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REGIONAL AFGHAN MUNICIPALITIES PROGRAM FOR URBAN POPULATIONS – REGIONAL COMMAND EAST

MONTHLY REPORT: JANUARY 2011



January 2011, citizens of Bamyan prioritized the solid waste management project to improve the city sanitation

February 2011

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REGIONAL AFGHAN MUNICIPALITIES PROGRAM FOR URBAN POPULATIONS – RC EAST

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

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ABBREVIATIONS & TERMS

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

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

Terms

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

ABOUT RAMP UP EAST

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

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

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

RAMP UP East Target Municipalities

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

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

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

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

RAMP UP EAST OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

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

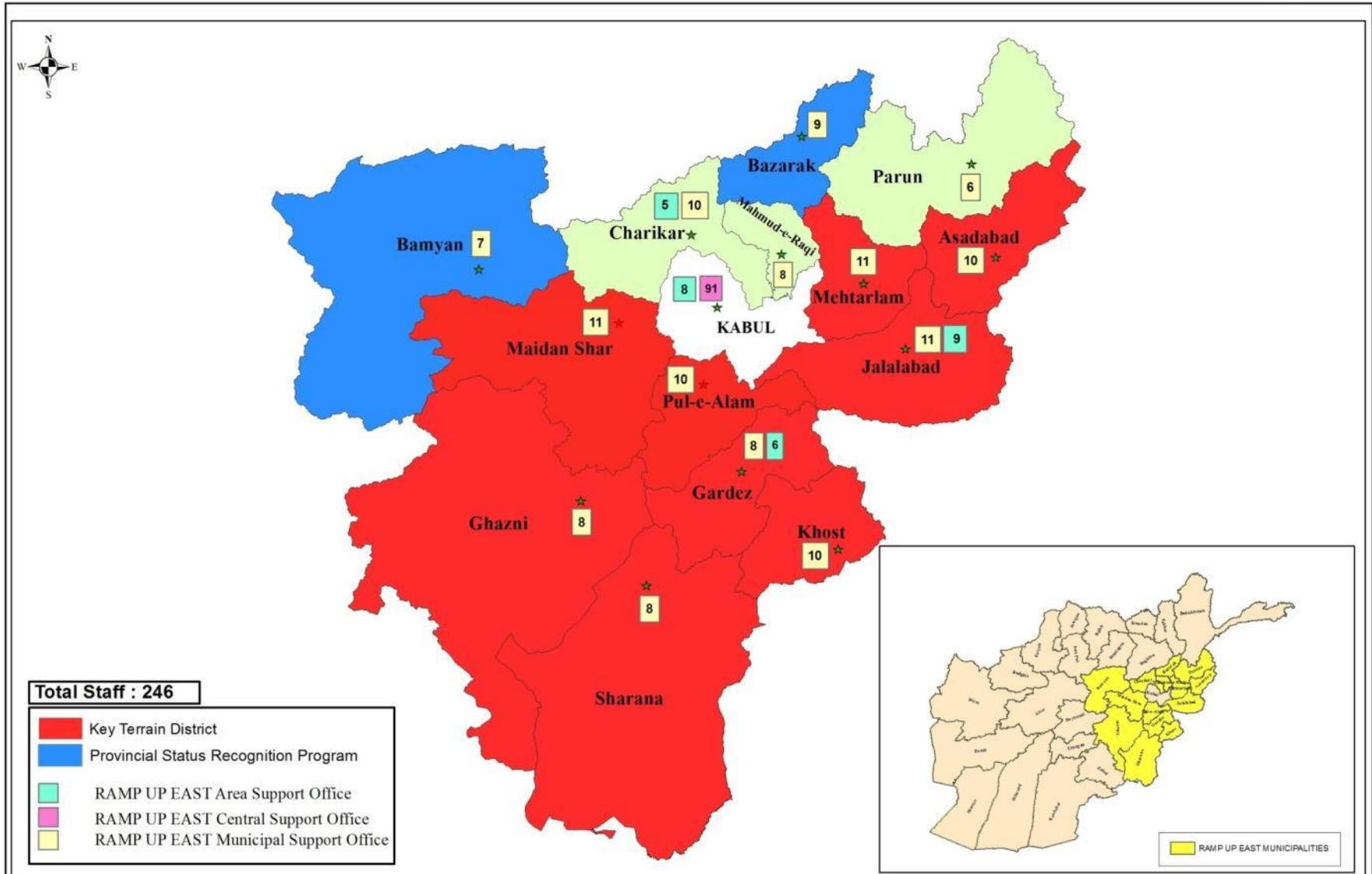
RAMP UP East's impact is measured by the degree to which Afghan citizens see local governance structures as legitimate. The perception of legitimacy is tied to receiving better services, understanding the responsibilities of municipal leaders, and playing an active role in municipal decision making.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

RAMP UP EAST IMPLEMENTING PRINCIPLES

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

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

USAID RAMP UP EAST OFFICE AND STAFF LOCATION



USAID RAMP-UP EAST JANUARY 2011 HIGHLIGHTS

On January 6th, the Mayor of Sharana along with GIRoA officials including the Deputy Governor celebrated the completion of the Sharana drainage ditch construction project. The drainage ditch construction began on August 20th 2010 and was completed on November 28th 2010 by fifty-eight unskilled laborers and thirteen skilled labors. Note this project is included in the Sharana municipality master plan based on needs and the expressed interests on the part of municipal citizens.



January, 6th. Sharana. GIRoA officials celebrated the completion of Sharana drainage ditch construction

The Charikar business registration pilot project commenced in on January 12th and it was used as a practical training opportunity for revenue generation officers. RAMP-UP East developed an Access-based business registration data base that has been installed on a computer in the Charikar Municipal Finance Office. A municipal staff member was trained on the use of data entry checklist that was developed as a desk reference for this process. District One of Charikar was selected as a project implementation site to survey an estimated 300 businesses. The business registration process is expected to be completed by February 2011.

On January 25th, the Deputy Mayor of Puli Alam city in Logar province led a monthly municipal citizen forum. The Mayor updated citizens' representatives on USAID RAMP-UP East supported Municipal Improvement Plan Progress including service delivery projects. Citizens of Puli Alam also learned from their Mayor about the municipal small scale plan for greening the pedestrian spaces. The monthly citizen forum enhances citizen collaboration with GIRoA at the municipal level. It also mobilizes public support and citizen engagement in public service delivery projects selection.

On January 26th, Mayor of Khost city along with Provincial Council members and citizens discussed preventive procedures against illegal construction. During the previous citizen forum, Mayor and citizens agreed to have further discussion on the portable drinking water project.



January 12th, Charikar. The business registration project will enhance municipal revenue generation opportunities.

On January 25th, The Mayor of Asadabad in Kunar Province discussed with citizens' representatives the state of municipal services. The monthly citizen forum in Asadabad enjoyed publicity and participation of GIRoA local officials, the US PRT, UNAMA and dozens of citizens including women and youth. The forum promotes good governance practices through open discussion between the Mayor and citizens about public services, budget management and tax collection.

On January 26th Mayor of Mehterlam convened a monthly citizen forum with the participation of students, businesses, women and members of the provincial council. Mayor of Mehterlam selected to speak this month to citizens about the public toilets and the public space allocation for a wheelbarrow.

On January 26th, Mayor of Bamyan city led a monthly citizen forum at the city Eco Tourism Hall with participation of 42 citizens. The municipal officials discussed with NGOs members, shopkeepers and ordinary citizens the details of the upcoming solid waste collection project. The Mayor made also a public speech about the city hygiene and impact on tourism. The municipal monthly citizen forums are convened in 13 municipalities throughout ISAF's RC East with the support of USAID RAMP-UP East.



January 26th, Bamyan Citizens attended the monthly citizen forms

MUNICIPAL GOVERNANCE AT THE SUB-NATIONAL LEVEL

RAMP-UP East continued working closely this month with the Independent Directorate for Local Governance (IDLG). In January, two senior level program meetings were held with the Department for Municipal Affairs (DMA) and IDLG's Programs Implementation Unit.

On January 19th, RAMP-UP East senior management and the DMA team discussed the program's progress and the Municipal Improvement Plans (MIPs). It was agreed that IDLG will review the MIPs and compare them with the city master plans and provide final comments. The meeting participants emphasized the need for establishing good coordination with the UNDP Sub-National Governance Program known as ASGP.



