

**UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
AFGHANISTAN**

**NATIONAL INSTITUTION BUILDING PROJECT
2009-2013**

**MID-TERM EVALUATION
October 2012**



Ultimate beneficiaries of the NIBP

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Thanks to all CDAs, CDOs and other informants for their frankness and excellent cooperation. I promised all of them confidentiality. For that reason no names are mentioned. For sake of clarity I do here and there mention names of departments and ministries, and insiders of the NIBP project might easily know the name of the related CDA or CDO. For that reason I am only explicit on departments when the statements are constructive and if it doesn't affect personal security.

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Acronyms

| | |
|---------|--|
| ACSI | Afghanistan Civil Service Institute |
| ANDS | Afghanistan National Development Strategy |
| AWP | Annual Work Plan |
| CAP | Country Action Plan |
| CBRF | Capacity Development for Results Framework |
| CD | Capacity Development |
| CDA | Capacity Development Advisor |
| CDO | Capacity Development Officer |
| CDP | Capacity Development Plan |
| CPAP | Country Programme Action Plan |
| CSO | Central Statistic Organization |
| DAIL | Department of Agriculture Irrigation and Livestock |
| DMoI&M | Deputy Ministry of Information and Media |
| DMoYA | Deputy Ministry of Youth Affairs |
| DoLSAMD | Department of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled |
| GDPDM | General Director of Programs' Design and Management |
| GEP | Gender and Equality Project |
| GM | Gender Mainstreaming |
| GIRA | Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan |
| GoI | Government of India |
| IARCSC | Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission |
| ICCD | Interministerial Commission for Capacity Development |
| KOICA | Korea International Cooperation Agency's |
| LoA | Letter of Agreement |
| M&E | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| MAIL | Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation & Livestock |
| MIS | Management Information System |
| MoEc | Ministry of Economy |
| MoEd | Ministry of Education |
| MoLSAMD | Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled |
| MoTCA | Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation |
| MoU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| MoWA | Ministry of Women Affairs |
| NIBP | National Institution Building Project |
| NTP | National Training Policy |
| PAR | Public Administrative Reform |
| RRF | Resources and Results Framework |
| TOR | Terms of Reference |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNDAF | United Nations Development Assistance Framework |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Program |

Executive summary

The UNDP National Institution Building Project (NIBP, 2010-2013), provides Capacity Development (CD) support to the Government of Afghanistan at the national and sub-national levels. International Capacity Development Advisors (CDAs) and national Capacity Development Officers (CDOs) are placed in ministries and departments. A mid-term evaluation is conducted to assess progress and provide the UNDP senior management with insights in possible desirable changes and possible future interventions. Observations are made on:

1. Project achievements
2. The project framework
3. The primary process, or “work floor”: the roles of the CDAs and CDOs
4. Management, support and security issues

1. PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

In 2012 the NIBP has gained good momentum. In the second half of 2012 the number of learning events accelerated considerably, from about 20 in the second quarter to over 60 in the third quarter. The available data shows that trainees are in all cases grateful and do appreciate all training courses.

In the mid-term evaluation examples of immediate outcomes (use of learnings) were gathered (see par. 2.2). The responses suggest that the NIBP approach to capacity development is by and large effective, adaptable and hands-on, at least for as far as skill-development is concerned. The general low educational level of government staff makes it at times difficult to make fast progress. The high staff turn over in the ministries stresses the need for continuous skill development.

Some recommendations on skill development:

1. *When after a training trainees train other colleagues, a bigger impact will be achieved.*
2. *To enhance a culture of performance and further improve effectiveness in some cases it is worthwhile to consider to first train a group of civil servants in Kabul. Hereafter select the best achievers for a further training or exposure abroad. Different possibilities of “earning the training abroad” can be considered.*
3. *For some technical applications exposure visits are the most effective way of learning. In other cases training courses in which multiple lecturers or trainers are involved cannot be duplicated in Kabul.*
4. *Requests of Ministries for training abroad should be critically evaluated. CDAs are to develop a training justification note, how the training would benefit the current organizational or technical change process. To some extent this is already done.*
5. *For the participants in more expensive trainings consider to ask them to sign binding agreements. For the majority of the short-term training courses, however, this seems not to be necessary.*
6. *English language skills on sub-national level are in general low. For that reason sometimes a CDO accompanies the group to offer translation services. This is not always effective enough. Consider a “buddy system” in which a person who speaks English well is connected to one participant or to a small group of participants who don’t speak*

- English well. One-to-one is best, but in most cases there might be insufficient English language speakers.*
7. *Training options could be more extended to countries not involved in the twinning arrangements. For instance Turkey has strong knowledge on cold storage of agricultural products.*
 8. *In a few cases use of learnings require for instance a computer, or some laboratory equipment. Allow for limited material support in the next phase of the project.*
 9. *Train CDOs and CDAs in adult learning and learners' centres approaches. Dis-encourage training through excessive use of powerpoints. People forget 80 to 90 % of what they see and hear, and remember 80 to 90 % of what they discuss and apply.*

Gender

Since 2011 the project has made some progress on promoting gender equity. In 2011 NIBP organized several training sessions and workshops on Gender Mainstreaming and in the same year elements in policy documents were "gender rated". In 2012 the UNDP projects team and the Ministry of Women Affairs (MoWA) agreed to conduct an organizational audit on gender with the Departments. Recently NIBP employed a national gender expert, while the progress report of the 3rd quarter of 2012 for the first time presents gender segregated data.

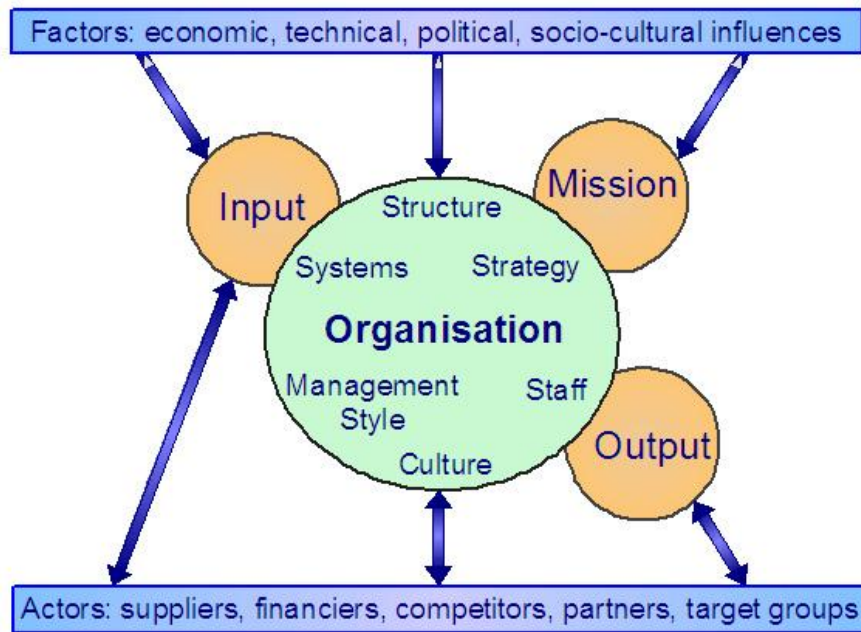
Much remains to be done: Recommendations:

