sustainable. Some evaluation scopes of work did not include sustainability questions.

It is also important to bear in mind that there were differing definitions of sustainability across the projects. Trained personnel and adequate, sustained financial resources were the most frequently noted elements of sustainability, followed by strengthening organizations and enacting new or improved laws, policies, and regulations. In all cases, sustainability questions narrowly focused on project achievements or the results of specific project components and not the entire project.

Sustainable and Unsustainable Project Results

Of the 35 projects evaluated, 27 of them had evaluations with major findings related to sustainability, while eight (nearly 23%), including ACAP II, ACE, AESP, HSSP, SPR-SEA, SPS,

---

[37] U.S. Mission/Afghanistan, U.S. Foreign Assistance for Afghanistan, *Post Performance Management Plan, 2011 – 2015*. Vol. I – Summary.

SNG, and RLS-I, did not produce major sustainability findings. The issues of trained personnel and adequate and assured financial resources were the element of sustainability that were discussed the most. Below is a discussion of project components that evaluations found to be sustainable.

LCEP II was reported to have met its objectives with regards to sustainability through a community-level apprenticeship program, with 100% of former program apprentices surveyed indicating that they now are earning additional income. Still, the evaluation noted numerous systemic barriers to capacity building in the National Literacy Department (NLD), including government HR policy, low wages, lack of MoE/NLD corporate direction, and lack of NGO coordination.

Prospects are also good for sustainability of the system reform results of RAMP-UP. The RAMP UP projects made greatest progress in modernizing the internal budget, revenue generation and financial management systems of municipalities. The increase in employment of younger, better-educated, computer literate staff as a result of the Public Administration Reform process has the potential to increase prospects for these improvements to be sustained. If mayors continue to require that the new systems be used and if IDLG institutionalizes them at the national level, prospects are good that these changes will be sustainable. Prospects for sustaining the gains made in revenue generation and service delivery would also be improved if some of the RAMP UP embedded Afghan advisors decided to become municipal employees, as some of them indicated. RAMP UP training and mentoring of the current staff has equipped these professionals to a degree that should enable them to maintain revenue systems once they are fully established.

Some sustainability efforts appeared promising during project implementation, yet didn't result in the long-term change desired. The Commercialization of Afghanistan Water and Sanitation (CAWSA) project successfully recruited a large number of female staff, earning high praise by the respective water utility managers, and leading to improved billing, but after the CAWSA project ended, none of the utilities was able to retain (or recruit) female staff for billing and meter reading. They explained that they couldn't match the salaries that CAWSA paid.

Some evaluations found that certain project components were unlikely to be sustainable in the future. For example, evaluators of Higher Education Project (HEP), found the sustainability of the Master of Education program at Kabul Education University was uncertain due to the lack of funded faculty positions for the program. Without additional, funded, well-qualified faculty members, and without additional financial, material, and technical resources, the evaluators concluded that the quality of instruction was likely to decrease over time. It did appear that the institutional capacity to replicate this program existed, however.

Evaluators of the AMDEP project, also believed the project's sustainability was in question.

Though it was likely that some of the Salam Watandar, a national network of 47 independent local radio stations, would grow, consolidate, and thrive in the private sector environment, the evaluators did not believe that others would survive. The international donor community created a media structure of colossal complexity, with multiple funding streams from multiple organizations to multiple outlets that were usually competing for turf over multiple, ever-morphing, and incompatible messages. As the situation was evolving in a rapid and out-of-control fashion, the evaluators foresaw many threats and few opportunities for AMDEP radio stations seeking to achieve financial sustainability. One challenge was how multi-media centers (MMCs) could generate enough revenue through user fees to cover their operating costs. One of the reasons for their growing popularity is the fact that they do not charge to use their computers, Internet, or their classes. Users are accustomed to free services and may be unhappy when fees are introduced.

UTILIZATION OF EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS

This section assesses how the USAID/Afghanistan Mission has utilized evaluation recommendations. It focuses on a subset of evaluations—mainly those completed in Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 and FY 2015—for which utilization trackers exist.

***Scope*:**

Twelve evaluations completed during the period 2010-15 had recommendation utilization data: three for ODG, three for OHN, three for OEGI, two for OAG, and one other (the CTAP activity). No evaluations with information on recommendation utilization were identified for the education sector. In general, only evaluations done in 2014 onward had such information; OPPD began aggressively following up with CORs to complete recommendation tracking templates immediately after evaluations were complete after this date. In previous years, this follow-up was done during the Performance Plan and Review (PPR) submission, by which time the CORs for the respective activities had usually already departed the Mission. Their successors were often unable to satisfactorily address how the recommendations were utilized.

***Summary of Utilization by Activity*:**

According to the evaluation recommendation tracker employed by OPPD in FY 2012, FY 2014 and FY 2016, rarely were any of the evaluation recommendations accepted as actionable (e.g., ACAP). In such cases, the evaluation was found to be of very poor quality, rendering the recommendations unusable. Of the evaluations where at least one recommendation was accepted, the proportion of recommendations accepted ranged from 39% to 100%, reflecting both the quality of evaluations, as well as the situation on the ground, which made certain recommendations impractical to implement.

These recommendations were grouped into six categories. These were the same categories used by the PPL/LER evaluation utilization study in which a few USAID/Afghanistan

evaluations were included. The report from this study is forthcoming.

Table 2: Acceptance of Evaluation Recommendations by Project

Office	Activity	Total number of recommendations	Number of accepted recommendations	Percentage of recommendations accepted
OHN	DEWS	8	8	100%
	SPS	11	11	100%
	TBCARE	10	8	80%
OAG	ACE	31	12	39%
	IDEA-NEW	21	14	67%
OEG	EGGI	16	16	100%
	LARA	7	7	100%
	FAIDA	15	11	73%
Gender	CTAP	8	0	0%
ODG	RAMP-UP	TBD (At least **10**, since 10 were accepted. If there were more recommendations that were not accepted, the % below will be even lower…)	10	TBD
	ACAP-II	5	0	0%
	RLS-I	13	10	77%
TOTALS		**155** (assuming 10 for RAMP-UP)	**107**	

***Findings*:**

By far, the largest number of recommendations fell into the "Design of current or future projects or activities" category. This is because, of these 12 evaluations, nine were conducted only in the last quarter of the activity or later; consequently, the evaluation results could not realistically be used for any other purpose. It is worth noting, moreover, that although only a few evaluations had gender-specific recommendations, gender issues were usually explicitly addressed in the evaluation questions in evaluation SOWs. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the paucity of gender-specific recommendations is largely the result of programming that generally does not raise gender-specific issues. Finally, no notable regularities are apparent with respect to the technical offices managing the respective activities.

Most of the 12 projects whose evaluations are analyzed here either already have follow-on activities in the process of implementation (e.g., TB CARE, DEWS), or follow-on activities in design or procurement (e.g., ADALAT). Based on interviews with the CORs, these follow-on activities incorporated the recommendations from these evaluations.

Table 3: Utilization of Recommendations by Category

Category	ODG	OAG	OEG	OHN	Gender	Total
Design of current or future projects or activities	20	22	22	7	1	**74**
How the IP manages the project	0			7		**7**
How USAID manages projects or activities	0		1	2		**3**
How the project or activity could improve its performance	0		2	3	6	**11**
How gender-specific issues can be better addressed	0	5	4	0		**9**
How to better monitor projects or activities	0		5	6	1	**12**
Total (Utilized)	**20**	**27**	**34**	**25**	**8**	**114** Total

Note: Some recommendations have been counted in two categories, hence the 114 versus 107 in number.