It was suggested by the DMA that RAMP-UP East implement larger scale municipal service projects instead of the current small projects, such as drainage ditches and pedestrian sidewalks. In response, the program team explained that RAMP-UP East aims to empower municipalities to deliver basic services. This means that the program is primarily a capacity building support program that uses small projects to enable opportunities for on-the-job training for the municipal officers who will acquire the skills to undertake such projects themselves.

On January 31st, IDLG, RAMP-UP East, ASGP and other implementing municipal support programs discussed the provincial operational planning and the need to integrate the municipal services into the provincial development plans. To assist this requirement, RAMP-UP East will complete the IDLG provincial planning template and submit it to IDLG for discussion in February.

MUNICIPAL PROGRESS REPORTS

CENTRAL AREA: PULI ALAM, MAIDAN SHAR, BAMYAN, PULI ALAM MUNICIPALITY

Province: Logar

MUNICIPAL SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Puli Alam municipality of Logar province is set to begin the implementation of a car parking lot construction during February. As the municipality currently has no organized car parking, this leads to residents parking their cars on the road in front of shops, which often results in blocking the shops entrances, hampering business and risking traffic accidents.

In August 2010, citizen's representatives and the municipality prioritized the project and listed it in the Municipal Improvement Plan. The project

will also include the erection of a guard house/toll booth and a public toilet. The parking facility will provide adequate parking for vehicles owned by businesses and their clients in the town center.

The parking lot location was selected by the Local Shopkeepers Union and the design was prepared by the municipal officers with technical support from RAMP-UP East. The main beneficiaries of the project are 1,500 businessmen who operate within the town center and their clients.



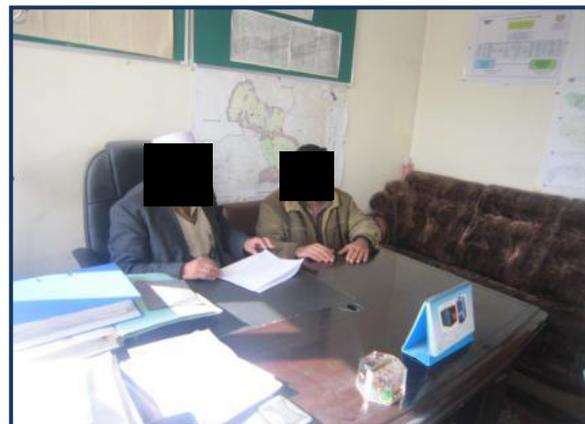
Pul-e-Alam municipality building

MUNICIPAL CAPACITY BUILDING

FUNCTIONAL TRAINING AND IMPACT

During the reporting period the staff of the Municipal Accounting Department learned about performance-based budgets and utilization of performance-based budget techniques. In addition, book-keeping and petty cash management skills were taught and staff received mentoring on a daily basis. A flow chart of revenue collection was also developed by the municipal officers.

The Finance Officer was trained on how to computerize the existing reporting form for revenue collection data. The revenue data for the



January 22nd, Puli Alam. The in-house public works training was supported by RAMP-UP East.

third quarter 1389 Hejri year was also computerized as a task that provided practical learning skills in data entry.

Furthermore, the Public Works Engineer undertook a site visit to the Puli Alam landfill site. He surveyed the site and measured the distance between the municipality, temporary dump-sites and the landfill. Environmental measures were also considered during the site visit – these included identification of soil type and water resources in the area. The site visit was part of the project’s preparation for an improved landfill site for Puli Alam. The Public Works Engineer also learned how to conduct project estimates and project design this month.



January 17th, Puli Alam. The municipal economic profile development continued over January

On January 31st, the Municipal Head of Revenue Department completed preparation of the municipal economic profile. Further information from GIROA departments and the local government was collected and incorporated in the profile. The municipal officer learned new techniques for data collection, analysis and data entry. During this month tasks completed include the municipal filling system review and its development to record revenue generation information.

Finally, the RAMP-UP East Economic Development Embedded Advisor supported his counterpart in producing a revenue generation analysis for the public park project, which included preparation of an income data sheet for the project.

CORE SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

The organizational chart of Puli Alam municipality was completed this month by the Administrative Officer. The TORs for the Public Works Engineer and Head of Bazara were also developed and will be shared with IDLG and CSC for review and to finalize the preparation of the job advert. The officer was trained on how to prepare a citizens forum agenda. He was also tasked with leading and coordinating the event as a means to acquire skills through on-the-job training to mobilize a citizens forum as an event.

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Citizen Forum Improves Municipal Responsiveness in Puli Alam

The municipality’s poor management of the public toilets construction and the lack of public environmental awareness were topics discussed at the monthly citizen forum meeting held on January 25th in Puli Alam.

The Puli Alam Deputy Mayor discussed these issues with twenty six citizen’s representatives as

well as the “disappointing” public behavior towards the city’s green spaces. The Deputy Mayor noted that some citizens of Puli Alam observed pulling-out of trees from the streets.

The Deputy Mayor asked community representatives to help raise public awareness in their communities, especially among their family members and friends, to prevent such behavior in future.

The municipality’s poor management and maintenance of the public toilets was another issue discussed at the forum. Businessman Haji Mahmood explained that the public toilets had water supply problems and he did not find any reason for their re-construction. He asked the municipality to review the contract, visit the site and monitor the construction work underway in order to gain an understanding of the problem. In response to this comment the Deputy Mayor summoned the contractor and agreed to resolve the water supply problem. The quick resolution of this issue demonstrates the effectiveness of the citizen forum as venue for public and municipal communications and as a means to empower citizens and improve the public accountability and responsiveness of the municipality towards its citizens.



January 25th, Puli Alam. The citizen forum participants discussed improving the city green spaces

The citizen’s representative of Kanjak district, [REDACTED], raised the concern that his community was not been included in the municipal services. Though Kanjak district is the eighth district of Puli Alam city according to the master plan, the municipality was not able to extend services to this area because of financial difficulties. The Deputy Mayor explained the challenges of the city’s expansion and requested citizens to pay the Safayi tax to help raise revenue in order to extend municipal services to the residents of Kanjak.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Municipal officials of Puli Alam participated in the PDC meeting held on January 16th at the Governor’s Office. During this meeting the USAID Activity Manager announced to GIRoA officials and community representatives that the parking lot construction will start in February. This news was welcomed by the participants.



January 25th, Puli Alam. Coordination meeting between USAID and RAMP-UP East area office team.

RAMP-UP EAST – USAID COORDINATION

On January 25th, RAMP-UP East held a coordination meeting with the USAID Activity Manager and State Department staff member Roberto Bran. The Activity Manager emphasized the need to start the parking lot construction so the residents of Puli Alam can soon benefit from using the parking lot.

MAIDAN SHAR MUNICIPALITY

Province: Wardak

MUNICIPAL SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

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

On January 23rd, the Provincial Governor along with the Acting Mayor and Engineers visited the proposed site of Maidan Shar's public park. The Engineering Team conducted the site survey and is developing the project's scope of work which is to be completed in February. The planned public park includes a coffee house, public latrine, pool, green spaces and boundary wall.



January 23rd, Maidan Shar. The provincial Governor and the Mayor visited together proposed site for public park

MUNICIPAL CAPACITY BUILDING

FUNCTIONAL TRAINING AND IMPACT

The financial system of Maidan Shar was reviewed this month with technical assistance of RAMP-UP East. The municipal Finance Officer received on-the-job training to assist in organizing the municipal filing system. In addition, in-house training on procurement procedures was conducted. As a result of this training, Purchase Order Forms were developed by the municipal officer. The revenue data for the second quarter of the Hejri year were also recorded by the municipal officer.



January 25th, Maidan Shar. Municipal officers received support to prepare municipal assets maintenance plan

The municipal Engineer in Maidan Shar made progress this month towards developing the operational maintenance plan for municipal assets after arranging for registration and computerized of assets. The Head of Sanitation Department also developed a concept paper for emergency support with guidance provided by RAMP-UP East.

The economic profile of Maidan Shar was completed during this reporting period and will be reviewed by the Mayor with the support of RAMP-UP East in February for further action.

CORE SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

In January, the Administrative Officer of Maidan Shar municipality received training to produce a work plan for the Administration Unit. The plan was developed and submitted to the Mayor. In addition, an organizational chart and TORs were prepared and shared with the municipal departments. Notably, a contact list for the municipal departments was also developed and will be shared with the public at each citizen forum. This step by Maidan Shar municipality

will help to strengthen public communications and improve the municipality's responsiveness.