10. *Analyze why female participation in some training courses is much lower than in other courses, and if possible address the issues. The national gender expert should take the lead in this analysis.*
11. *Recruit more female CDAs and CDOs*
12. *Provide gender mainstreaming training to CDAs, CDOs and to the national gender expert of NIBP.*
13. *Coach and follow up on the implementation of gender mainstreaming activities in the ministries. Follow up on the "gender rating" exercise done in 2011. Coordinate such efforts with relevant ministries like MoWA and development partners.*
14. *Start and promote "gender-budgeting".*

2. THE PROJECT FRAMEWORK

The NIBP project concept is unique in Afghanistan. It is a potentially powerful concept. NIBP stands for a comprehensive organizational Capacity Development effort. Interventions however are focused on skill development and policy advise. There are good examples of efforts to go beyond that, though not always as part of a structured approach. A holistic approach to capacity development is not absent, but is still to rare in NIBP.

I will use two simple models to illustrate this point. The following image depicts the Integrated Organizational model. It shows the elements of an organization in its relevant context.



Picture 2: The Integrated Organizational model

Organizations are organic entities. Everything is connected with everything, and must work together to make things work, what means helping an organization to achieve its mission. Focusing on a few elements only could be insufficient. For instance using learnings might be hampered by lack of equipment, or by lack of commitment, and so on.

The second model comes from change theory. Change theories describe different mechanisms mobilizing change, frequently mentioned in literature are: use of power, rational analysis, staff motivation and skill development. (For details see par. 3.3.3.) In real life all mechanisms co-exists, and different departments have different characteristics or “mixes”.

In the following table a first assessment is made of a general “required effort in Afghanistan” and the “level of effort in NIBP”. Rather than pretending to make an accurate judgment, the purpose of the following table is to illustrate the importance of more attention for change management.

| Mechanisms facilitating change | Required effort in Afghanistan | Level of effort in NIBP |
|--|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Power and politics | High | Medium (policy advice) |
| Rational analysis (for instance systems approach or Result Based Management) | High | Low to medium |

| | | |
|--------------------------|------|------|
| Staff motivation | High | Low |
| Skill development | High | High |

Table 5 NIBP efforts versus required change efforts

Every mechanism requires different competencies of the change agents (CDAs and CDOs), see par. 3.3.3. This informs recruitment policies. It is recommended to:

- 15. Engage in a Strategic Reflection in 2013 in order to prepare for the follow up of the current project*
- 16. Train CDOs and CDAs in organizational assessments and in change management*
- 17. Limit the amount of content for a training. The “boot camp” in September 2012 seems a bit overloaded. Go for quality and in-depth learning, rather than quantity.*
- 18. CDAs and CDOs to design change strategies as part of their CDPs / AWP, based on situational analysis*
- 19. Recruitment policy of CDAs and CDOs to be informed by the competencies required to implement such strategies. To some extent this happens already, but the underlying analysis could be made more explicit.*

Mapping the “donor landscape”

Worldbank (CBR project) and USAID are big players in Capacity Development of the Government of Afghanistan. There are many smaller others as well, often embedded in projects implemented through line-ministries. ICCD is coordinating these efforts. It is recommended to:

- 20. Map carefully who is happening in the CD playing field at the moment. Again, this is not completely absent in NIBP, but it could be wider shared and further detailed.*
- 21. Clarify the NIBP concept further and be specific on the added value of NIBP in the CD landscape. Every CDA and CDO should understand the unique added value of NIBP and be able to explain this to others.*

South-South cooperation

Another characteristic of NIBP is the south-south cooperation. At the moment NIBP is already extending collaboration with more countries, and 13 new CDAs are “in the pipeline”.

Asian cultural affinity is most of the time helpful. Sometimes though, a person from a different culture might note and discuss issues, which are part of the implicit worldview of Asian cultures. For instance when it comes to not questioning a paternalistic or a strongly hierarchical culture. This is not about disrespecting local culture, but rather to engage in a dialogue about the values UNDP /NIBP promotes, like an achievement oriented culture and more control of citizens over decisions which affect their lives.

It is recommended to:

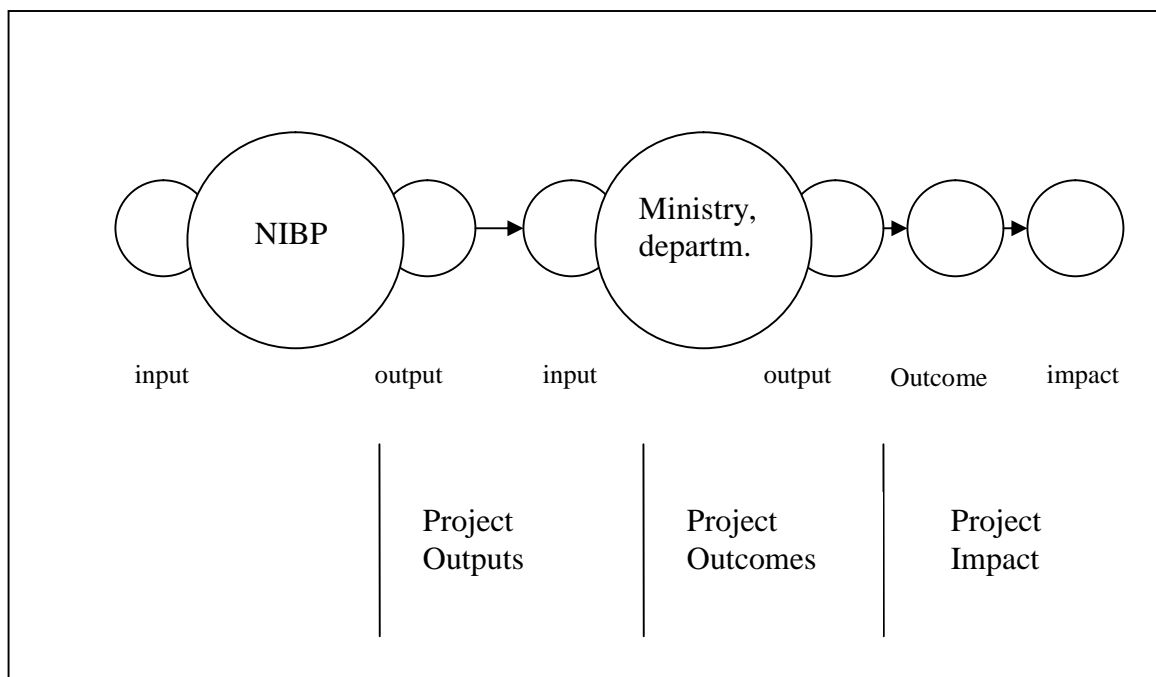
22. Continue with South-South co-operation, in order to live up to the Busan (2011) declaration.
23. Continue to be recruit CDAs mainly from Asian countries, while remaining aware of the cultural differences between Afghanistan and other Asian countries.
24. Focus more strongly on “content” countries have to offer. (For instance Turkey is competent in cool chains.)
25. Clarify to CDAs the values where UNDP and NIBP beliefs in, and how to promote these values. This can be a part of the strategic reflection mentioned before.
26. Continue to be alert on costs and possible alternatives in a context where twinning arrangements and MOUs might allow cutting bureaucracy and regular tendering procedures.