While a few evaluations (e.g. IDEA-NEW and RAMP-UP) were of projects that had no planned follow-on, recommendations were incorporated into the designs of similar projects already being implemented (e.g. RADP, ISLA, and SHAHAR).

Two activities had no *USAID–managed* follow-on: LARA and CTAP. For LARA, USAID may continue to support this activity through a dedicated Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) contribution. In this event, the OEG team lead indicated that the recommendations would be shared with the World Bank counterparts responsible for ARTF oversight. The only on-budget activity among the 12, CTAP, had no-follow on because the responsible Ministry did not pass a required pre-award assessment.

***Examples of recommendations and how they were utilized*:**

Key recommendations were grouped by Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability, and Gender; illustrative examples of actions taken to address them are provided below. Under effectiveness, we further classify utilization examples according to various dimensions of effectiveness (recalling some of the dimensions discussed in section IV).

Project	Recommendation	Utilization
Effectiveness: Civic engagement / Public outreach/monitoring		
RLS-I	Additional community outreach should be undertaken to increase knowledge among the general population of the roles and responsibilities of the formal versus informal justice sectors for resolving different types of disputes, and of how formal and informal justice actors should work together.	Language addressing increased community outreach incorporated into the follow-on solicitation. Actual programmatic adoption will take place after contract is awarded.
TBCARE1	Support a higher level of collaboration with local religious/social leaders and the media, along with local and national associations of previous TB patients, to increase awareness and case finding.	USAID's follow-on TB project will take several actions that address this recommendation. It will facilitate one community awareness meeting per health facility per quarter in 13 selected provinces. It will also install billboards in these provinces. Finally, the project will revise and print training modules for community healthcare workers to increase awareness and case finding.
IDEA-NEW	Building the capacity of associations to represent their members' interests should be continued. This should include a plan to raise sufficient funds from association members to fund association activities, over time.	Because of the scale of the RADPs, buy-in from and collaboration with these groups is essential to all activities, including farmer trainings, establishment of farmer extension groups, para veterinarian trainings, and the establishment of veterinary field units. The farmers' associations are critical actors in the value chain and are therefore consulted regularly and involved in facilitating links between farmers and input suppliers as well as wholesalers.
ABADE	The job creation indicator 11 should be modified to also include a mechanism for tracking the number of beneficiaries.	Used this recommendation as part of a justification for a modification to the ABADE Cooperative Agreement.
FAIDA	Standardize partner microfinance and finance institutions' full-time equivalent job calculations to make them comparable.	COR stated that as a result of this recommendation the IP will be required to enforce the standardized approach.

Efficiency		
TB-CARE I:	The organization and staffing of the project should be enhanced to increase its effective in-office support to the National Tuberculosis Program (NTP) and to the TB directors in highly-populated provinces, especially to directors in any provinces selected for Urban-DOTS expansion.	The TB project reviewed its staffing needs. The new organogram and staffing proposed will be effective in supporting NTP and the project in Kabul and provinces.
ABADE:	To remove bottlenecks, and to improve efficiency in monitoring and tracking PPA development approval and implementation performance, attach timeframes to various stages within the PPA development and implementation flowcharts reviewed by the evaluation team.	As a result of this recommendation, ABADE tightened implementation performance. The inefficiency of ABADE's procurement system was identified as a cause of major delay and the activity streamlined its procedures and changed the manager.
Sustainability		
RAMP-UP	Incentivize and reward municipal capacity improvements by making such improvements part of the conditionality for future USAID funds.	The recommendation was incorporated into the features of SHAHAR's new Municipal Development Fund, whereby eligibility criteria include demonstrated ability of the municipality to execute 75% of its development budget.
Gender focus		
IDEA-NEW ACE/ADF	Women in Afghan agriculture are still not considered by project staff, whether male or female, Afghan or expat. Activity design should include training and develop tools to illuminate the roles of women farmers. Tap into the work of the MAIL Directorate of Home Economics as well as other women's' organizations to identify more women for capacity building and link them to financial services such as Zahra.	The RADPs all have comprehensive and detailed plans about how they will target women farmers and women-owned businesses and are highly focused on ensuring women are involved in interventions along the value chain, including farmers and agribusinesses. In addition, with ADF's new Zahra credit scheme that targets women, the RADPs are facilitating linkages with ADF for greater access to credit.
FAIDA	More support should be geared towards finding solutions to the problems women face in accessing loans at reasonable rates and in sufficient amounts to be able to grow their businesses.	The FAIDA COR stated that the recommendation would be discussed with the project to enhance the intervention's outreach to businesswomen.

In summary, based on self-reported information from CORs, the majority of recommendations were addressed through adjustments in USAID activity management, changes in IP program management, or, in the case where activities were over, in the design of the follow-on activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the course of conducting this meta-evaluation of USAID/Afghanistan projects, the meta-evaluation team reviewed and analyzed not only the individual projects evaluations, but their scopes of work, as well. A number of deficiencies were identified. The discussion below provides recommendations on improving the evaluation reports and scopes of work so that issues of effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability are better addressed. In addition, standardizing the scopes of work and evaluations will make cross-project assessments an easier and more fruitful endeavor.

1. Improve Evaluation Scopes of Work and Reports

Over the period 2010 to 2015, there were significant variations in the quality of the evaluation scopes of work across all sectors. It was unusual, early on, for the scopes to include consistent, straight-forward questions on *effectiveness*, *efficiency,* and *sustainability* so that one could easily make comparisons across projects. In some cases, it was difficult to assess the *efficiency* of projects absent essential background information like budgets, timelines, and other key information. This was particularly pronounced during the early years, but more recently the scopes showed improved clarity, and a focus on fewer essential questions. These improvements appear to have been part of the changes in the Mission's evaluation practices adopted by OPPD and the SUPPORT II contractor over time, particularly greater oversight following the introduction of the Agency Evaluation Policy in 2011.

The Mission should continue to enforce standardization of evaluation scopes of work by providing a common overall structure, and asking that evaluation questions be grouped under clearly defined categories like *effectiveness*, *efficiency* and *sustainability.* After OPPD has provided the definitions of these terms, project managers can draft project-specific evaluation questions that fit under each of those broader categories. Under *efficiency*, further elaboration could include "determining if a project has achieved its current stated goals and objectives as defined in the Results Framework and M&E plan."

A commendable example of focused *sustainability* questions were included in the scope of work for the TMI, BLT project. Rather than simply asking whether the achievements would be sustainable, it posed sharper questions:

(1) As the BLT program comes to an end, to what extent are TMI's operational costs covered by existing or planned future revenue streams from sources other than

USAID or other donors? Please examine reliability and stability of any market-based revenue streams.

(2) Can the current structure of TM... be mobilized to create a fully sustainable and profitable public-private partnership and business venture...?

(3) To what extent are the Afghan handicraft enterprises with which TMT and TMI collaborate sustainable, independent, and business-savvy organizations that are ... capable of ensuring adequate revenue streams?