January 18th, Maidan Shar. The municipal organizational chart was produced with support from RAMP-UP East.

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Educational Drama Activity at the Monthly Citizen Forum in Maidan Shar

The success of the citizen forum continued to thrive when seventy citizen's representatives including 9 women participated in the monthly forum held on January 20th. This forum holds the record for the most extensive citizens' participation in ISAF's RC East.

At the meeting the Acting Mayor announced that the municipality will increase the number of trash bins in Maidan Shar and will receive further support from RAMP-UP East to assist the municipality in managing the solid waste collection program. The support requested by the municipality included labor costs subsidies and the purchase of trucks and the installation of additional trash bin. The Acting Mayor added: "Citizen's collaboration is vital to make the city green and clean."



January 20th Maidan Shar. Women's representatives participated actively in the monthly citizen forum.

One of the new improvements at the citizen forum was an educational drama performance played by the local theater team supported by the municipality. The short drama helped raise awareness about public environmental concerns, for example city cleanliness and environmental protection.

Citizens voiced complaints and suggestions about which municipal services should be improved. The public discussions with citizens provided an opportunity for the introduction of democratic practices and the exchange of opinions among citizens and the participating municipal officials.

A representative of the shopkeepers, [REDACTED], stated that the city did not have public green spaces such as a public park and proposed that it is a project that the municipality should

work on. He also requested the quick construction of a new landfill outside the city and provision of clean drinking water for citizens.

Community leader [REDACTED] noted the slow progress made by the municipality in his city and was quoted as saying “we all together, government and citizens, will work hand by hand and bring development to our city.”

One of the shopkeepers’ representatives asked the Mayor “all the service projects are dominated by big companies, why is the chance not given to small companies too?” The Mayor responded by explaining that mistakes will not be repeated and citizens will be granted an equal chance to obtain business opportunities. Finally, it was agreed that the next citizen forum will be held on February 15th.



STAKEHOLDER RELATIONS

On January 23rd, the Provincial Governor of Maidan Shar hosted a meeting with RAMP-UP East municipal advisors. The team provided a detailed report of the progress of municipal activities over the last few months.



January 23rd, Maidan Shar. The Governor hosted coordination meeting with RAMP-UP East.

BAMYAN MUNICIPALITY

Province: Bamyan

MUNICIPAL SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

The severe weather conditions in Bamyan slowed down the initiation of service delivery projects. The municipal team with support from RAMP-UP East began drafting project concept notes for services proposed by citizens.

On-the-job training will enable improved project planning skills to be acquired by the municipal staff and time management skills until such time that the weather conditions improve and project implementation can resume.



January 23rd, Bamyan, the municipal Engineer reviewed the new city master plan and discussed with RAMP-UP East

MUNICIPAL CAPACITY BUILDING

FUNCTIONAL TRAINING AND IMPACT

In January, the municipal Finance Officer in Bamyan was trained to draft the municipal annual budget for 1390 Hejri. The budget includes the expansion of services to four districts of Bamyan city. The operational budget was completed and staff salaries were also planned for. In addition, The Accounting Manager was trained to computerize the payroll records and use a double entry system for financial data and accounting.

This month the Public Works Engineer prepared a project concept note for the construction of public toilets. He also reviewed the new city master plan and discussed it with RAMP-UP East.

CORE SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

During the reporting period, the organization chart of Bamyan municipality was developed by the Administrative Officer. Preparation of ToRs started and will be completed and submitted for the Mayor by February.

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Shopkeepers Nominate Representatives at the Citizen Forum in Bamyan

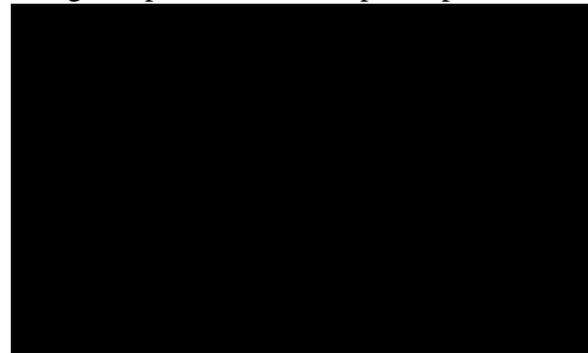
On January 26th, the Mayor of Bamyan convened a citizen forum with 42 participants. The forum provided an opportunity to follow up on previous discussions in the municipality held in December to address the city cleaning drive, Safayi tax collection, and public installation of toilets in the new city of Bamyan.

As discussed previously, the shopkeepers nominated eight representatives to participate in the forum on a regular basis. This step demonstrates the interest of shopkeepers who demanded strong representation for participation in municipal matters.

Regarding municipal waste clearing activities, the Mayor explained that solid waste is collected eight days a month and currently the snow gets cleared from the airport on a regular basis.

The municipality of Bamyan distributed bank slips to 219 shops to pay tax. The Mayor noted that the municipality had recently generated 308,000 AFGs from the tax collection. Furthermore, a committee of the shopkeepers, municipality and police was formed to oversee food prices in the local market.

Citizens of Bamyan requested that the Mayor decide on the allocation of car parking spaces and also to quickly start the solid waste management project proposed to RAMP-UP East/ USAID.



January 26th, Bamyan. Shopkeepers nominated eight representatives at the citizen forum.

MUNICIPAL NEWSLETTER

The newsletter for Bamyan is a new activity for the small municipality located in central Afghanistan. After receiving public outreach training from RAMP-UP East, municipal officers stepped up to the challenge of producing a monthly municipal newsletter called “Clean City”.

The newsletter produced in January was registered at GIRoA and licensed to raise public awareness about municipal affairs. The topics of the first issue included a news report about the monthly citizen forum, municipal activities during the month, environmental awareness, the organizational structure of Bamyan municipality, Q&A and municipal advertisements.

The newsletter supported by RAMP-UP East intends to improve public communications and municipal accountability at the sub-national governance level.

MUNICIPAL MEDIA EVENT

On January 9th, Bamyan city Mayor was interviewed by Bamyan local radio along with shopkeepers’ representatives and the GIRoA Commerce Department. The 50 minute discussion



January 23rd, The first municipal newsletter was produced in Bamyan.

focused on sanitation issues, the low use of public toilets and the city development plan.

The Mayor used this opportunity facilitated by RAMP-UP East to raise public awareness about hygiene and citizens' obligations to dispose of garbage at the allocated collection points and also to pay the Safayi tax on a regular basis to expand and sustain municipal services.



January 9th, Bamyan. The Mayor was interviewed by Bamyan local radio station

RAMP-UP EAST USAID COORDINATION

On January 16th, the USAID Activity Manager held a coordination meeting with RAMP-UP East and had another meeting with the Bamyan Mayor. The Activity Manager emphasized the need for municipal staff to learn new skills through RAMP-UP East.

On January 26th, the RAMP UP East Kabul Area Director and USAID Activity Manager discussed with the Mayor the construction of the Bamyan river retaining wall. It was agreed that RAMP-UP East will contribute to constructing the northern side, pending review and approval by USAID.

CHARIKAR AREA OVERVIEW: CHARIKAR, PANJSHIR, MAHMUD RAQI CHARIKAR MUNICIPALITY

Province: Parwan

MUNICIPAL SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

The Solid Waste Management project underway in Charikar provides technical and financial support for daily trash collection and waste removal to the municipal landfill site.

During January, the Department of Public Service of the Municipality of Charikar has become fully responsible for project management, after receiving the required training

during the last quarter of 2010. Currently, the municipality is studying a financial support plan to subsidize solid waste management labor costs as the PRT will stop funding the project by March 2011.

During this month, the municipality collected a total of 729 cubic meters of solid waste plus 486 cubic meters of rubble from drainage ditches. The project has also paid for 34 laborers at a total cost of \$2,783.

Furthermore, the planning for a solid waste analysis pilot project began in Charikar. RAMP-UP East has developed a step-by-step solid waste collection analysis check list.

This process will allow municipal staff to conduct an analysis of the solid waste collection operations. The process includes improved solid waste collection schedules, measuring daily performance, and providing the municipal staff with tools to determine if additional capital or operating resources are required to provide for the desired level of municipal services.

The key components of the solid waste analysis process involve the use of GIS aerial imagery to assist municipal staff in locating, plotting and numbering existing formal and informal collection sites. Lessons learned from the Charikar pilot project will be captured in improved training materials and validated checklists before the process is expanded to other municipalities.