The project document

The Resources and Results Framework in the project document has serious flaws, which most likely influence donor support negatively.

- There are only broad intentions in the project document, moreover worded in pretentious language. Only in the CDPs and AWP objectives are made more specific.
- In the project document “improved capacity of a ministry” is called an output. This is in line with the UNDP prescribed terminology, but not in line with the world-wide accepted definition of an output.
- Changing the ultimate project purpose in a real output statement (like: “so many people trained”) however is likely to raise eyebrows from donors, who are interested in outcomes and sometimes even impact, rather than in outputs.

The following result chain might be useful:



Picture 1: Project result chain

It is recommended to:

- 27. To discuss the use of the terms output and outcome at the correct level and place within UNDP.*
- 28. Reviewing the current project document has already the highest priority within NIBP.*

The Capacity Development Plans

In 2011 6 CDPs were endorsed. These are almost everywhere considered to be NIBP CDPs instead of what they are, CDPs of the (deputy) ministries. NIBP implements a part of the CDPs, but not everything. On the quality of the CDPs:

- the description of the external environment or context is fairly comprehensive in all six plans. In 4 CDPs internal strategies are wrongly considered to be enabling environment.
- The description of the organization tends to be incomplete: by and large absent are: systems, culture, leadership and staff commitment.
- In the response-matrix activities are almost all about skill development (individual level), leaving out other dimensions of capacity development (apart from policy advice). The CDP of the DMoM&I is a positive exception.
- Scoring existing competencies on a scale from 1 to 5: In 2 CDPs this is done in a simple and general way. In the other four CDPs efforts are made to improve quality and objectivity in the scoring by breaking down the core issues in underlying elements, what is better practice.

Recommendations:

- 29. Clarify to relevant GIRA high level government officials what the CDPs are and what not. If adequate support GIRA in mobilizing additional support for implementing the CDPs.*
- 30. Make CDPs for the ministries and departments where CDPs are not yet available.*
- 31. Use existing assessments, but only as a secondary source. It is important that CDAs get engaged in a dialogue with the ministry for sake of understanding of the situation, and developing a sense of ownership by the Ministry.*

The One-Ministry Approach

A key component of the One-Ministry Approach is capacity development at sub-national levels. Service delivery typically happens at sub-national levels and skills at that level are typically weak. NIBP also hopes also to “bridge the gap” between national and sub-national levels, which seems to imply some decentralization of decision making within the given legal framework. Such decentralization is hampered by lack of competencies at sub-national level, lack of trust from the central level in sub-national level, and the strong hierarchical culture of Afghanistan.

NIBP has made some progress by placing CDOs and CDAs at sub-national level. The One-Ministry approach is spearheaded in MAIL and DAIL They engage for instance in skill-development and formulating proposals. There is a need for CDAs and CDOs (starting with MAIL

and DAIL) to improve their understanding of how the “bridge the gap” between the national and sub-national levels, within the given legal framework. Recommendation:

32. For 2013 choose for a more in-depth understanding of the One-Ministry approach in MAIL and DAIL, get a better understanding of:

- *the details of the related legal framework*
- *the annual government planning cycle*
- *the processes in defining core budgets*
- *the processes in defining development budgets*
- *the various departments and key actors involved*
- *issues and challenges*

Decentralization is not only about the relation between MAIL and DAIL. It is also about the relationships within DAIL, between the province and the districts, and the relationship with the farmers. Here are good opportunities for NIBP to show results, if it want to pursue this trail. The Director of DOLSA Herat for instance seems to be supportive for a more decentralized an achievement oriented organizational culture, and eventually structure.

Recommendation:

33. Engage DAIL and maybe DOLSA in a dialogue on introducing a more decentralized and service delivery oriented culture. I would recommend not to start talking about changing formal mandates and job-descriptions, but with changing practises.

Bridging the gap between national and sub-national levels implies that NIBP bridges that gap as well in its own structure. DAIL has already started to develop horizontal links between DAIL in Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif and Bamyan. Now the vertical links within NIBP should be strengthened.

Recommendation:

34. Form a team or working group with the CDAs and CDOs at MAIL and DAIL. Develop a common team vision and strategy. Meet and visit each other regularly.

35. After NIBP has strengthened its vision and strategy of the One-Ministry approach in MAIL-DAIL it is recommended to expand the One-Ministry Approach to other Ministries and Departments.

Sustainability of Capacity Development efforts

Capacity Development needs to be on ongoing affair. The NIBP projects has a limited life-span. The high level of salaries of CDOs makes it difficult for them to become permanent employed civil servants, at least with that salary. The director of IARCSC in Herat explained that the high salary of the CDO caused resentment and demotivation among his other staff.

Recommendations:

36. Strengthening the CD units in IARCSC and the HR directorates will help to sustain skill development efforts in the Government.

37. *Coordinate such efforts with what the Worldbank and USAID are doing and explore how they are dealing with the sustainability issue.*
38. *For some sensitive issues internal Capacity Development units might not be effective. External change agents are in a little better position to advise on sensitive subjects, provide they have sufficient respectability and do it adequately. Proper organizational analysis and clearer change management strategies will help clarifying the roles of the internal CD units and other CD providers like NIBP.*
39. *Maintain close coordination with ICCD as the Government's body overseeing and coordinate CD activities across Afghanistan.*
40. *An idea which came up during one of the conversations is to organize the CDOs in an independent organization providing Capacity Development services on demand. These services can than be hired by governments, UN agencies and other development partners.*

Sustainability of project entity

That there is a need for continued efforts to strengthen the capacity of the Government of Afghanistan is undisputed. It is therefore recommended

41. *to engage in a participatory strategic planning exercise in the first half 2013, to prepare for a follow up project. Such an exercise would be informed by UNDP's countries strategy and experiences and insights gained during the previous phases, including CAP.*

NIBP is an effective approach with even greater potential. At the beginning of NIBP in 2009 it was proposed that GDPDM would take over the implementation of the project after 6 months. So far this did not happen. The following became clear:

- For UNDP the project could serve as a model to bring more coherence in its currently too fragmented project approach.
- UNDP believes that currently IARCSC and GDPDM do not have sufficient capacity to implement the NIBP effectively and efficiently.
- NIBP is involved in a capacity development effort to strengthen IARCSC and GDPDM.