Differing interpretations of what should be included in the scope's purpose, objective(s), and evaluation questions is an issue that also merits the Mission's attention. In some evaluation scopes of work (e.g., SNG), there is redundancy in what is described as the objective of the evaluation and specific evaluation questions. For example, the SNG scope says that one purpose is to "Evaluate the citizens' satisfaction with their representatives and the effectiveness of the PC members in conducting their jobs in better representing their constituents," and then poses the question "How have citizens' perception changed regarding the capacity and effectiveness of their representatives and PC members in conducting their jobs in better representing of their constituents?"

In some evaluation reports, the purpose and objective sections simply provided the opportunity to add to the list of the questions that the evaluators were being asked to address. This comes at a time when the Agency is encouraging fewer questions.

The meta-evaluation team recommends including projects' M&E plans in evaluation scopes of work, especially the appropriateness of its indicators and reporting. Including M&E in the evaluation is an opportunity to explore the effectiveness of USAID's project monitoring, which is vital during implementation, but regularly overlooked when it comes to evaluations. The meta-evaluation team also recommends adding results frameworks to the evaluation templates to help structure the evaluation questions (and enable OPPD and others to better review evaluation questions). The SNG scope of work includes a results framework for the project that nicely sets the stage for the evaluation purpose—to evaluate the effectiveness of the project in achieving its goal, objectives and results. But only some of the other evaluation scopes include this kind of graphic.

2. **Ensure Timeliness of Evaluations**

USAID/Afghanistan should continue to prioritize timeliness of evaluations. Per USAID's Evaluation Policy, final evaluations should be conducted ideally 18 months before the end of the activity to allow time for the findings and recommendations to inform the design of possible follow-on activities, as well as to inform performance improvement for the remaining duration of the activity. In FY 14, only 33% of evaluations were done on time; in FY 15, 75% were timely. Though they were not included in this study, some final external evaluations like those for the SIKAs were conducted within a little more than a year of mid-term evaluations. It should be noted that not all projects are required to have midterm and

final evaluations. Especially in the case of activities that have no planned follow-on, doing expensive external evaluations so close together are a poor use of USAID resources.

3. Enforce Use of Utilization Tracker

The USAID/Afghanistan Program Office should continue to prioritize population of the recommendation utilization template by CORs immediately following the completion of evaluation reports. To ensure this practice is mainstreamed and not dependent on the incumbent responsible for evaluation, use of the evaluation tracker should be included in the Evaluation Mission Order. Documentation sources to support recommendation utilization should also be captured in the utilization spreadsheet to help with Special Investigator General for Aghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) audit responses; SIGAR frequently enquires about evaluation utilization.

4. Incorporate Recommendations into New Project Designs

Though CORs might fill out the evaluation recommendation tracker, ensuring that the recommendations are incorporated into new designs or used to improve activity management is another matter. For new designs, OPPD should ensure that Program Development Officers use the recommendation utilizations for new activity/project design. Adding utilization to the pre-obligation checklist for new activities should be considered. Regarding activity management, Offices should be explicitly asked in portfolio reviews to highlight any changes made to activities in response to evaluation recommendations.

5. Attend Evaluation Exit Briefings

It was observed that CORs filling out the evaluation tracker tend to mark evaluation recommendations as "Not Applicable" if these do not relate closely to the existing scope of the activity, not realizing that recommendations may warrant changes to the activity's scope to address new/changing needs. To determine whether recommendations may warrant a change in scope of existing activities, Office Directors should be encouraged/required at a minimum to attend evaluation exit briefings (if not read the recommendations).

ANNEXES

ANNEX I: EVALUATION STATEMENT OF WORK

USAID/Afghanistan
Evaluation Scope of Work (SoW)

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Program/Project Name:	**Meta evaluation of Afghanistan performance evaluations**
Contractor:	
Contract #:	AID-306-A-13-0002
Total Estimated Cost:	
Life of Program/ Project:	2010-2015
Active Provinces & Districts:	Nationwide
USAID/Afghanistan Mission Development Objective (DO):	
Linkage to Standard Program Structure (SPS):	
Required?	Not-Required
Type:	Performance

I. INTRODUCTION

USAID/Afghanistan follows the Agency policy in evaluating the majority of its resources. However, to date the Mission has not attempt to consolidate learning from these evaluations.

II. BACKGROUND

N/A

III. PURPOSE AND USE OF THE EVALUATION

The primary objectives of this meta-evaluation are:

1. USAID will be informed of the efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of its DO portfolios from 2010-2015[i].

2. USAID will be informed about how it utilizes the results of its evaluations. This learning will inform the design of new projects and activities.

IV. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

1. What are the key findings of the component evaluations relating to efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability?

2. How have evaluation recommendations been utilized?

V. EVALUATION DESIGN & METHODOLOGY

1. The contractor will begin by conducting a desk-review of final USAID performance Evaluations (external only) of activities that were implemented during this period. The USAID DEC reveals that there are approximately 45 activities that have uploaded reports that meet these criteria, with 4 additional evaluation reports in clearance stage (IDEA-NEW, ACE, ATAR, ALBA) that may be included in this study.

2. The contractor will review the evaluation reports, tabulate and consolidate the findings of the reports relating to the efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of these activities. If there are adequate evaluations to consolidate findings at the IR and sub-IR levels[ii], this should be done.

3. For a sub-set of evaluation which have utilization trackers (mainly those done in FY14 and FY15), assess how the recommendations have been utilized (Note—some work has already been done by the Mission on this)

VI. EVALUATION TEAM

The team will consist of a STTA lead consultant, and a member of the USAID M&E team.

VII. EVALUATION SCHEDULE

The evaluation will commence as soon as possible, and a draft report will be shared with USAID by August 27, 2015.

VIII. CONTRACTOR TASKS AND DELIVERABLES

A. Description and Timeline of Deliverables

1. **Literature Review and Evaluation Methodology Preparation**: N/A
2. **Remote/In-country In-briefing:** Depending on whether the lead consultant is local
3. **Submission of Initial Work Plan:** N/A
4. **Conduct Fieldwork:** N/A
5. **Mid-Term Briefing and Interim Meetings:** A date for the mid-term briefing will be decided during the in-brief
6. **PowerPoint and Final Exit Presentation:** N/A
7. **Draft Report:** Shall be consistent with the guidance provided in Sections A and B below. Length of the report: not to exceed 30 pages, exclusive of Annexes, in English, in Times New Roman 12 point, single space, consistent with USAID's branding policy.[1] The report will address each of the issues identified in the SOW. The draft evaluation report per the below format will be submitted by the Team Leader for review and comments by USAID/Afghanistan. The USAD M&E Unit will have ten calendar days in which to review the draft, gather comments from the , and submit all comments to the Team Leader.

8. **Final Evaluation Report:** The final report will be due within 10 business days (two calendar weeks) following receipt of comments from USAID/Afghanistan. See deliverables below for more detail. USAID/Afghanistan comments are due within 10 days after the receipt of the initial final draft. The final report shall be submitted to the Program Office (OPPD) within six work days of receipt of comments by the Team Leader. All project data must be submitted in full and in electronic form. Final evaluation report shall be prepared in accordance to the given structure below.