January 11th, Charikar drainage ditch gets cleaned on regular basis.

S/N	Name of Project	Number of Labor	Man days	Wage paid \$
1	Trash collection	22	590	1,666
2	Ditch cleaning	8	215	592
3	Land filled	4	105	525
Total		34	910	2,783

MUNICIPAL CAPACITY BUILDING

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

For the first time since RAMP-UP East capacity building activities have begun, the Finance Department of Charikar municipality produced an electronic salary payroll report with the use of a computerized accounting program. The computerization of the financial system will allow adequate monitoring of expenditures and reduce the risk of corruption.

The municipal engineering team of Charikar received on-the-job training in which functional skills were applied on the maintenance plan of municipal assets. During the reporting period, a municipal property maintenance plan was prepared and assistance was provided on improving rental records.

The new mapping template for municipal assets was also completed. The template will assist the municipality to update information about active and inactive assets and identify the necessary action to sustain the use of these assets.

One of the municipal achievements this month is the completion of the city economic profile. RAMP-UP East provided technical support to the municipality to collect statistics and other information about the economic aspects of Charikar city. The information was collected from GIROA Departments and compiled in the economic profile. It provides a comprehensive picture of the existing infrastructure, businesses, and residents within the municipal boundaries. The municipality and other GIROA Departments will be able to use the economic profile to monitor and plan economic development.

The business registration pilot project started in Charikar on January 12th and it was used as a practical training opportunity for revenue generation officers. RAMP-UP East developed an Access based business registration data base that has been installed on a computer in the Charikar Municipal Finance Office. A municipal staff member was trained on the use of data entry checklist that was developed as a desk reference for this process. District one of Charikar was selected as a project implementation site to survey an estimated 300 businesses. The business registration piloting process is expected to be completed by February 2011.

Although the business registration process will not generate additional tax or fee revenues for the municipality the registration process will provide municipal staff with a more effective tool to manage revenue collection. However, this will also depend on the municipality's ability to use the information to actually levy and collect fees that are due.

The Head of the Revenue Generation Department of Charikar municipality welcomed the initiative and was quoted as saying "The municipality does not have accurate figures about businesses in the city. The business registration project will put the municipality in the right direction to improve the income sources".



January 22nd, Charikar. In-house finance and accountancy training was held by RAMP-UP east.

CORE SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

This month the municipal administrative team learned about managing meetings, notes recording and project progress tracking. Haji Abdul Malik, Head of the Administration Department, commented on the training: “I finally got to learn how to use the computer to maintain data and manage the office administrative issues”.

The municipal engineering team was also trained by RAMP-UP East to develop technical specifications and project scope of work.

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Charikar Mayor Discusses New Business Registration Process with Citizens

Twenty community representatives of Charikar city learned about new mechanisms for business registration during the monthly citizen forum held on January 23rd. The pilot project for business registration was discussed between the Mayor and community representatives.



January 23rd, Charikar. Mayor shared with citizens the new business registration project implementation plan.

The Mayor emphasized the need for improvement in business registrations as a process that will assist in increasing municipal incomes and impact service delivery for the municipal tax payers. Currently, the pilot project is being implemented

in District One while citizen representatives of District Two requested that the project is expanded as municipal revenues increase. The Mayor stated: “I will appoint a committee to enroll houses in the Safayi tax collection and also business registration.”

Citizens pointed out that roads construction, drainage ditches and septic wells are top priorities for the municipality. The Mayor explained that those suggestions will be included in the city development plan and the new annual budget that begins on March 21st, 2011.

Aziz, an inhabitant of District Two was quoted as saying: “Citizens of district 2 face periodic road blockage, pollution, and flooding. How is the municipality helping us?”

The citizen forum discussion ended with a brief from the Mayor about the progress of rehabilitating the current landfill site with the support of RAMP-UP East. Citizens stressed the urgency of this project to reduce health hazards. They also asked the Municipality for thorough follow-up to make sure the project is completed as soon as possible. The project scope of work is currently awaiting approval by USAID, after studying the environmental procedures that will be undertaken during the implementation process to mitigate the environmental impact of the project.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

The Mayor of Charikar and GIROA officials met at the Provincial Development Council meeting held on January 25th. During this meeting, the US PRT representative provided an update on the Bagram-Charikar 22KM road construction requested by the citizens of Charikar. The PRT stated that this project will be implemented in collaboration with Charikar municipality over a 3 year period starting this year. The Municipality agreed to provide the PRT with the project design, a cost estimate and a scope of work. RAMP-UP East reported on the road construction issue after the monthly citizen forum in December.

STAKEHOLDER & DONORS COORDINATION

RAMP-UP EAST USAID COORDINATION

On January 16th, RAMP-UP East held a meeting with the USAID Activity Manager at the Governor's house. The Team Leader provided an update on the project progress and challenges facing projects implementation. The initial environmental examination was also discussed as the land fill project in Charikar requires technical approval on project standard environmental criterias.

BAZARAK MUNICIPALITY

Province: Panjsher

MUNICIPAL SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

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

The Municipality is set to initiate an improved tax collection program in February. This activity supported by RAMP-UP East will assist the

Municipality to gradually improve and sustain the solid waste management project.

The municipal team collected 110 cubic meters of solid waste in January.



Bazarak. The municipality runs guest house next to the municipal building.

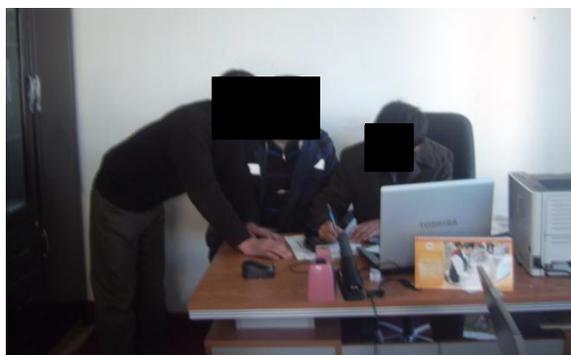
MUNICIPAL CAPACITY BUILDING

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

The Public Works Engineer of Bazarak continued to receive technical support on the use of AutoCAD project design software and projects development. In January, two site visits were conducted plus on-the-job training for project documentation and small grants management. The municipal Construction Manager was given a project leadership role to manage the PRT grant for small construction projects. The management skills the municipal Engineer will learn include budget estimation, procurement and scope of work development, in addition to labor management skills.

A safayi tax collection guide booklet was developed and discussed with the municipal officers. GIROA and business stakeholders were contacted and informed about the tax collection improvement project that will be undertaken in February. In addition, 60% of the economic profile development process is completed and the profile will be finalized in February.

The Finance Officer of Bazarak municipality was trained by RAMP-UP East to understand the basics performance based budgeting and



January 12th, Charikar. RAMP-UP East supported municipal finance documents computerization.

mechanisms to produce an accurate budget for each municipal department. Financial forms like payroll, expenditure and procurement records were all computerized during January.

In addition, preparation has started for an improved municipal revenue database. The municipal officials requested RAMP-UP East to support the municipality with computers to apply the learned functional skills in their daily work.

CORE SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

The Administrative Officer of Bazarak municipality started arranging for municipal meetings, including the preparation of an agenda and meeting notes. RAMP-UP East provided on-the-job mentoring and worked with the officer to improve his meeting management skills and document filing.

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

STAKEHOLDER & DONOR COORDINATION

On January 31st, the Mayor of Bazarak held a small grant management meeting with the PRT with the participation of representatives from Wakel e Gozar and the CDC. The PRT suggested that Bazarak Municipality should manage the implementation of small grants projects in the city. Bazarak city districts will receive small grants funding for 10 construction project as proposed by the CDCs.

The Mayor asked the PRT for a quick hand-over of the public toilets to be managed by the municipality. He also proposed that RAMP-UP East will assist in the development of the project scopes of work and share these with the PRT.

MAHMUD I RAQI MUNICIPALITY

Province: Kapisa

MUNICIPAL SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

On January 26th, citizens of Mahmud Raqi city and their Mayor received good news with regards to supporting the Municipality in implementing a 240m drainage ditch, mosaic sidewalk and culverts along the Rig Rawan Roadside, south of Mahmud Raqi High School.

The construction of the drainage ditch is expected to reduce poor drainage that leads to water contamination. Moreover, residents will have better access to shops, which will result in improved revenue generation opportunities for the shopkeepers and Municipality.