Recommendation:

42. *Try to agree with IARCSC and GDPDM on a realistic roadmap to achieve GIRA ownership, even if it is a long way ahead.*

3. THE PRIMARY PROCESS OR "WORK FLOOR": ROLES OF THE CDAS / CDOS

Roles of CDAs

Some of the Kabul based CDAs spend most of their time on organizing trips abroad and on advice and knowledge products. Most CDAs on central level focus more on the relation with the Minister and less on coaching of Middle Line Managers. The CDAs in Herat focus on skill development and in DAIL assist in writing project proposals.

Interviewees mentioned percentages between 20 % and 50 % of their time spend on capacity substitution. Capacity substitution only addresses only immediate needs. From the perspective of sustainability capacity substitution should be avoided as much as possible.

The requirements and tasks for a CDA are many. An ideal CDA is a competent technical expert, OD specialist, coach and trainer. Added to the difficulty of finding qualified people willing to work in Afghanistan, compromises seems unavoidable. It is recommended to:

- 43. do not compromise, but start to think differently. Start thinking in terms of teams or working groups in stead of persons. It will be easier to form teams or working groups with all the required competencies, than persons.*
- 44. NIBP has already started preparations for a proper induction for the CDAs. For instance*
 - The Afghan context: administration, civil service, culture*
 - UNDP procedures, role of NIBP and GDPDM*
 - Role of CDAs, CDOs, one Ministry Approach*
- 45. Introduce all CDAs and CDOs to their national counterparts, explaining roles etc.*
- 46. Provide organizational capacity development training*
- 47. Stop the CDAs spending excessive time on logistics. Provide alternative support.*

Roles of CDOs

The position of the CDOs is complicated.

- They work together with, sometimes under, sometimes independent from the CDAs.
- They are employed by GDPDM. The CDOs send their monthly worksheets there. GDPDM does the annual job-appraisals and conducts quarterly meetings with the CDOs.
- The formal line manager of the CDO is the Director or other high official in the ministry, who also signs the monthly worksheets.
- In the same time the CDO could be the advisor of – among others – his line manager.
- The CDO is paid from the NIBP budget, and appears in the NIBP organogram under the CDA. A common (mis-)understanding is that the CDAs are the line-managers of the CDO. This is believed by some CDAs, some CDOs and many government officials.

In a situation where there are more than one boss, there are three possible situations:

- the bosses coordinate well, or have systemized this coordination,
- the bosses at times send out conflicting messages or tasks (no examples of this were mentioned in this evaluation)
- all bosses think that other bosses take care, so as a result there is no boss. Quite a number of CDOs feel neglected and are floating without proper monitoring and supervision. CDOs submit their monthly activity report to GDPDM, but do not get feedback on these reports.

Recommendation:

- 48. Ensure proper supervision and monitoring of CDOs.*

It is recommended to pay attention to the following issues as well:

49. *The project budget does not allow for salary increases and compensation for increasing costs of living. Apart from that NIBP has already started a discussion about a achievement based grading pay-system.*
50. *CDOs (like the CDAs) get a generic job-description, and later sometimes in consultation with their line-manager, make a more specific and situational job-description. They are however appraised annually according the generic job-description, which does not always reflect the reality on the ground. This apparently caused one CDO in Herat to loose her job.*
51. *The appraisal formats do not have a section on improving performance. It is good practice that after looking into the performance of the CDO to agree on what improvements will be targeted, and how the CDO can be assisted to improve his or her performance.*
52. *The quarterly meetings deal more with administrative matters than with content. These meetings were not held regularly. CDOs placed outside Kabul are usually not able to attend these meetings.*
53. *Ensure a proper introduction of the CDO to the relevant authorities, explaining his/her position and responsibilities.*
54. *If a CDO is asked to do perform a certain task, he needs to reflect on possibilities to build the capacity of the requesting party to do it themselves in future.*

Potential of CDOs becoming future advisors of high officials

Currently an important task of the CDA is to advice high level government officials. We already mentioned that being a technical expert helps to build rapport. There is more aspects on building rapport and respectability or status, like:

- formal position (advisor to whom),
- informal position (relation with UN, influential people, control over funds and over other benefits)
- Attributed status (age, gender, religion, tribe, nationality, titles)
- Professional status (relevant competencies and effective work)

The CDAs in general have a higher status than CDOs because of most of these contributing factors, though the situation is different for every CDA and CDO. Maybe 10 to 20 % of the CDOs eventually might reach the desired level of respectability to be able to become the advisor of a minister or another high government official.

Recommendation:

55. *Changing the title of CDO in National CDA or Capacity Development Specialist will increase their status.*
56. *Put more effort in building the capacity of the CDOs*
57. *Take the current job appraisals of the CDOs as an entry point for their improving their performance. Suggest to GDPDM to Include a section on agreeing on improving performance in the appraisals.*
58. *Also generic trainings are recommended, like:*
 - a. *change management*
 - b. *conducting organizational assessments*
 - c. *conducting training need assessments*

- d. *defining training objectives and develop curricula*
 - e. *adult learning*
 - f. *competency based training*
 - g. *coaching skills*
59. *Encourage also self-learning. The internet is a rich source of relevant information.*
60. *It has been suggested that CDOs could more often share experiences and learn from each others. This will be useful, but is not really a game changer. I suggest to enhance the supportive professional context for the CDOs much closer to their actual working place. For instance by forming teams or working groups.*