B. REPORT STRUCTURE

- Title page
- Table of Contents
- List of any acronyms, tables, or charts (if needed)
- Acknowledgements or preface (optional)
- Executive summary (not to exceed 3-5 pages)
- Introductory chapter (not to exceed 3 pages)
  a) Description of the activities evaluated, including goals and objectives.
  b) Brief statement of why the project was evaluated, including a list of the main evaluation questions.
  c) Brief statement on the methods used in the evaluation such as desk/document review, interviews, site visits, surveys, etc.
- Findings – Describe the findings, based upon evidence collected during the evaluation, focusing on each of the questions the evaluation was intended to answer. Organize the findings to answer the evaluation questions.
- Conclusions – This section will include value statements that interpret the facts and evidence and describe what those facts and evidence mean.
- Annexes
  a) Statement of Work
  b) List of documents consulted
  c) List of individuals with titles and agencies contacted
  d) Methodology description
  e) Copies of all survey instruments, questionnaires, and data
  f) Statement of Differences (if applicable)
  g) Evaluation Team CVs

C. REPORTING GUIDELINES

An acceptable report will meet the following requirements as per USAID rules and procedures:

- The meta-evaluation report should represent a thoughtful, well-researched and well- organized effort to objectively evaluate what the component evaluations say worked in the respective projects, what did not and why.
- Evaluation reports shall address all evaluation questions included in the scope of work.
- The evaluation report should include the scope of work as an Annex. All modifications to the scope of work, whether in technical requirements,

evaluation questions, evaluation team composition, methodology, or timeline need to be agreed upon in writing by the AOR or his/her alternate. Evaluation methodology shall be explained in detail and all tools used in conducting the evaluation such as questionnaires, checklists and discussion guides will be included in an Annex in the final report.

- Evaluation findings will assess outcomes on males and females.
- Limitations to the evaluations shall be discussed in the report, with particular attention to the limitations associated with the evaluation methodology (selection bias, recall bias, unobservable differences between comparator groups, etc.).
- Evaluation findings should be presented as analyzed facts, evidence, and data and not based on anecdotes, hearsay or the compilation of people's opinions. Findings should be specific, concise and supported by strong quantitative or qualitative evidence.
- Sources of information need to be properly identified and listed in a separate Annex.
- Recommendations need to be supported by a specific set of findings.
- Recommendations should be action-oriented, practical, and specific, with defined responsibility for the action.
- The report shall follow USAID branding procedures.

IX. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

All records from the evaluation (e.g., interview transcripts or summaries) must be provided to the USAID M&E Unit. All quantitative data collected by the evaluation team must be provided in an electronic file to be agreed upon during the first week of the evaluation in easily readable format agreed upon with the M&E Unit. The data should be organized and fully documented for use by those not fully familiar with the project or the evaluation. USAID/Afghanistan will retain ownership of the survey and all datasets developed.

ANNEX II: METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS

This is a comparative desk evaluation of the 35 evaluations conducted by the USAID/ Afghanistan Mission between 2010 and 2015 and the uses that were made of those evaluations for Mission decision-making. It will be a joint effort of representatives of the M&E staff in the Mission and consultants engaged by the SUPPORT II project. The necessarily simple analytical approach consists essentially of analyzing the final evaluation reports, which have been accepted by the Mission, to determine what the evaluations found regarding the projects' effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

No new project documents are to be reviewed or key informants interviewed, and no new qualitative or quantitative data collection is planned. Basic program design documents, grant agreements, progress reports, and reports of activities completed are likewise outside the scope of the evaluation.

The evaluation team will not be visiting any of the sites where the 35 projects were implemented, nor is there any expectation of reaching out to any of the implementing partners or their former Chiefs of Party who managed the projects during the five-year period covered. Rather, the focus is strictly on what the evaluation reports say about effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the projects.*

For consistency and reliability, the definitions of efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability were taken from the World Bank. The definitions used for this study are**:**

Efficiency: Is a measure of how economically resources are converted to results. Resources can refer to funds, expertise, time, or other inputs.

Effectiveness: Is the extent to which the objectives were achieved according to the development interventions, taking into account the relative importance of the objectives. Effectiveness can also be used as an aggregate measure of (or judgment about) the merit or worth of an activity.

Sustainability: Is a continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has ended. Analysis of sustainability can also project the probability of continued long-term benefits or resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time.

Evaluation Questions: The evaluators will review the evaluation reports, tabulate and consolidate the *key findings* they report, and the *factors (or evidence)* presented in the evaluation reports that led the author(s) to those findings. In this context, *key findings* refer to those findings that respond to or attempt to answer the specific evaluation questions presented in the evaluation scope of work. The second level of *key findings* are those that respond to questions described as the *objectives* or *focus* of the evaluation, also found in the evaluation scope of work. And finally, a *key finding* might be something new and important that the evaluators learned, but which had not been specifically identified in the scope of work.

For each of these *key findings*, the evaluators will then assign a weighting of positive,

negative, or mixed that reflect the project's performance. In looking for the *key findings*, the evaluators are expected to determine if and how the evaluations addressed the following basic questions:

4) To what extent did the USAID program or project achieve its objectives? What were the major factors cited in the evaluation report influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?
5) According to the evaluation reports, were program/project objectives achieved efficiently, that is on time and with good use of resources?
6) To what extent are the benefits of the USAID program or project likely to continue after USAID funding ceased? What were the major factors cited in the evaluations that influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the program or project?

There may be cases in which (1) evaluation SOWs included questions on effectiveness, efficiency or sustainability, but (2) the corresponding final evaluation report did not—in the professional judgment of the evaluation team—adequately speak to these questions. In such case, the evaluation team will offer any insights from their review of the evaluation report (e.g., relating to aspects of evaluation timing or management, project design, project management decisions, monitoring/documentation, and so forth) regarding the reasons for identified shortcomings in the evaluation report.

If there are adequate evaluations to consolidate findings at the IR and sub-IR levels[1], this should be done. (Mission: Is this still something we should try to do?)

The tabulated and consolidated results will then be analyzed by the evaluators to find patterns in the evaluation reports by sector, by technical office, and by the year the evaluation was completed. In addition, in reviewing each of the 35 evaluations the reviewers will be looking for themes that are found across the evaluations, such as:

<u>Coordination with other donors and GIRoA offices and ministries.</u> Where this was weak, the projects were less effective (e.g., HEP bypassed the MoPH, creating serious problems, and ASAP failed to involve MAIL in the planning, implementation and management of activities, adversely impacting sustainability). Where coordination was strong, there were positive results (e.g. CTAP's success was due in part to an understanding with the MoM, MRRD, and MoE).

<u>Human Resources.</u> The already low capacity of Afghan staff, low government salaries, high turnover, and a perceived lack of motivation were cited in several reports as having a negative influence on effectiveness and sustainability.

<u>Gender.</u> Programs that had an explicit gender component and targets to meet (e.g. HSSP) were more effective in addressing disparities that those that did not (e.g. HEP, CTAP). The government counterpart making gender a priority was also important for achieving the gender objectives.

Training. Many of the projects had training components (HEP, LCEP II, MISPA, SPS, etc.), which are usually at the core of capacity building efforts. Most often the amount of training is used as a measure of increased capacity. We should look closely at cases in which the training was perceived as effective and how implementers determined effectiveness. What factors influenced participants' views of the usefulness of the training?

Technical Advisors/Consultants. Several of the projects made use of international consultants, who were sometimes embedded in ministries and offices. In cases where the TA provided direct mentoring to several Afghan counterparts, transfer of knowledge and skills was effective and sustainable (e.g., CTAP). In cases where the TA simply did the work for the Afghan staff, capacity building was ineffective (e.g. MISPA).