The municipal staff members of Mahmud-I-Raqi designed the project and drafted project concept notes as a first steps towards actual project implementation. The construction of the 240m drainage ditch is expected to begin in mid February when the weather conditions permit construction activities.

MUNICIPAL CAPACITY BUILDING

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

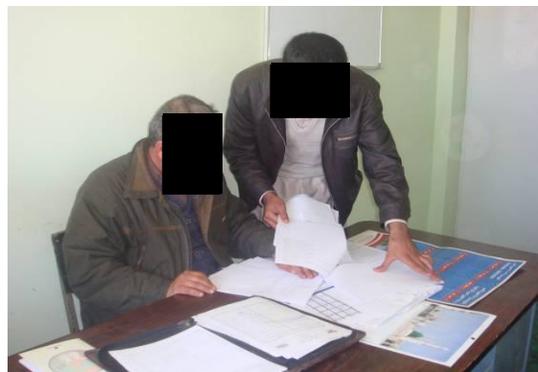
The head of the municipal Finance Department received on-the-job training in January 2011. The training provided by RAMP-UP East consisted of:

- 1- Developing an action plan for the finance department;
- 2- Understanding the financial flow chart;
- 3- Standardization of procurement and accounting procedures;
- 4- Using financial journals for accounting;
- 5- Recording and categorizing quarterly revenue;

In January, the municipal Engineering Department received public works training in the areas of survey and project design. RAMP-UP East assisted the municipal Engineers to design the scope of work for a public park, public toilets and coffee shop. The training applied an on-the-job training methodology that enhances the capacity building aspect of the municipal public works.

In addition, the municipal property registration team received in-house training on how to develop improved mechanisms for property registration and monitor taxation.

The municipal Sanitation & Greening Department received on-the-job training by RAMP-UP East this month to develop a weekly city sanitation plan, maintenance survey of the city trees and data entry of the ongoing maintenance work.



January 16th, Mahmud Raqi. The municipal accounting manager received in house training to produce quarterly financial report

The municipal preparation of the economic profile progressed and will be completed in February. The municipal Economic Development team members were trained on incorporating data from GIRoA departments in the economic profile.

Further training on revenue generation was conducted and the municipal officers learned how to identify revenue generation resources, register municipal assets, and undertake tax collection assessments.

CORE SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

In January, the Administrative Manager of Mahmud Raqi Municipality continued to receive on-the-job training on municipal administration skills, such as record keeping and creating a filing system for each municipal department.

In addition, the Administrative Manager was in the leadership role to gain experience in organizing the monthly citizen forum and learn norms and standards of socially inclusive public meetings and liaison with the media.



January 9th, Mahmud Raqi. The municipal Administrative Manager was trained by RAMP-UP East to produce ToRs.

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

In Mahmud Raqi: The Monthly Citizen Forum Raises Awareness on Environmental Issues

The citizens and GIRoA officials in Mahmud Raqi agree on the importance of environmental protection measures to be undertaken in their municipality. Forty two citizen representatives participated in the monthly citizen forum held on January 19th led by the Mayor and the Provincial Acting Governor. The forum emphasized the obligations of citizens to comply with the recent Presidential Decree with regards to environmental protection.

The Mayor and the Acting Provincial Governor together explained to the public that the city greenery will help reduce dust and pollution. Citizens were also requested to irrigate trees and not cut them. The Governor also pointed out that plastic bags and containers harm the environment and should not be discarded in the streets or burned to avoid pollution.



January 19th, Mahmud-i-Raqi. The monthly citizen forum discussed environmental awareness issues.

The community representatives agreed to raise community awareness regarding environmental concerns about drainage ditches and sanitation. They noted that some residents use drainage ditches as public latrines and that this creates potential health hazards. The religious council members suggested an increase in the number of public toilets to reduce the use of the drainage ditches.

Finally, the Mayor of Mahmud Raqi received the Governor's approval to work with the National Environmental Protection Agency to produce a situational report on the environmental issues and problems of Mahmud Raqi.

STAKEHOLDER & DONORS COORDINATION

INTER-GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

On January 18th, the Mayor of Mahmud Raqi participated in the monthly PDC meeting chaired by the Acting Provincial Governor. The participants discussed provincial development affairs and emphasized the need for coordination of aid efforts with the government including the municipality. It was agreed that RAMP-UP East will participate in the PDC meeting on a regular basis and provide updates on the program's progress.

STAKEHOLDER & DONORS COORDINATION

The Mayor along with GIRoA officials and USAID met on January 12th. The meeting provided an update on USAID's Capacity Development Building Program extension to be undertaken by Mercy Corps. The Mayor and other participants agreed on the project's priority to support poor citizens through cash-for-work opportunities and the use of local materials.

RAMP-UP EAST USAID COORDINATION

On January 18th, RAMP-UP East briefed the USAID Activity Manager in Kapisa on the progress of the program. The Team Leader explained that the construction of Mahmud Raqi Public Park is a priority of the city residents and the project should be implemented as soon as possible.



January 12th, Mahmud Raqi. Coordination meeting was held between GIRoA, USAID partners and PDCs.

JALALABAD AREA OVERVIEW: JALALABAD, MEHTERLAM, ASSADABAD JALALABAD MUNICIPALITY

Province: Nangarhar

MUNICIPAL CAPACITY BUILDING

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

During the reporting period, Jalalabad's Head of Revenue Generation Department received on-the-job training in improving the quarterly income reporting mechanism. The training included an introduction to a computerized data tracking systems using spreadsheets.

A municipal assets maintenance plan was drafted this month by the municipal Engineers with support from RAMP-UP East. The Public Works Engineers were trained in producing a comprehensive check-list for the planning and maintenance of municipal projects.



Jan 13th, Jalalabad. Deputy Mayor discussed with RAMP-UP the program upcoming events.

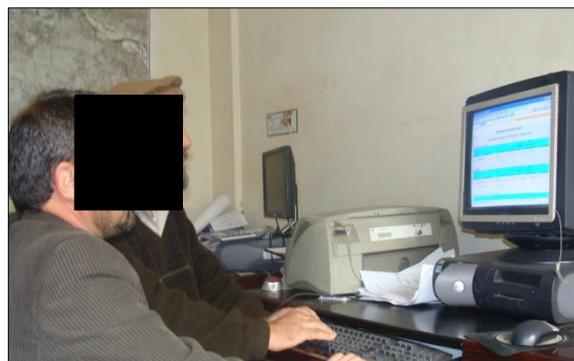
According to Eng. Noor Mohammad, Deputy Engineering Department Head, "Learning how to produce project maintenance checklists has enabled us to keep track of the municipal assets. We will maintain the city parks with the use of the checklist. That is a promise".

In addition, the Municipal Planning Department completed about one third of the municipal economic profile and economic development plan. The profile will assist the Municipality to plan for improved revenue generation in the long term.

The Planning Department decided to prioritize the rehabilitation of Sarai service market as part of the economic development plan. This project has revenue generation potential through tax collection and the issuance of business licenses.

CORE SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

The Administration Department of the Municipality of Jalalabad developed a filing system, computerized files labeling, and a structure for standardized municipal meeting notes during January.



January 10th, Jalalabad. The municipal Engineer produced computerized quantity bills after training provided by RAMP-UP East.

Staff of the municipal Engineering Department undertook engineering surveys of play grounds located in the Shanzda residential area. The team developed the project design, bill of quantities and cost estimates, and prepared concept notes.

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

RAMP-UP EAST – USAID COORDINATION

On January 24th, the USAID FPO, DFPO and Representative of the State Department were updated by RAMP-UP East on program activities and challenges in the Municipality.

The capacity building activities, revenue generation and collaboration with the Mayor of Jalalabad were the main topics discussed at the meeting.

The USAID FPO stated that he plans to meet with the Mayor to discuss ways to improve the collaboration and coordination between the Municipality and RAMP-UP East. The meeting is planned for February.

MEHTERLAM MUNICIPALITY

Province: Laghman

MUNICIPAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

In January, the Mehterlam municipal Finance Officer received on-the-job training in producing the quarterly revenue generation report. The report was completed based on Ministry of Finance revenue reporting guidelines.

Mr. Wali, the Finance Officer, commented on the training that he received and said: “Completing the revenue generation report with the use of check-lists allowed for accurate reporting and results evaluation of where the municipality stands”.