Relationship between CDAs and CDOs

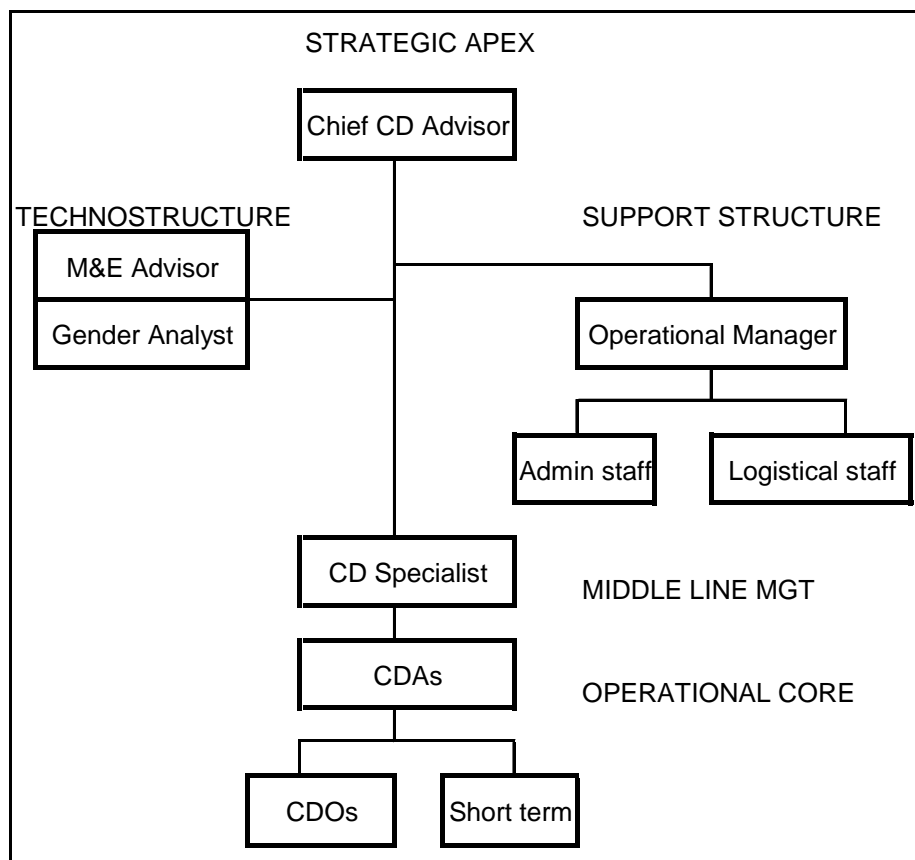
Some CDAs consider the CDOs to be their personal assistants, mainly due to lack of other logistical support. Other CDAs respect the CDOs in their own right and do ask them to provide logistical support. Again in other places CDOs and CDAs work together on equal footing as a team. NIBP needs a common and shared vision and strategy among the NIBP staff, and subsequently clarity on of the CDAs and CDOs and their relationship. In the same time it is acknowledged that one blue-print approach for all would not work. It is recommended that:

- 61. *In future CDOs and CDAs work together in teams or working groups, whenever possible.*
- 62. *To facilitate this transition training will be given on what working in a team or workinggroup means, and make first concrete steps towards forming teams or working groups.*
- 63. *Some recommended characteristics of these teams:*
 - *The team goal, the tasks they perform together, are defined in the plans: the capacity development plans and annual workplans.*
 - *Shared responsibility. There is no longer a hierarchy between CDAs and CDOs. They are mutual accountable. NIBP monitors team performance. If a team succeed, team members succeed together. If it fails, they fail together.*
 - *Team members have complementary skills. Some team members could have a specific Technical Advisory task, others more generic Capacity Development tasks and again others could have a coordination or supporting task. A suggestion from Barry: "An inventory of the resource/skills base within the project would be immensely interesting, constructive and help fill the gaps."*
 - *The required competences of teams inform the recruitment policy of NIBP.*
 - *Support functions will be adequately addressed. One possibility is that teams have a person (maybe from the tashkeel) for translation and logistical support. Another possibility is to place a person for admin and logistic support through the NIBP project in the provincial UNDP office. There will be related support budgets.*
 - *The common goal is always overriding individual responsibilities.*
 - *CDOs and CDAs can be member of more than one team. It is possible that the CDA at MAIL is also member of a team implementing the goals of a one-ministry programme team. In the provinces it is possible that one CDA (for instance stationed in Herat) is member of teams in various regions (for instance Bamyan, Herat and Mazar-i-Sharif). NIBP as a whole is of course also a team.*
 - *All teams communicate informally by different ways, and also meet regularly face-to-face to discuss progress. The frequency of such meetings is decided by the teams.*

64. *If forming teams is a bridge too far at this moment, NIBP can choose to form working groups in stead of teams. In a working group there is a stronger sense of individual responsibility rather than common responsibility. In a working group CDAs and CDOs still work together closely on a common task, but divide and coordinate the work.*

4. MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT ISSUES

The current project organogram is as follows:



Picture 10: NIBP organogram

The Strategic apex also includes the Country Director, the concerned Deputy Country Director , M&E advisor, the CD-specialist and layers in the UNDP hierarchy above the Chief CD advisor. The purpose of the “technostructure” is to improve the functioning of NIBP. At present the support structure is being expanded.

It is recommended to clarify roles and job-descriptions in the project office.

65. *Depict the CDOs in the organogram in a way that does not suggest a formal line management function within the NIBP project.*

66. The M&E expert designs and improves the M&E system and focuses on **evaluations and on outcome surveys**
67. Regular monitoring and supervision of **activities and outputs** to be done through the middle line management, as it is his task to monitor and supervise the CDAs.
68. When the project increases in size it might be wise to specialize top management roles further. In many organizations the CEO (here Sultan) focuses on external relationships and monitoring of project outcomes, and his deputy (here the middle line manager, Barry) is looking more inwards, in this case managing the CDAs and CDOs.
69. It is recommended to have two persons: one for Capacity Development, and one for middle line management functions.
70. In a small set-up like NIBP it is possible that roles are more fluid, and coordination mechanisms can be largely informal and only little regulated. Also the frequent R&Rs demand such team spirit.
71. CDAs are often from a more regularized and formal background, and it is advised to be clear to them on roles of senior management.

Another recommendation:

72. Expedite payment of salaries of CDOs. This issue came up during the evaluation and has already adequate attention.

One sub-national CDA mentioned that for a number of months he has not been able to get a table and a chair, partly due to the UN bureaucracy with all its checks and balances. This could compromise project efficiency.

Recommendation:

73. It is suggested that teams have limited discretionary budgets up to say USD 5,000. This will enable them to purchase for instance chairs, tables, computer, internet access, and so on. There needs to be sufficient checks and balances and NIBP has to comply with UNDP regulations, like the need for three quotations. Probably purchases could be approved in a team meeting (minutes to be made) and more than one team member will have to formally sign and approve the expenditure.

Project monitoring

Conceptual clarity on outputs, outcomes and defining better indicators, will enable a proper design of a monitoring system and improves insights in responsibilities and accountabilities. It is recommended:

74. To be modest and start with defining indicators for immediate outcomes (like so many people using acquired knowledge / skills).
75. Ensure that clear learning objectives are set for all learning events (like training courses) to be able to compare achievements with set goals
76. Collect personal achievements stories with a picture a name, description of the learning event and how it changed practises and lives, and include these in t reports to the donors.
77. Start follow up surveys or tracing studies for selected learning events to measure immediate outcomes.

Security:

NIBP has the idea of combining international and national experience to cover provinces, including insecure parts of the country. While frequently unable to put internationals on the ground, because of security considerations NIBP hopes to be able to channel their expertise through CDOs. CDOs are national staff. Associating themselves openly with the UN (what would enhance their status) could increase their security risk.

Not all CDAs work in a MOSS compliant environment. The CDA in the Ministry of Education is offered a proper place, but that is far away from his national counterpart, the Chief of Staff, and transport services in the project are limited.

The UN or NIBP prescribes some CDAs to be in the office for maximum 4 hours only. This compromises efficiency and in a few cases respectability. The rule is meaningful for ad-hoc presence, but it loses rapidly validity as soon as patterns emerge, as attacks are usual planned well ahead. In one interview it became apparent that limited presence decreased respectability and support for the NIBP employee. If strong local embedment enhances security, then it is conceivable that compromising such local support might compromise security.