Factors Outside the Projects' Control. Of course most of the projects mentioned insecurity, conservative culture, corruption, etc. as factors that constrained the effectiveness, efficiency, and potential for sustainability of the results. We might look at how projects tried to overcome or compensate for these constraints and whether they were effective in doing so.

For these and other themes that are identified, anecdotal observations and conclusions will be fully supported by quantitative evidence.

Methodological Limitations: Given that the evaluation reports are to be the sole information source for determining the effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the projects, the evaluators will be limited in their judgments about each project by the nature and quality of the information presented in each report. If, for example, the scope of work for an evaluation did not ask a question about sustainability, the report might say little if anything about the sustainability of the project's results. But this could be misleading if, in fact, the project did include activities that promote sustainability, such as reforming laws and policies or building the capacity of beneficiaries and participants.

* Based on the criteria of the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD for evaluating development assistance

ANNEX III: BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abelardo Rodriguez et al. *Performance Evaluation of the Integrated Livelihoods and Governance through Natural Resource Management Project.* Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., August 2013.

Albana Vuji et al. *Final Evaluation of the Commercialization of the Afghanistan Water and Sanitation Project*. Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., August 2014.

Alan Decker et al. *Final Performance Evaluation of the Cash Transfer Assistance Agreement for Civil Service Reform*. Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., June 2014.

Alan Decker et al. *Final Performance Evaluation of the Land Reform in Afghanistan Project*. Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., November 2014.

Allison Brown et al. *Performance Evaluation of the Incentives Driving Economic Alternatives North, East, and West*. Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., July 2015.

Aluiso Rosa-Borges et al. *Final Evaluation of the Strategic Provincial Roads- Southern and Eastern Afghanistan Program.* Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., August 2011.

Andy Tamas et al. *Performance Evaluation of the District Delivery Program*. Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., April 2012.

Andy Tamas et al. *Performance Evaluation of the Support to Subnational Governance Structures Program*. Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., February 2013.

Brandsetter, Robert and Drew Gilmour. *Performance Evaluation of the Kabul City Initiative*. Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., July 2013.

Dima Qato et al. *Performance Evaluation of the Strengthening Pharmaceutical Systems Program.* Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., November 2014.

Charles Balina et al. *Performance Evaluation of the Engineering Quality Assurance and Logistical Support Project*. Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., July 2014.

Douglas I. Grube et al. *Final Evaluation of Task Order #14 of the Road Operation and Maintenance Capacity and Building Program*. Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., June 2012.

Final Performance Evaluation of the Afghan Civilian Assistance Program II. Management Systems International Ltd., February 2015.

Final Evaluation Report of the Rule of Law and Stabilization Program- Informal Component. Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., August 2014.

Gavin MacGregor Skinner et al. *Performance Evaluation of the Disease Early Warning System.* Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., August 2014.

Gerald R. Boardman et al. *Final Evaluation of the Afghanistan Higher Education Project*. Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., April 2012.

Ivens, Saskia. *Project Evaluation of the Initiative to Promote Afghan Civil Society II*. Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., July 2013.

James Purcell et al. *Performance Evaluation of the Regional Afghan Municipalities Program for Urban Populations-South, North, East, and West*. Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., August 2013.

Jon Leeth et al. *Program Evaluation of the Rule of Law and Stabilization- Formal Sector Component*. Democracy International, August 2014.

Judy Benjamen et al. *Final Project Evaluation of the Ministry of Women's Affairs Initiative to Strengthen Policy and Advocacy*. Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., June 2010.

Karina Stover et al. *USAID/Afghanistan's Combined Healthcare Projects Evaluation: BASICS, Tech-Serve, and HSSP*. The Global Health Technical Assistance Project, December 2011.

Lee R. Briggs et al. *Performance Evaluation of the Civilian Technical Assistance Program*. Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., October 2012.

Lowe, Graham. *Final Evaluation of the Performance-Based Governance Fund.* Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., September 2013.

Lynda Rhoades et al. *Assessment of Afghanistan's Public Financial Management Roadmap and Final Evaluation of the Economic Growth and Governance Initiative Project*. Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., November 2014.

Margaret Karuri et al. *Final Evaluation of the Afghanistan Credit Enhancement Program*. Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., May 2015.

Margaret Karuri et al. *Final Performance Evaluation of the Financial Access for Investing in the Development of Afghanistan Program*. Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., July 2015.

Michael Lightfoot et al. *Final Performance Evaluation and Sustainability Assessment of the Building Livelihoods and Trade Activity*. Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., July 2015.

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. "DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance." Accessed May 29, 2016. http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm

Peter Gillies et al. *Learning for Community Empowerment Program Phase II Final Evaluation*. Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., November 2011.

Richard Martin et al. *Performance Evaluation of the Afghanistan Media Development and Empowerment Project.* Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., April 2012.

Robert Hagan et al. *Final Performance Evaluation of the TB Care I Program*. Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., December 2014.

Robert Ressigue et al. *Final Performance Evaluation of the Accelerating Sustainable Agriculture Program*. Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., April 2012.

Ron Francis et al. *Final Performance Evaluation* of the *Afghan Engineering Program.* Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., April 2014.

Ron Francis et al. *Final Performance Evaluation of the Rehabilitation Projects at Regional Airports.* Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., December 2013.

Suzanne Savage et al. *Final Evaluation* of the *Afghanistan Small and Medium Enterprise Development Project* Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., July 2011.

U.S. Mission/Afghanistan. U.S. Foreign Assistance for Afghanistan. *Post Performance Management Plan, 2011 – 2015*. Vol. 1 – Summary.

ANNEX IV: PROJECT DETAILS

No	Title	LOP Budget ($ millions)	Implementing Mechanism	Implementation Period	Implementing Partner(s)	Sector(s)	Geographic Scope	Rating
1	Accelerating Sustainable Agriculture Program (ASAP)	133.7		Nov. 2006 – Nov. 2011	Chemonics International, Inc.	Agriculture	National	Unsatisfactory
2	Afghan Civilian Assistance Program II (ACAP II)	64	Cooperative Agreement	Sept. 2011 – Feb. 2015	International Relief & Development	Humanitarian and Technical Assistance	National but with a focus on the south, southeast, and west	Satisfactory
3	Afghanistan Engineering Support Program (AESP)	63	Task Order	Nov. 2009 – Nov. 2014	Tetra Tech/ARD	Energy, Infrastructure, and Water and Sanitation	Kabul	Inconclusive
4	Afghanistan Media Development and Empowerment (AMDEP)	22	Cooperative Agreement	Nov. 2010 – Jan. 2012	Internews Networks, Inc.	Media	National	Mixed
5	Afghanistan Small and Medium Enterprise Development (ASMED)	114		Oct. 2006 – March 2012	Development Alternatives, Inc.	Economy and Private Sector Development	National	Mixed
6	Agriculture Credit Enhancement (ACE)	150	Task Order	July 2010 – Jan. 2015	Development Alternatives, Inc.	Agriculture and Economy	National	Satisfactory
7	Building Livelihoods and Trade (BLT)	10.6	Cooperative Agreement	Nov. 2008 – Nov. 2015	Turquoise Mountain Trust	Education, Arts, and Restoration	Kabul	Mixed
8	Cash Transfer Assistance Agreement for Civil Service Reform (CTAA)	15	Government-to-Government Award	Oct. 2011 – July 2014	Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission	Public Administration	National	Unsatisfactory
9	Civilian Technical Assistance Program (CTAP)	41.3, (30 from USAID)	Government-to-Government Award	Oct. 2009 – Dec. 2012	Ministry of Finance	Technical Assistance and Capacity Development	Kabul	Mixed