The Revenue Generation Officer prepared a revenue generation sources list that consists of fixed and temporary resources. Mr. Wahab said: “Identifying the revenue resources will assist the Municipality to plan for the annual budget that is going to start on March 21st”.



Jan 13th, Mehterlam. RAMP-UP East provided on the job training for the municipal Finance Officer.

The municipal Engineer was also trained to improve the filing system and project tracking sheets. Engineer Naqib was quoted as saying: “The documents are systematically compiled and filed in the Engineering Department. The team will be able to respond to public requests or needs in a faster way.”

The municipal economic profile was completed during the month and submitted to RAMP-UP East for review.

CORE SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

During the reporting period, comprehensive repairs of the municipal administration computers were completed. Also, the Mehterlam Administration Department received approval from the Mayor to process the license request for the monthly municipal newsletter. The Mayor provided his approval after 2 months of discussions about the importance of public communications and the promotion of municipal activities. The Mayor asked the Finance Department to include the newsletter production fee in the next annual budget starting on March 21st.



January 3rd, Mehterlam. The municipal filing system was reviewed and re-organized with support from RAMP-UP East.

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

On January 26th, the Head of the Revenue Generation Department of Mehterlam convened the second monthly citizen forum for his municipality. Fifty community representatives held discussions with municipal officials, – including on the site allocation for Mehterlam retailers for sale of goods as a commercial area. The following feature published by the US PRT provides further details about the meeting.



January 26th, Mehterlam. Fifty representatives including women participated in the monthly citizen forum.

LAGHMAN: Mehtarlam Citizens RAMP UP Community Sanitation Demands

On January 26th, an estimated 50 residents and shopkeepers urged officials of Mehtarlam, the capital of Laghman Province, to address the urban blight and congestion caused by unregulated vending carts on the city's streets.

“Citizen Forum” - facilitated through USAID’s Regional Afghan Municipalities Program for Urban Populations (RAMP UP) - brought neighborhood leaders, businessmen, youth representatives and city officials together. This led to an animated discussion on improving sanitation in Mehtarlam.

The problem of proliferating pushcarts dominated the discussion, although requests for more trash bins and better public latrines were also voiced. The gathering pledged to identify alternative sites for the errant fruit and vegetable sellers.

This was only the second such forum held in Mehtarlam and was designed to involve residents in the process of setting municipal priorities to promote transparency, to encourage democratic practices, and to boost government credibility.

Working closely with Afghanistan’s Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG),

USAID/RAMP UP supports effective, responsive, and accountable governance in targeted municipalities throughout the country. (Marc Bender)



January 25th, Mehterlam. The citizen forum participants discussed urban blight and congestion in their city

INTER-GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

On January 25th, The Deputy Mayor of Mehterlam participated in the provincial development meeting chaired by the Governor. Donor agencies, the PRT and civil society representatives were asked by the Governor and the Deputy Mayor to share proposals for construction projects with the local government.

The Governor of Laghman pointed out that he was skeptical about the quality of work for construction projects funded by donors. He urged the participants to employ local hard working laborers and to use local high quality materials that would contribute towards the sustainability of the services.



Jan 25th, Mehtherlam, the Deputy Mayor participated in the monthly PDC meeting.

RAMP-UP EAST – USAID COORDINATION

On January 27th, RAMP-UP East held a coordination meeting with the USAID Activity Manager. The RAMP-UP team gave an overview of the program activities and challenges. The Activity Manager expressed his satisfaction with the public participation level in the monthly citizen forum.

ASADABAD MUNICIPALITY

Province: Kunar

MUNICIPAL CAPACITY BUILDING

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

During the reporting period, the Finance Officer of Asadabad received on-the-job training on how to use the financial journal and to develop an economic profile. The officer was also trained to plan for performance based budgets and to produce monthly payroll's and expenditure statements.

In addition, the Municipal Engineer continued to learn about project designs, drawings, and estimation. Cost estimates were completed for

the following projects:

- 1- City culverts
- 2- River shops and guest house
- 3- Bathrooms for the municipal owned hotel



January 22nd, Asadabad. The municipal Finance Officer received accountancy training.

CORE SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

The Administrative Officer received daily technical support from RAMP-UP East. The hands-on training included filing system management and the coordination of internal management meetings.

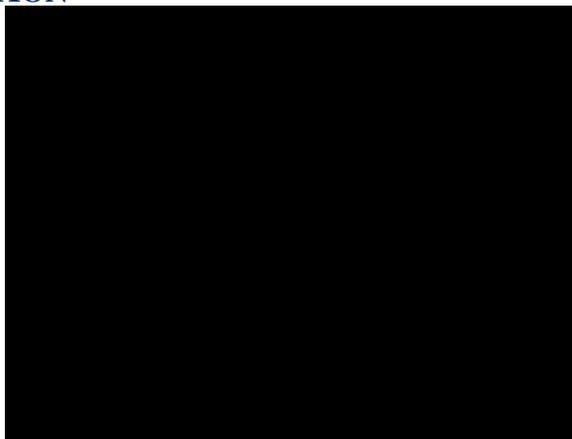
MUNICIPAL PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

The Mayor of Asadabad convened a monthly citizen forum on January 26th, with the participation of businesses and community elders.

The following topics were discussed in the meeting:

- 1- The construction of Kerhala 2 km road, which is currently in the planning process;
- 2- The appointment of one municipal staff



January 26th, Asadabad. The citizen forum received local media coverage.

- member to oversee the construction works for Asadabad city check-point;
- 3- The completion of a 300 m street in Karamar;
 - 4- Project progress for construction of a 300 m protection wall of Qalai Asadabad dam;
 - 5- The on-going rehabilitation of the municipal-owned Bazar;
 - 6- Renovation of the municipal-owned hotel and plans to rent it out to a private contractor to manage rooms rentals;
 - 7- The construction of three culverts across the city;
 - 8- The launch of a municipal newsletter, supported by RAMP-UP East.



January 26th, Asadabad. Citizens were briefed by the Mayor on municipal progress.

RAMP-UP EAST USAID COORDINATION

On January 20th, the USAID Activity Manager held a coordination meeting with RAMP-UP East. The program team provided an update on the capacity development support activities and the preparation of the economic profile of the city. It was agreed that the economic profile will be shared with the Activity Manager when finalized.

GARDEZ AREA OVERVIEW: GARDEZ, KHOST, SHARANA, GHAZNI

GARDEZ MUNICIPALITY

Province: Paktia

MUNICIPAL SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

In January, Gardez municipality continued to receive RAMP-UP East technical and project management assistance for the city's solid waste management program. The support included the supply of fuel for municipal vehicles and the costs of twenty eight laborers who were engaged in the solid waste collection project.

Due to a shortage of cleaning laborers, only about one quarter of the residents benefitted from the solid waste collection service. The Governor of Paktya ordered the municipal laborers to plant trees in the streets, which diverted the laborers focus from collecting the garbage.

The Mayor of Gardez requested RAMP-UP to accelerate the planned solid waste collection project and hire an additional 40 laborers. The Mayor stressed the importance of gaining the public's support through expansion of the garbage collection service to cover all Gardez city districts.

██████████, a citizen of Gardez commented on the solid waste collection service and said: "It is the municipality's responsibility to provide a clean environment, but Gardez municipality doesn't have the capacity to keep the city clean for its citizens".

Citizen ██████████ added: "the Mayor keeps talking about the municipality's activities but the reality is different. The city is full of trash and we demand that the Mayor take responsibility for keeping the city clean".

A Taxi driver named ██████████ defended the municipality. He commented: "We should understand that the municipality lacks cleaning laborers and nobody will accept the low pay that is offered by the government. We as citizens should collaborate with the municipality."



January, 27th Gardez. The municipal Head of Trash Collection Department visited the solid waste collection project site.

MUNICIPAL CAPACITY BUILDING

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

In January, the municipal public works team was trained to design public service projects. The practical training included the design of the Governor's house, a car parking lot, green spaces and footpaths. Note that some of these projects are funded by the PRT.

The municipal Engineer reviewed the city master plan and developed the concept paper for a median construction project funded by the municipality.

During the month, the municipality made progress towards developing the economic profile for the city. All the key departments were involved in the preparation process, which will help the municipality to plan for increased revenue generation.



January 19th, Gardez. The municipal Engineer discussed with RAMP-UP East the city master plan

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

The monthly citizen forum of Gardez provided public awareness opportunities for the municipality to discuss tax collection with citizens. Nineteen citizens' representatives met with the Mayor on January 30th for the discussion.