Recommendations:

- 78. Discourage CDOs to openly associate themselves with the UN, or at least do it with caution, for security reasons.*
- 79. CDOs are formally not UN employees, their security comes more from local embedment. To what extent that policy can be followed in more insecure regions needs more reflection. Wise decisions (travel in a UN car or not, go for UN security, or try to blend in) are always situational as well.*
- 80. Continue to make efforts in making the CDAs work in a MOSS compliant environment.*
- 81. Suggest the UN security staff to re-evaluate the 4 hour rule applicable for some CDAs for regular presence in ministries.*

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Enhancing good governance, responsive to the need of the Afghan citizens is one of the top priorities of the Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRA). The National Institution Building Project (NIBP) (2010-2013, provides Capacity Development (CD) support at the national and sub-national levels. The impact would be better budget utilization, rationalized organization structures and well-trained civil servants, which would result in improved service delivery. In the NIBP Capacity Development Advisors (CDAs) and national Capacity Development Officers (CDOs) are placed in selected government entities. At national the CDAs provide coaching and advisory services for institutional strengthening, organizational reforms and skills development. At the sub-national level, the focus of CD is to enhance the planning, implementation and monitoring capacity within the provincial departments of ministries/agencies.

A mid-term evaluation is conducted to measure the project relevance, progress and effectiveness and how the project is developing the public administration reform (PAR) management and coordination capacity of the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission (IARCSC). The result of the mid-term evaluation will inform the project and UNDP senior management on future interventions of UNDP in the Capacity Development and national institutions building area.

1.2 Key stakeholders

Key stakeholders are:

- Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission
- General Director of Programs' Design and Management

Ministries in which NIBP is engaged at the national level include:

- Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation & Livestock;
- Ministry of Education;
- Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled;
- Central Statistic Organization
- Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation;
- Deputy Ministry of Youth Affairs
- Ministry of Communication (media) and Culture
- Ministry of Communication and IT
- Ministry of Mines
- Ministry of Economy
- Ministry of Justice
- Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
- Ministry of Public Health
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

The last eight ministries are new partners, with whom NIBP has started to engage already. Sub national partnerships are occurring Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation & Livestock in the provinces of Bamyan, Herat, and Mazar e sharif; and in Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled in the province of Herat. NIBP's sub national presence with the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission is in Jalalabad and Mazar e sharif.

1.3 Objectives and scope of the Mid-term evaluations

According the ToR The mid-term evaluation has the following objectives (summarized, see Annex 1 for the ToR):

- To examine to what extent the project has achieved the intended outputs, outcomes and impact.
- To analyze underlying factors influencing project achievements.
- To identify lessons learned and recommend further interventions.

In the ToR the objectives of the mid-term evaluations are defined in terms assessing the outputs, outcomes and impact of the project, and underlying factors. The original evaluation matrix (questionnaires) therefore focuses almost exclusively on this result chain. (See annex 2).

The project document does not quantify outputs and outcomes. During the inception phase of the evaluation it became clear that this is to some extent done in the Capacity Development

Plans (CDPs) and Annual Work Plans (AWPs). A re-assessment of the capacity of the ministries following the same procedures as when formulating of the CDPs would then be the closest one can get in measuring and quantifying the project achievements in terms of the outputs and outcomes.

During the inception phase it was decided not to engage in this task at this moment. The priority is to use the results of the mid-term evaluation for re-designing the approach and improve effectiveness and efficiency of project design. To make best use of the limited time set aside for this evaluation, it was decided to explore outputs and outcomes to some extent only and focus more on project-design and underlying factors.

1.4 Evaluation team and methodology

The Evaluation Team was composed of one independent international consultant (Dr. Martien van Asseldonk) and one independent national consultant (Mr. Arif Kamawi). The evaluation was carried out through:

- Interviews (see annex 3 for persons interviewed)
- Focused Group Discussions (see annex 3 for persons who attended FGDs)
- Desk study (see annex 4 for documents read)

As a rule the international consultant conducted interviews in English with English speaking informants (CDAs, CDOs, key GIRA and project officials), while the national consultant at the same time conducted parallel interviews in Dari with non-English speaking informants, usually lower level GIRA employees and past trainees.

During the inception phase a selection of key informants and evaluation schedule was made (see annex 5) keeping in mind the limited timeframe. It was considered to visit both Herat and Mazar-i-Sharif sub national project activities. The schedule would have been tight. Keeping in mind the security situation in Afghanistan, and the risks of cancelled flights, it was decided to visit only Herat, where more CDAs and CDOs are working than in Mazar-i-Sharif. The CDA positioned in DAIL in Mazar-i-Sharif was asked to come to Herat instead. This arrangement allowed for more in-depth-discussions, and deeper understanding of issues, than a schedule with visiting both Herat and Mazar-i-Sharif would have allowed.

1.5 Structure of this report

Chapter 1 is the introduction. Hereafter the mid-term evaluation report assesses and gives recommendations on:

Chapter 2: Project achievements

- Efficiency and effectiveness of training
- Project outcomes
- Gender

Chapter 3: The project framework

- The project concept
- The Institutional setting
- The project document
- The Capacity Development Plans
- Theory of Change

Chapter 4: The primary process: the CDAs and CDOs

- Current perceptions and roles of CDAs
- Current perceptions and roles of CDOs
- Relationship between CDAs and CDOs
- The one-ministry approach
- Sustainability
- A standardized approach

Chapter 5: Management, support and security issues

2. Project Achievements

Due to some managerial issues beyond control of the NIBP project staff the project outputs between mid 2011 and March 2012 had decreased for a period of time. Thanks to the efforts of NIBP Chief Capacity Development Advisor and acting Programme Director, Mr. Sultan Hajiyeu, and his team the project could continue and started moving again after March 2012. Since then considerable progress has been made.

It was decided to focus in this evaluation on the present and explore the near future, rather than digging excessively into the past. I do mention the crisis here shortly, because it is important to understand the past, not to use it as an excuse, but to properly understand the present and deeper appreciate the progress made in 2012.

2.1 TRAINING AND OTHER LEARNING EVENTS

Capacity Development efforts done in the NIBP are mostly done through training and exposure visits, and to a lesser extent through coaching and mentoring, and knowledge products like policy papers. The number of training programmes in NIBP has increased from about 20 in the second quarter to over 60 in the third quarter. The available data shows that trainees are in all cases grateful and do appreciate all training courses. By and large CDAs and CDOs choose not to be involved in the selection process of trainees.