10	Commercialization of Afghanistan Water and Sanitation (CAWSA)	14.2	Cooperative Agreement	Nov. 2008 – May 2014	International City Managers Association	Water and Sanitation	Balkh, Nangarhar, Ghazni, Gardez, Kandahar, Helmand, Nimroz, and Laghman	Unsatisfactory
11	Disease Early Warning System (DEWS)	12.7		Sept. 2008 – June 2014	World Health Organization,	Health	National	Mixed
12	District Delivery Program (DDP)	40	Government-to-Government Award	Aug. 2010 – Feb. 2013	Independent Directorate of Local Governance	Public Administration and Governance	13 districts in three provinces: Wardak, Kandahar, and Nangarhar	Unsatisfactory
13	Economic Growth and Governance Initiative (EGGI)	92.4		Aug. 2009 – Aug. 2013	Deloitte Consulting, LLP	Economy and Public Financial Management	National	Mixed
14	Engineering Quality Assurance and Logistical Support (EQUALS)	96.8	Contract	April 2011 – April 2016	International Relief and Development	Infrastructure, Transportation, and Water and Sanitation	Sites in Kandahar, Gardez, Khost, Badakhshan, Nangarhar, Balkh, Jowzjan, Faryab, Bamyan, Wardak, Kabul, Parwan, Paktika and Helmand	Unsatisfactory
15	Financial Access for Investing in the Development of Afghanistan (FAIDA)	108.2		Feb. 2011 – Feb. 2016	Chemonics International, Inc.	Agriculture and Economy	National	Unsatisfactory
16	Health Service Support Project (HSSP)	62	Associate Award	July 2006 – Oct. 2012	Jhpiego	Health	21 provinces	Inconclusive
17	Higher Education Project (HEP)	40	Cooperative Agreement	March 2006 – June 2012	Academy for Educational Development, University of Mass	Higher Education	18 universities in Badakhshan, Baghlan, Balkh, Bamyan, Faryab, Herat, Jowzjan, Kabul, Kandahar, Kunduz, Nangarhar, Parwan	Mixed
18	Improving Livelihood and Governance through Natural Resources Management (ILGNRM)	14	Cooperative Agreement	April 2010 – Dec. 2013	Wildlife Conservation Society	Natural Resource Management	Badakhshan and Bamyan	Satisfactory

19	Incentives Driving Economic Alternatives – North, East, West (IDEA-NEW)	156.9	Cooperative Agreement	March 2009 – Feb. 2015	Development Alternatives, Inc. w/ACDI/VOCA, Mercy Corps	Agriculture and Economy	19 provinces: Nangarhar, Kunar, Laghman, Kabul, Kapisa, Panjshir, Parwan, Balkh, Jawzjan, Samangan, Sari Pul, Faryab, Badakhshan, Takhar, Kunduz, Baghlan, Nuristan, Badghis, and Herat	Satisfactory
20	Initiative to Promote Afghan Civil Society II (I-PACS II)	45	Cooperative Agreement	Oct. 2010 – Sept. 2013	Counterpart International, Inc. with International Center for Not-for-Profit Law	Civil Society	Kabul, Parwan, Paktia, Paktika, Uruzgan, Zabul, Kapisa, Panjshir, Kunar, Nuristan, Laghman, Nangarhar, Logar, Wardak, Helmand, Bamyan, Daikundi	Mixed
21	Kabul City Initiative (KCI)	45	Contract	Oct. 2010 – Sept. 2013	Tetra Tech/ARD	Governance and Public Administration	Kabul	Mixed
22	Land Reform in Afghanistan (LARA)	41.8	Contract	Jan. 2011 – Nov. 2014	Tetra Tech/ARD	Governance and Land Reform	Kabul and Nangarhar	Mixed
23	Learning for Community Empowerment Program II (LCEP II)	48	Cooperative Agreement	March 2008 – Jan. 2013	UN-Habitat	Education	20 provinces: Kabul, Kandahar, Farah, Herat, Bamyan, Balkh, Kapisa, Parwan, Panjshir, Nangarhar, Ghor, Baghlan, Kunduz, Jawzjan Helmand, Laghman, Logar, Saripul, Takhar and Paktia	Satisfactory
24	Ministry of Women's Affairs Initiative to Strengthen Policy and Advocacy (MISPA)	7.2		Jan. 2006 – Jan. 2011	The Asia Foundation	Women and Governance	Dept of Women's Affairs in Kabul, Bamyan, Herat, Kandahar, Balkh, and Nangarhar	Mixed

25	Performance-Based Governance Fund (PBGF)	48.9	Cooperative Agreement	Nov. 2009 – July 2013	The Asia Foundation	Governance	33 of 34 provinces (exception was Kabul, which had a separate project)	Mixed
26	Regional Afghanistan Municipalities Program for Urban Populations (RAMP-UP)	270 in 4 projects	Contract	Various start dates – March 2014	Development Alternatives, Inc. (East, North, West) and Chemonics International, Inc. (South)	Governance	33 of 34 provinces (exception is Nuristan)	Mixed
27	Rehabilitation Projects at Regional Airports (RPRA)	30, (6 from USAID)	Government-to-Government Award	Dec. 2010 – July 2012	Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation, Tetra Tech, IRD	Infrastructure and Transportation	Badakhshan and Faryab	Unsatisfactory
28	Road Operations and Maintenance Capacity Building Program (AIRP TO#14)[38]	59.3	Task Order	Nov. 2007 – Oct. 2011	Louis Berger, Inc./Black &Veatch	Infrastructure and Transportation	National	Unsatisfactory
29	Rule of Law and Stabilization Program – Formal (RLS-F)	33.8		May 2010 – May 2012	Tetra Tech DPK Consulting, Inc.	Justice and Governance	National	Mixed
30	Rule of Law and Stabilization – Informal (RLS-I)			Oct. 2012 – Jan. 2014	Checchi & Company Consulting, Inc.	Justice	Logar, Kunar, and Kandahar (Phase 3)	Mixed
31	Strategic Provincial Roads – Southern and Eastern Afghanistan (SPR-SEA)	269.4		Nov. 2007 – Dec. 2011	International Relief and Development, Inc.	Infrastructure and Transportation	Ghazni, Khost, Kunar, Laghman, Nangarhar, Paktika, Paktya, Helmand, Kandahar, and Uruzgan	Unsatisfactory
32	Strengthening Pharmaceutical Systems (SPS)	34.3	Cooperative Agreement	Aug. 2011 – July 2017	Management Sciences for Health	Health	13 provinces including Kabul, Herat, Nangarhar, Badakhshan, Kandahar, Paktika, Baghlan, and Takhar,	Mixed

[38] This is a component of the larger Afghanistan Infrastructure Rehabilitation Program

33	Support to Sub-National Governance (SNG)		Cooperative Agreement	June 2008 – Sept. 2013	National Democratic Institute	Governance	National	Mixed
34	TB CARE I – Afghanistan	4.6		July 2011 – Dec. 2014	Management Sciences for Health	Health	17 provinces: Kabul, Bamyan, Baghlan, Badakhshan, Jowzjan, Faryab, Herat, Farah, Nimroz, Helmand, Kandahar, Zabul, Maidan Wardak, Ghazni, Paktika, Paktiya, and Khost	Satisfactory
35	Technical Support to the Central and Provincial Ministry of Public Health (TECH-SERVE)	100.6		July 2006 – Aug. 2012	Management Sciences for Health	Health and Public Administration	17 provinces: Kabul, Bamyan, Baghlan, Badakhshan, Takhar, Jowzjan, Faryab, Herat, Farah, Nimroz, Helmand, Kandahar, Wardak, Ghazni, Paktika, Paktiya, and Khost	Inconclusive