The Mayor gave a speech about the Safayi tax and the sustainability of public services. The Mayor was quoted as saying: "The municipality will not be able to perform all its duties if the citizens do not pay the Safayi tax."

The Mayor also explained recent municipal achievements and proposed upcoming projects. He said: "The municipality will construct a number of pathways in front of the city shops. We also planted trees in the city and we request citizens to protect the trees and not to throw garbage in the street drainage ditches."

██████████, who works for a construction company, explained the problem of car parking in the city. He told the Mayor: "There is no parking lot in the city. Businesses have asked the local government so many times to implement this project". He went onto say "We are ready to pay the tax if this project gets done". Responding to this request, the Mayor suggested that the municipality will allocate a space for a car parking lot and will charge 10 AFS per hour.



January 30th, Gardez. The monthly citizen forum participants discussed the Safai tax collection.

Shopkeeper ██████████ said: "The drainage ditch near Gardez square is quite small and doesn't drain the water. The municipality should enlarge the size of this ditch". The Mayor told Haji Noorullah that the municipality is looking for funding to implement this project as one of its priorities.

The meeting finished with a call from the Mayor for all citizens to increase their participation in the forum so municipal issues will get solved in the future.

GHAZNI MUNICIPALITY

Province: Ghazni

MUNICIPAL CAPACITY BUILDING

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

During the month of January 2010, the municipal Finance Officer received on-the-job training on basic financial and accounting skills. The officer received RAMP-UP East technical support in computerizing accounting documents, understanding budget planning methods, and computerizing the municipal budget template. He also received an explanation on the municipal procurement procedures.

A seminar about the revenue and development budget was held in the municipality to provide an improved understanding of GIROA budgeting and procurement rules.

On-the-job training was also provided to the Revenue Generation Department of Ghazni municipality. A learning-by-doing approach was applied covering the following activities:

- 1- Preparation of revenue recording forms;
- 2- Preparation of the municipal economic profile;
- 3- Received training on property registration;
- 4- Computerized assets inventory;
- 5- Computerized revenue generation.

CORE SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

During the reporting period, the municipal Administration Officer continued to develop the municipal organizational chart and TORs for staff members. The officer learned how to computerize and categorize municipal data.

In addition, RAMP-UP East provided the municipal team with office management training that will assist in the effective use of the municipal officers' time and resources.

The municipal Engineers of Ghazni were able to improve their personnel skills in project design



January 19th, Ghazni. RAMP-UP East provided on the job training of municipal budgets production.



January 23rd, Ghazni. The municipal Admin Officer was trained to computerize municipal data.

this month. The team developed a solid waste collection concept note and the construction of Cola Sabz road construction funded by the PRT. The project development process included a site survey and budget estimate.

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Ghazni Mayor to launch an investigation on municipal tax bribery

On January 23rd, the Acting Mayor of Ghazi city, along with the Wakil-e-Gozar and community representatives, discussed the Safayi tax collection mechanism, food price control and complaints about municipal bribery.

The Acting Mayor urged citizens to pay the Safayi tax on time for the public and GIROA benefit to sustain municipal services. On the other hand, shopkeeper [REDACTED] [REDACTED] accused municipal officers of accepting bribes offered by some businesses to reduce the tax amount.



January 23rd, Ghazni. The citizen forum participants discussed the food prices increase.

[REDACTED] said: “I have evidence that some officials take bribes from the shopkeepers in order for them to not pay the actual amount of tax money”. The Mayor defended his staff members and denied the accusation. However, he agreed to launch an investigation and to share the outcomes with the public at the next citizen forum.

With regards to the food prices, businessman [REDACTED] requested that the municipality should coordinate better with the tax collection authorities as food gets taxed twice. He was quoted as saying: “Businesses import fruit from Mazar-e-Sharif and pay the tax twice, in Kabul and Ghazni, and therefore the cost of food is more expensive. The municipality should be in control of this issue.”

Another shopkeeper, [REDACTED], complained that the municipal property rent rate had increased over the last year, which impacted on the food prices. He suggested that the municipality should reduce the shop rent rate so that businesses can sell food at a lower and affordable rate.

The representative of GIROA Department for Women’s Affairs Fuizia Kakar commented on this issue: “I suggest that the government develop a systematic mechanism for tax collection and price controls in the city.”

Finally, the Mayor of Ghazni announced that the next citizen forum would be held on February 24th and he advised that the meeting will discuss the details of the preparations for the 2013 celebration of Ghazni city as the Islamic World’s capital. He also stated that a large number of community representatives would attend the upcoming citizens forum to discuss the planned construction projects.

MUNICIPAL NEWSLETTER

Residents of Ghazni city used to receive a municipal newsletter known as “Tajalla“ on a regular basis. Newsletter production was stopped due to changes in the municipal leadership. On December 6th, one municipal staff member received public outreach training at RAMP-UP East and demonstrated keen enthusiasm and good skills to work on the newsletter.

On January 23th, representatives of the RAMP-UP East team met with the Mayor of Ghazni and discussed the re-launching of the newsletter. The Mayor agreed on the proposal and asked for the program technical and financial assistance. Therefore, the licensing process has begun and the newsletter’s name has been determined as “City Post”. RAMP-UP East plans to hold an in-house editorial training session in Ghazni in April 2011 after the newsletter license is issued.

RAMP-UP EAST USAID COORDINATION

On January 15th, RAMP-UP East held a coordination meeting with the US DFPO and shared the great challenges that the program is facing in Ghazni. The team explained that access to information, municipal staff collaboration and low interest in learning new skills are the main challenges that slow down the program in Ghazni city. In addition, RAMP-UP East staff members were banned from attending any municipal meetings or to receive information about municipal activities.

The DFPO agreed with RAMP-UP East that the Mayor of Ghazni should be invited regularly to the USAID coordination meetings. He also urged the staff members to continue doing their best to provide capacity building support for demand driven skills requested by the municipal officers.

SHARANA MUNICIPALITY

Province: Paktika

MUNICIPAL SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Citizens of Sharana continued to benefit from the technical and financial support provided by RAMP-UP East to the Municipality's solid waste management project. In January, the municipal laborers collected 164 cubic meters of solid waste and cleaned a total of 4,000 m of roads and drainage ditches in the city.

The municipal Revenue Department received technical support this month to improve revenue generation opportunities to sustain this project after May 2011.

Due to the expansion of the commercial and residential areas and unavailability of proper systems for solid waste collection management as well as limited resources (e.g. equipment, funds and manpower) of the municipality, the amount of waste has increase around the municipality and residential areas, resulting in poorly maintained city environments.



January 8th, Sharana. The Mayor visited the trash collection site.

During the reporting period, RAMP-UP East began supporting the Municipality in preparing for the construction of solid waste enclosures. Concrete solid waste enclosures will be constructed in 70 separate locations within the Sharana municipality. The specific location for each enclosure has been determined by the Municipality.

MUNICIPAL CAPACITY BUILDING

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

In January, the Public Works Engineer of Sharana received on-the-job training on how to use engineering software (AutoCAD). The training included page set-up for drawings, distance measuring and program installation. The Engineer designed a public toilet project and was able to apply all the skills learned for the project design, which included budget estimates, design drawings and project work plan preparation, all of which were done this month.

CORE SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

The core skills training in Sharana faced some challenges: some municipal staff members expressed limited interest or low motivation to learn new skills. The majority of the municipal officials are elderly and there are few young workers to lead institutional change. Therefore, the capacity building activities are very limited.



January 26th, Sharana. Administrative training seminar.

The skills taught in January include filing skills training and basic computers skills.

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

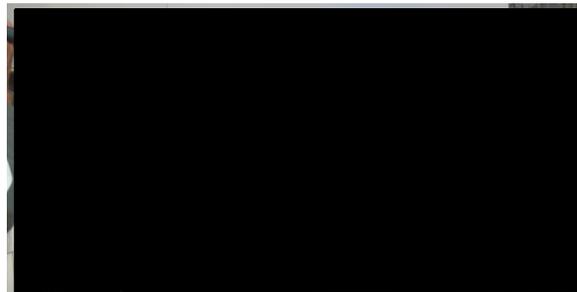
CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Taliban Threatens Sharana Residents to NOT Participate in GIROA led meetings

The monthly citizen forum held in Sharana on January 29th encountered great difficulties due to security threats. The forum was first planned on January 27th but none of the residents attended the meeting. Member of the city council Haji Khan Mohammad said: “Citizens are trying to attend the public meetings but they received a call from the Taliban threatening them to not attend those meetings organized by the government.” The Mayor of Sharana discussed in the meeting attended by 15 citizens the taxation issues and the city sanitation. He urged citizens to support GIROA and to attend the municipal meetings.