2.1.1 Recommendations

- In some cases (MAIL, Saffron, DOLSA) trainees are asked to cascade, to train others, to achieve a bigger impact and enhance efficiency. This is good practice, which can be followed more broadly.
- Exposure visits and training abroad are expensive. It would cost two to three times as much to send a group of 20 trainees to India for two weeks, than to get two qualified Indian trainers to Kabul to do the same training. In terms of efficiency this is not money wisely spent.
- On the other side for some technical application learnings exposure visits are the most effective way of learning. In other cases training course in which multiple lecturers or trainers are involved of course cannot be duplicated in Kabul. Another consideration to be kept in mind is the UNDP policy of not allowing more than 5 external experts in the country at one time.
- Some interviewees suggested that the number of participants selected for training abroad should be in proportion of the size of the department or unit. I do not agree, relevance and commitment are more important. This is not about sharing the (DSA) cake but about improving the functioning of the Ministry. Capacity Development is primarily about what participants can “give” to the development of Afghanistan, and only secondarily what one can “take”. Ideally the two coincide and are often entangled.
- An exposure visit can be a life-changing experience and add to motivation, broaden world-view and enhance conceptual understandings in many ways. These changes are not always easy to make explicit and by and large escape benefit-for-money calculations. In the same time the organizational development of the ministries remains the primary focus, not the personal experience and personal benefits. Requests of Ministries for training abroad should therefore be critically evaluated.
- One model which might be applicable in some cases is to first train a group of Civil servants in Kabul. For the same money spent for sending 20 persons abroad 40 to 60 could be trained in Kabul. Hereafter select the best achievers for a further training or exposure abroad. This system enhances efficiency, and also promotes a culture of achievement. It might motivate participants of the training to study and work harder, and it avoids “political nominees” for trips abroad.
- There are basically two reasons why civil servants would ask for a certain training: to improve their work or to enhance their personal career. Most of the time these interests run parallel, and then there is no problem. If the civil servant is asking for training without relevance for his current position, then that is not acceptable. In NIBP this is given some attention. The training need assessments are sufficiently detailed, often the line managers are asked for the training needs in his department, rather than his subordinates, and with training requests, justifications which this training is needed are usually required.
- In a response to the first draft of this evaluation report the project leader, Mr. Sultan Hajiyeve, recommended CDAs to develop a training justification note in all instances, explaining how the training would benefit the current organizational or technical change

process. If the proposed training is not justifiable enough to intervene/contribute in the change process, such training can be eliminated.

- For the participants in more expensive trainings and exposures consider to ask them to sign binding statements, promising to stay in the Afghan Civil Service for a certain minimum period of time, at a certain penalty. This has to be in harmony with Afghan law. For most short courses this is considered unnecessary.
- One CDA suggested that for the training to be more effective, the trainees should be allowed by the government to continue in their position for a certain amount of time. This would be difficult to demand, because the GIRA looks at it HR demand from a much wider perspective, and such wider concerns usually rightfully overrun individual concerns.
- English language is an issue. Efforts are made to give more civil servants from sub-national level the opportunity to travel abroad for exposure visits. English language skills on sub-national level are in general lower than at the central (Kabul) level. For that reason often a CDO accompanies the group to offer translation services. A number of interviewees mentioned that this is not always effective enough and that they could not understand enough. Consider a “buddy system” in which a person who speaks English well is throughout the visit connect to a participant (or a small group of participants) who doesn’t speak English well, with the purpose of providing translation support. This might imply including more English speaking trainees familiar with the technical jargon in the group, if these are available.
- Training options could be stronger extended to countries not involved in the twinning arrangements. For instance Turkey has strong knowledge on cold storage of agricultural products.
- In a few cases training doesn’t make much sense without removing inhibiting factors in applying the learnings, for instance a computer for making a data-base, or some laboratory equipment.
- Methods and quality of training or content delivery vary. Encourage adult learning and learners’ centres approaches. Dis-encourage training through powerpoints. People forget 80 to 90 % of what they see and hear, and remember 80 to 90 % of what they discuss and apply. Train CDAs and CDOs in effective training methodologies.
- Some donors fund internships at IARCSC in Herat for a period of six months. Internships could be a modality of building competencies which could be more broadly applied.
- Another learning event could be organizing stake-holder consultations. Another possibilities are trade fairs.

2.1.2 Some specific requests

In MAIL and CSO some specific request were mentioned.

- MAIL asks for support in organizing trade fairs
- MAIL asks for support in setting up their unit for Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures. This is crucial for food safety and also for promoting the export of Afghan agricultural products. For the time being this unit is stationed in the MIS unit of MAIL.
- MAIL wants to create a knowledge management system. Register what people have learned.
- CSO: The training which we have obtained a couple of weeks ago in India supported by NIBP, for total 13 days, was based on Basic Economic Statistics in Trade and Industries. But we need some more trainings and with longer period in other sectors which we work on.
- CSO: We request for a specialist advisor, who could guide us in data collection and conducting surveys both in rural and urban areas in Afghanistan.

This list of training requests is not exhaustive. Many more requests are shared with the CDAs and CDOs and incorporated in the annual plans.

2.2 Project outcomes

2.2.1 Information on outcome in project documents

As mentioned before the implementation of NIBP was put on hold from mid 2011 to early 2012. In the course of 2012 the project gained momentum again. The number of training courses for instance increased from about 20 in the second quarter to over 60 in the third quarter.

The annual and quarterly progress report contain hardly any information on outcome and impact level. These documents report on activities and outputs only. A system of more systematically monitoring and collecting evidence of outcomes is being developed by NIBP at this moment, by a newly recruited M&E expert.

2.2.2 Examples of outcomes gathered through interviews

To gather information on outcomes (use of what training participants learned) most interviewees were asked to give concrete examples of outcomes (a statement like “I now know filing systems”, doesn’t count, but a statement like: “after the training I improved the filing system” does, etc.)

A few examples of outcomes:

- Some CDAs have build excellent rapport with high level officials, and were able to contribute significantly to policy development. This illustrates the potentially enormous impact of NIBP on governance in Afghanistan.

- An informant at MAIL said: “We went for a 10 days training in India on Dairy Technology. In Kabul we have a machinery plant, for producing dairy food from milk, which is run by a union of milk sellers. Now that we learnt new dairy techniques, we can share these with the people who work in this plant. We can train them on techniques like testing milk density for pricing milks per its quality. We can also advise people who have animal farms and sell milk on new technology on feeding and caring of cows etc... This way the citizen will benefit from quality dairy food.” (Not really an outcome yet, as they used verbs like “we can share”, and “will benefit”, and not “we have shared”, and “have benefitted”.)
- A CSO: “We obtained training on the compilation of the GDP in India. We learnt how to report on quarterly compilation of GDP in India, which we have practically started recently in Afghanistan.”
- The director of DAIL gave a number of examples of outcomes:
 - o A monitoring checklist was developed
 - o Job descriptions have been improved
 - o A policy document is translated in Dari
- On exposure visits he mentioned that after visit to IRRI (Philippines), DAIL is now operating a hotline for farmers. The farmers get a telephone number which they can dial for asking questions. This idea comes from the exposure visit.
- Department of Education Herat: “A CDA conducted a workshop on writing a concept note. Now we do it, we wrote a concept note on the first National Education Best Practices Conference in December 2012.”
- Department of Education Herat: “We got advices of CDO on planning and organizing trainings on Gender as ToT for teachers in schools in districts, which were very effective. Now were able to design and organize Gender Awareness trainings on our own with his assistance on more effective way; and we provide trainings to teachers with his support.”
- Department of Education Herat: “We are still benefitting from the CDO that he taught us. For example, writing proposal was not an easy task for us – we just heard the name of proposal; but since we learnt it from him, it brought a lot of changes in our work. We have currently worked on a proposal for one of project in our department, and he still gives us advices on it.”
- The department of Education in Herat also got IT training and are now using internet and skype.
- The Publication Officer of the department of Education in Herat was coached in organizing coordination meetings and composing an Agenda, and does this now without support from others.