ANNEX V: EXPLANATION OF PROJECT RATINGS

Project	Overall Rating	Summary of Results / Key Reasons for Rating
ASAP	Unsatisfactory	There were some successes with growing agribusinesses and establishing AgDepots and VFUs. However, there was no baseline against which to measure increases in agribusinesses' exports; little attempt to incorporate the MAIL into the planning, management, and implementation of the many activities; no follow-up with some training, demonstrations, and other activities; and not all farming activities were transitioned to MAIL, making their sustainability unlikely.
DEWS	Mixed	The evaluation found achievements in case detection of diseases, as well as registration, confirmation, reporting, and coordination. However, poor data management, a lack of systematic analysis of the data collected, and problems with laboratories prevented maximizing the impact of the project. In addition, DEWS budgets are not well defined or closely managed, resulting in important functions being underfunded.
AESP	Inconclusive	The evaluation provides some insight into the design and execution of the project, but severe constraints prevent rating its performance. These include a review of only 6 of 158 work orders, the IP failed to provide adequate documentation and prohibited many interviews, and stakeholders did not return any questionnaires made it extremely difficult to evaluate this project. At least two of the seven evaluation questions were not answered.
CTAP	Mixed	The project recruited international technical advisors (TAs) to provide expertise and mentoring to participating ministries. The evaluation found the recruitment process was transparent but the program attracted insufficient quantities of high-quality candidates and female TAs. Most of the TAs were well-qualified and effective, but there were cases of unqualified people being selected. The capacity gains provided by TAs appear largely sustainable, especially within the Counterparts with whom they have worked directly
AMDEP	Satisfactory	The project built the capacity of Salam Watandar and other radio stations that are providing news to hard-to-reach populations. It trained thousands of Afghan journalists, perhaps a majority. AMDEP had successes in promoting media solidarity, literacy, and advocacy. It made a consistent and conscientious effort to promote women as implementers, journalists, and beneficiaries.

DDP	Unsatisfactory	The DDP was not designed well, as it had two general objectives (governance and stability) that did not fit well together. There were some successes in increasing linkages between the different levels of government and improving government staffing levels. However, DDP was launched without an assessment and development of the capacity of the IDLG or GIRoA's financial management systems; funding activities faced significant delays, with USAID suspending the project in 2012; and gender equity was not in the DDP design so there was negligible activity in this area.
CTAA	Unsatisfactory	The evaluation found that the HRMIS is not functional and the IARCSC and ministries are using their own databases. CTAA was not successful in ushering in substantial and lasting improvement for female staff. In spite of some achievements, including conducting effective performance appraisals, there were no observable improvements in the overall internal operating systems of the IARCSC.
TB Care I	Satisfactory	The evaluation found that case findings, NSSP cases, and TSRs significantly increased under TB-CARE I. TB CARE I provinces had a higher level of improvement than non-TB CARE I provinces since the start of the project. The project's DOTS method is considered cost-effective because of increase in detection and treatment rates and international reputation.
SPS	Mixed	SPS contributed to improving the technical and management capacity of the GDPA, as well as strengthening the inventory, supply chain, and procurement systems for pharmaceuticals. However, SPS activities did not sufficiently improve policy implementation and coordination, especially at the provincial and local levels, in the regulation, quality, and rational use of medicines, and in evidence-based decision-making. Medicine stock outs remain a problem.
SPR	Unsatisfactory	SPR's Roads Program rehabilitated only a small fraction of the target kilometers of road. The Community Outreach and Capacity Building Program ultimately failed due to a poor grant process and weak implementation and monitoring; a gender component that was ill-conceived; and a community mobilization process that had a poor understanding of traditional rural socio-political structures. SPR suffered from severe management problems and insecurity, as road crew sites attacked.
MISPA	Mixed	MISPA helped build some administrative capacity at MoWA, as well as select DoWAs, through trainings and mentoring. MISPA also had some successes in assisting MOWA with public awareness and advocacy campaigns. However, it fell short of rendering MoWA an effective agent for policy, as the ministry continues to suffer from management and human resources problems. In addition, strategic communications between MoWA and DoWAs remain weak.

ACAP II	Satisfactory	ACAP II was highly effective at supporting small business opportunities for beneficiaries. Beneficiaries were properly selected and vetted, the assistance and trainings complemented beneficiary needs, and the majority of recipients continue to operate their businesses and provide for their families. ACAP II has good relationships with the MOLSAMD, AIHRC, UNAMA, and NGOs, which facilitated its work. Assistance to women was confined to the domestic ventures, however, and accessing beneficiaries in insecure areas was a challenge.
SNG	Mixed	SNG training was generally seen effective in providing PCs with the knowledge, skills, and tools required to fulfill their responsibilities. SNG supported a large number of site visits, public hearings, NGO briefings, stakeholder interactions, workshops, etc., for PCs to learn and carry out their duties. The intern program was widely seen as a success. However, SNG did not cover training in conflict resolution, which occupied the majority of PCs' time. PCs' effectiveness was limited by the PC Law and varying relationships with governors, ministers, and other government officials
LCEP II	Satisfactory	LCEP II took rigorous steps to rectify problems with activities identified in the mid-term review, such as replacing skills training with an apprenticeship program. The apprenticeship program was successful; 100% of those surveyed indicated they are earning additional income. A community-level system was established on a sustainable basis for continuing learning, as illiterate people are seeing the benefits of literacy and seeking help for literate neighbors and community members. Women were adequately included and benefited from LCEP II.
ILGNRM	Satisfactory	ILGRM helped build MAIL and NEPA's capacities to establish guidelines and regulations for natural resources management, and facilitate community participation in protected areas planning and management. ILGNRM succeeded in facilitating livelihood development and creating jobs. By providing low-cost stoves and corrals and by ensuring that park management and facilities development plans integrate provisions that specifically benefit women, ILGRM improved the welfare of women. The only performance indicator that was not met is the establishment of APWA.
I-PACS II	Mixed	I-PACS II's advocacy methods were effective in facilitating the adoption of desired amendments to the NGO law. Women were well-represented in working groups and their concerns and rights were addressed in the law, but most CSOs do not mainstream gender. The cascading model of training KSOs, which in turn trained CSOs, was contributed to building civil society capacity. I-PACS II had many problems with the CSO grant program, with applicants complaining about the short grant period and lack of transparency in applying.