PROJECT CLOSING CEREMONEY

On January 6th, the Mayor of Sharana along with GIROA officials, including the Deputy Governor, celebrated the completion of the construction of the Sharana drainage ditch project. The drainage ditch construction began on August 20th 2010 and was completed on November 28th 2010 by 58 unskilled laborers and 13 skilled labors. This project is included in Sharana’s municipal master plan, based on the needs and specific interests of municipal citizens.



January 6th, Sharana. The drainage ditch completion ceremony was led by the Deputy Governor.

The drainage ditch construction provided an effective means for the drainage of rainwater and other effluent that used to accumulate in large areas alongside the road. The projects was executed in conjunction with municipal engineers and helped to develop their capacity to conduct similar projects in the future.

STAKEHOLDER & DONORS COORDINATION

On January 22nd, the Mayor of Sharana participated in a donor coordination meeting held at the Provincial Governor’s compound. The PRT donated more than \$4,000 for the maintenance of municipal vehicles. The Mayor requested the PRT to pay for extra numbers of cleaning laborers to support the solid waste management project.

RAMP-UP EAST – USAID COORDINATION

The USAID Activity Manager, the Sharana city Mayor along with RAMP-UP East held a joint coordination meeting on January 1st. The participants discussed the preparation of the drainage ditch project closing ceremony. The project was completed on November 28th but the Governor and Mayor proposed that the closing ceremony be delayed until a proper evaluation of the project quality is completed. The project was evaluated by an independent committee that approved the project handover.

KHOST MUNICIPALITY

Province: Khost

MUNICIPAL CAPACITY BUILDING

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

During the month of January, Khost Municipality Finance Officer undertook the following tasks as part of his on-the-job training:

- 1- Computerization of the municipal filing system and salary sheets;
- 2- Revenue generation income recording.

The officer also learned about performance based budgets and gained an understanding of the differences between ordinary and development budget structures.

Furthermore, the Municipal Engineer applied a learning-by-doing approach for small size projects design. These projects included measuring road dimensions, producing drainage ditch drawings, writing scopes of work and preparation of project work plans.

As citizens keep accusing the municipality of not paying attention to the city sanitation, RAMP-UP East helped the Municipality to develop an annual budget including funding for the trash collection project. The municipal officers for revenue generation, the solid waste project manager and others were tasked to collect the required information that would be incorporated in the new budget. The project will improve citizen's support to the Municipality and provide for a daily trash collection service and the ability to hire 50 additional laborers.

The Revenue Generation Department of Khost progressed towards the completion of the economic profile. The initial draft was shared with the Mayor on January 15th and he expressed his satisfaction with the outline of the profile.

The municipal Business Licensing Officer was also supported by RAMP-UP East to improve the business registration mechanism and make it faster and more systematic.

Finally, the Revenue Generation Officer received on-the-job training to prepare a new database as instructed by IDLG. Computerized entry of revenue data has begun at the Municipality with the use of MS Access software. RAMP-UP East provided practical training on the use of the software and assistance in entering the data in an accurate manner.



January 8th, Khost. RAMP-UP East helped the municipality improve the trash collection schedule.



January 22nd, Khost. The Mayor reviewed the municipal organizational chart.

CORE SKILLS TRAINING AND IMPACT

The Khost Municipality organizational chart was finalized and shared with the Mayor in January. The Mayor commented on the chart and was quoted as saying: “The chart helps me to get a clear idea about the vacant posts and to share this information with IDLG for job advertisements.”

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Mayor forms City Advisory Committee in Khost

On January 25th, the Mayor of Khost city along with 13 community representatives discussed the renovation of shops owned by the Municipality and tax collection. The municipal interest in improving public communications led to the formation of a Khost City Advisory Committee that was elected by the citizen forum participants.

Mayor Jahan Gull briefed the participants on the municipal achievements in December. He told citizens: “I’m sure you have noticed the improvement in the city cleanliness. The Municipality needs strong support from citizens to deliver services.”



January 25th, Khost. The citizen forum participants formed city advisory committee.

Businessman ██████████ told the Mayor: “The Municipality should register all businesses and renovate the municipal owned shops.” The Mayor explained that the Municipality will soon have a public-private partnership to renovate the Bazaar and to manage the shop rents.

During this meeting, participants criticized RAMP-UP East for not implementing public services projects that had been requested by citizens during the Municipal Improvement Plan discussions. The Public Engineering Department Head explained that the approval process for project funding takes some time to ensure the submitted documents are correct and that the project planning standards are adequate.

Finally, the community representatives nominated the Citizen Advisory Committee members who will meet with the Mayor on a regular basis.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

During the reporting period, the Mayor of Khost prepared the new fiscal year’s budget and submitted it to the Governor. The budget includes service delivery projects and public outreach activities. The Governor did not approve the proposed monthly municipal newsletter, even though the Mayor is supportive of it. The Governor formed a planning committee that approved the following municipal service projects:

- 1- Road repairs and maintenance;
- 2- Public park fence construction;
- 3- Housing project;
- 4- Drainage ditch construction in *Circular* city district;

STAKEHOLDER & DONORS COORDINATION

On January 20th, the RAMP-UP East team in Khost city and the PRT held a coordination meeting. It was proposed that RAMP-UP East provide technical support to the Municipality for the city solar light system proposed by the Mayor.



January 20th, Khost. Coordination meeting between US PRT and RAMP-UP East.

CENTRAL SUPPORT OFFICE MUNICIPAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Economic Development and Revenue Generation

During the month of January, RAMP-UP East supported municipalities with the preparation of economic profiles, review of IDLG's new template for Octrai tax collection, and technical support for business registration.

In Charikar, two survey teams were created with support from the Economic Development Unit. Both teams were trained in the use of survey instruments and data entry to register businesses in the Municipality for tax collection purposes.

Moreover, RAMP-UP East provided technical support to the municipalities of Khost, Assadabad and Maidan Shar for the development of their municipal economic profile.



Charikar. RAMP-UP East supported the new Business Registration Project

Finally, the Economic Development and Revenue Generation Unit reviewed IDLG's new tax collection form for the Octrai tax. The Octrai is a new type of tax on imported goods. RAMP-UP East will help municipalities to improve their tax collection mechanism to enable municipalities to achieve this task.

RAMP-UP East also plans to hold a workshop on tax collection methodologies in February, and will continue to support municipalities in the development of their economic profile.

Gender Mainstream Activities

In January, RAMP UP East's gender mainstreaming team conducted 3 sessions on basic introduction to gender. Twenty-four staff members of RAMP-UP East participated in the introductory sessions.

The objective of the sessions was to introduce the gender concept to the program staff and examine their reaction to and knowledge of gender issues. The gender mainstreaming team will incorporate and consider input and feedback from the participants into the training manual development.

These training sessions will be held for RAMP UP East's embedded advisors and municipal staff to ensure gender mainstreaming and integration of men and women in the decision making process of municipal projects.

Contracts, Grants & Compliance

As of the end of January there were a total of 13 service delivery/infrastructure projects being implemented, with a total value of about \$880K. In addition, consent was received in January from USAID for the following additional projects, valued at \$320K:

- 1- Automobile Parking Facility (Maiden Shar);
- 2- 240m Drainage Ditch Construction Project (Mahmud Raqi);
- 3- 600 Drainage Ditch Construction Project (Asadabad);
- 4- Solid Waste Disposal Enclosure Construction Project (Sharana).

During the month of January, work was initiated on the following service delivery/infrastructure construction projects, valued at \$260K:

- 5- Automobile Parking Facility (Maiden Shar);
- 6- 240m Drainage Ditch Construction Project (Mahmud Raqi);
- 7- Drainage Ditch Construction Project (Asadabad).

An investigation into allegations regarding the Ghazni Ada Kandahar Road Median Project was completed and the final report is being prepared. To improve oversight and avoid corruption, RAMP UP-East has employed a Compliance Auditor (Fraud Investigator) to assist in the monitoring and oversight of all projects and other RAMP UP East activities.