PBGF	Mixed	PGOs interviewed stated that PBGF improved their capacity to plan, budget, and procure goods and services. The evaluation found mixed responses about the extent and effectiveness of PGO's outreach. The disbursement of PBGF funds allowed the PGOs to mitigate delays and reductions to their core budget allocations from the MoF. However, PBGF's financial management practices were not integrated with those of the MoF. Instead, PBGF officers assumed responsibility for financial management, resulting in limited capacity transfer.
KCI	Mixed	KCI training and technical assistance improved the management structure, the efficiency, and effectiveness of the KM. The APM has not become law and is little used. Revenue data reported by KM was variable and unverifiable, so the evaluators could not assess whether it had increased revenues.
RAMP-UP	Mixed	RAMP-UP's program design and allocation of funds to municipalities was flawed. Levels of improvements to internal municipal systems (accounting, budgeting, revenue generations, automation, etc.) vary widely across municipalities. However, there was widespread automation of municipal accounting and budget systems. With the exception of RAMP-UP North, mentoring and training was effective, as municipal officials reported using their newfound knowledge and skills. There are some prospects for revenue generation and sustainability.
EQUALS	Unsatisfactory	EQUALS prepared the required QA plans and generally performed the specified quantity of monitoring and inspection services. However, there were major deficiencies with the project design, implementation, and quality of services. Some local field engineers were considered underqualified. There was minimal training and capacity building offered, and it was deemed ineffective.
AIRP/TO#14	Unsatisfactory	Sub-contractors performed routine maintenance work at the required level of service standard specified in the O&M contracts. However, the Task Order contained inconsistent and incompatible objectives. The MOPW was not significantly engaged, and the primary objective of establishing a new organization, the RMU, was not achieved. There were no works plans or a needs assessment, and the capacity building component was inadequate.
RPRA	Unsatisfactory	The ADB-funded airport rehabilitation project had gone past schedule and exceeded its budget. While it is clear that USAID intervention was instrumental in getting the project completed, there were numerous problems. IPs had minimal direct/contractual authority over the construction contractors; their capacity building efforts were ineffective, with little or no management capacity being transferred to the Project Implementation Unit; and the project continue to suffer from delays.
HEP	Mixed	HEP improved the quality of instruction at the education faculties of 18 universities through trainings, study tours, and funding instructors to earn master's degrees. The project created three new academic programs and helped develop a quality assurance system at the MoHE best on international best practices. HEP's greatest weaknesses were flaws in program design, limited attention to project activities, and a lack of planning for sustainability.

Tech Serve	Inconclusive	The evaluation that covers Tech-Serve is more descriptive than analytical, discussing only the project's contributions to predetermined areas of health program development.
HSSP	Inconclusive	The evaluation that covers HSSP is more descriptive than analytical, discussing only the project's contributions to predetermined areas of health program development.
ASMED	Mixed	ASMED achieved significant reach into the population, directly created thousands of jobs, strengthened key value chains, and stimulated both domestic and foreign investment, thus creating opportunity for further economic growth. However, it failed to strengthen business associations, which was dropped from its work plan. ASMED did not share market assessments and other resources with stakeholders, limiting its impact, and failed to keep track of targets in order to measure effectiveness.
CAWSA	Unsatisfactory	CAWSA introduced new concepts, procedures, and systems for water management, provided training in functional and technical areas to AUWSSC staff, and awarded small grants to upgrade the work environment at SBUs. AUWSCC was generally happy with CAWSA's assistance. However, the evaluation found that CAWSA did not achieve its cost-recovery targets or increase water supply in any sustainable manner at any of the utilities. The project did not produce any important effect with regard trainings and other support in financial management and accounting areas, largely because of low staff capacity. All of the female interns discontinued their work after CAWSA ended.
EGGI	Mixed	Evaluation focuses on assistance in implementing PFM Roadmap since 2012. EGGI managed to deliver against the overly broad objective of supporting the implementation of the PFM Roadmap. The project improved the capacity of tax administration staff at the ARD and helped NTR staff identify opportunities to generate additional non-tax revenues, and contributed to the institutionalization of program budgeting in line ministries. However, trainings did not have program indicators or targets and cannot be evaluated. Technical advisors sometimes substituted rather than transferred capacity. The WIG was successful in introducing and placing women in government positions
LARA	Mixed	LARA upgraded Arazi as the major land agency of Afghanistan, strengthened its leadership, and integrated the cadastral unit formerly located in AGCHO into the agency. LARA successfully upgraded and formalized settlements in Jalalabad, with the result that nearly every property holder is on track to receive a formal deed. The project established a road map for formalizing settlements and registering deeds throughout the country. However, while LARA reported extensive training of Arazi staff, it was incomplete and questionable in its effectiveness. Arazi staff stopped using the ALMRIS software. The public awareness campaign of women's land rights had a negligible impact.

ACE	Satisfactory	ACE successfully revived the formal agricultural credit market in Afghanistan, which had been dormant since the demise of the Agricultural Development Bank in 2006. Through the ADF, the project provided loans indirectly to agribusinesses and farmers, which reportedly contributed to the modernization of agriculture and job creation. ACE overcame obstacles that included a lack of interest on the part of banks to mediate credit and a lack of gender strategy.
IDEA-NEW	Satisfactory	Remote sensors found more diversification of crops and less poppy growing in IDEA-NEW beneficiary communities than non-beneficiary communities. IDEA-NEW grants, training, and other support was appreciated and reported to increase agricultural productivity and business. However, some agribusinesses remain unsustainable without strong value chains and continued donor support. IDEA-NEW's small animal, karakul, and home-based activities were effective at improving women's income and status.
FAIDA	Unsatisfactory	While FAIDA contributed to building some capacity of finance professionals and finance institutions such as ABA and AMA, there were more challenges than successes. The finance institutions remain unsustainable. FAIDA-facilitated loans, a quarter of which went to women, reportedly created over 5,000 jobs, but most of these were created indirectly by the clients of one micro-finance institution (Oxus). The Mobile Network Operators scheme failed, and FAIDA was hampered in its policy work by a ban on working with the Central Bank.
RLS-I	Mixed	Evaluation of Phase 3, 2012-13. The evaluation found, broadly, a link between RLS-I training of village elders in Afghan law and Sharia and more satisfaction with dispute resolution. However, the differences between the treatment and control groups was not outstanding. In the case of men accepting women's role in dispute resolution, there were modest gains. In addition, elders showed negligible gains in more abstract constitutional knowledge.
RLS-F	Mixed	2010-12. The program trained judges and lawyers through continuing legal education, study tours, legal clinics and moot courts. The capacity building, however, had mixed and unclear results. RSL-F developed a core curriculum for law school that had gained traction, and extended the ACAS to 514-537 courts. The public outreach campaign seemed to be an afterthought and was not monitored.
BLT	Mixed	TM succeeded in rehabilitating Murade Khane, and its vocational training has provided some poor and talented people with viable crafts skills. However, the evaluation found the current training is poor in quality and costs are unsustainably high. Only half of the graduates stay in the crafts field. TM provides some support to new businesses, but relies on tried and tested companies to fill large orders, making it difficult for small businesses to grow. It has sparked some international demand for Afghan crafts.

ANNEX VI: DISCLOSURE OF ANY CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Disclosure of Conflict of Interest for USAID Evaluation Team Members

Name	Name James H. Purcell
Title	Consultant
Organization	Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc.
Evaluation Position?	☐ Team Leader ☒ Team member
Evaluation Award Number *(contract or other instrument)*	**Contract No. AID-306-C-12-00012**
USAID Project to be Evaluated *(Include project name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)*	
I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.	☐ Yes ☒ No
If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts: *Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:* 1. *Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the project(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.* 2. *Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose projects are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation.* 3. *Current or previous direct or significant though indirect experience with the project(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the project design or previous iterations of the project.* 4. *Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.* 5. *Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.* 6. *Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular projects and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation.*	

I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.

Signature	James H. Purcell
Date	August 28, 2015

U.S. Agency for International Development
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20523