- The Economic Directorate in Herat was trained in making overviews of quarterly project expenses in Excel and are now doing this.
- The Economic Directorate in Herat in 2011 was coached in making the Provincial Development Plan. In 2012 much less coaching was needed.
- The CDO at IARCSC advised the direct to include the line “women are highly encouraged to apply” at all job announcements. This suggestion is implemented.

On the downside:

- Two directors at sub-national level mentioned: “to see outcomes needs a little more time, the educational level of out staff is rather low.”
- Another exposure visit of DAIL was to India, where a factory producing agricultural machinery was visited. This visit did not lead to practical applications in Herat.
- In some cases lack of a computer was mentioned as an obstacle to apply learnings, for instance in maintaining a database.
- Some trained staff have left. Sometimes the training increased their range of job-opportunities. Good for them, bad for the departments. Due to high staff turnover, there is a need to keep on training.
- DAIL Herat: “Basic level of education is low. Slowly more younger and smarter persons are being employed coming in. Capacity Development with them is more effective. For instance the head of the Planning Dept was an elderly person, not listening and learning much. Now he is replaced by a younger person and his successor uses the results of the training giving to him much more. He is also good in English and better in donor relations. “

The list of project outcomes is by far not complete, but it allows for some general conclusions. The responses suggest that the NIBP approach to skill development is by and large effective, adaptable and hands-on. Training and coach happens at all levels from the Minister up to the office assistant on sub-national level. That trained people leave is not a loss for Afghanistan, as long as they do not go abroad. It emphasis the need for continuous Capacity Development efforts and need for sustainability of Capacity Development services.

2.3 GENDER

2.3.1 The project document

Gender equity is a cross cutting subject and its importance has been recognized by both UNDP and GIRA. The ambition of the NIBP project was to develop and implement a Gender Mainstreaming Strategy , with the objective of:

- To bring about empowerment of female civil servants; and
- To facilitate gender mainstreaming in ministries and agencies.

This was planned to be achieved through

- direct coaching of female civil servants and
- advising high level government officials like ministers on bringing about gender mainstreaming in government ministries and agencies.
- by helping in making the policies and procedures of the ministries and agencies, where CDAs are placed, gender sensitive and gender responsive.
- help and advise in preparing gender specific policies and documents, such as Gender Action Plans, for the respective ministry or agency.
- reserving slots for women in each training programme
- by having specific programmes designed especially for female civil servants.
- A gender segregated database to be developed in the ministries/agencies.

2.3.2 Where the project is at this moment

So far the project has made limited progress on promoting gender equity. On the up-side:

- In 2012 NIBP employed a national gender expert, based in the project office in Kabul
- In 2011 NIBP organized several training sessions and workshops on Gender Mainstreaming in ministries/agencies to educate senior management and encouraged them to address gender concerns in their policies and strategies.
- In 2011 elements in policy documents are “gender rated” to measure the relevance for gender mainstreaming. This was done for the draft National Youth Policy of DMOYA, National Strategic Plan of MoLSAMD, National Policy for Child Labor, National Saffron Policy of MAIL, National Transport policy of MoTCA, National Strategy on integration of Sport and Physical Education with School Curriculum and ICT Policy for School Education in Afghanistan.
- In 2011 26 female civil servants from different ministries/agencies were trained during Korea International Cooperation Agency’s (KOICA) training in 2011 and similarly hundreds were trained in other national and international trainings.
- In 2012 the UNDP projects team and the Gender and Equality Project (GEP) in the Ministry of Women Affairs (MoWA) agreed to conduct an organizational audit to assess

the readiness and preparedness of sub-national agencies in terms of mainstreaming gender with the Departments.

- The 2012 annual report for the first time presents gender segregated data on female participation in training courses. Participation of women in a number of courses has been between 20 to 35 %.
- Every minister has a Kindergarten facility for female employees. In 2012 NIBP supported training of Kindergarten Managers at various ministries, to improve the functioning of this facility.
- IARCSC Herat mentions the following pro-active measure to encourage higher levels of female civil servants. The law prescribes 30 % of the civil servants to be female. In reality the figure is around 15 %.
 - In job advertisements we write: "Women are encouraged to apply." This is a suggestion of the CDO of NIBP.
 - If equally qualified women are given preference.
 - Provide child-care is provided in all Ministries. Child bearing mothers get three months paid maternity leave.
 - There is department for hearing complains, placed in CSC. If the complain is about sexual harassment we organize for a woman to hear the complain. There is also a Conflict and Solution Department with very capable female staff. Women can also directly complain there.
 - USAID and HELP both fund a internship programme mainly for females in IARCSC Herat. The internship lasts 6 months, and internees get a certificate.

On the downside:

- Female participation in a number of training course (for instance at MAIL / DAIL) is still zero or close to zero.
- Recruitment of CDAs and CDOs has been male dominated. At the moment there are 2 female CDAs and 3 female CDOs only. In Afghanistan it is very difficult or impossible for a male CDA or CDO to coach a female civil servant.
- The annual report of 2011 mentions gender rating of policy documents, but doesn't mention subsequent activities promoting gender equities in these policies.
- In some NIBP training programmes women were trained in separate groups, and not in mixed groups with men. Training in mixed groups sends out a stronger signal on what gender mainstreaming means. Obviously purpose of the training and cultural constraints of course need due consideration.

- There is no common understanding of what Gender Mainstreaming in Capacity Development means. For training it implies for instance:
 - o The gender expert of NIBP needs more training in gender.
 - o Representation of women, rather than treat them as a separate group
 - o Ensuring an enabling environment for women to participate (timing, location, protection.)
 - o Trainer to be gender sensitive, encourage active participation of women, use gender sensitive language, for instance he/she, him/her language
 - o Training material to be “genderized”. Avoid stereotyping of roles, in examples, not only pictures of man, etc.
- There is no gender budgeting done in the project document.
- Participation of female participants in overseas trainings and exposures is hampered by culture. Many families object to women to go out, especially out of the country, without having a close relative / male with her (husband, father or brother).

2.3.3 Recommendations

- Provide gender mainstreaming training to CDAs, CDOs and to the national gender expert of NIBP.
- Coach and follow the implementation of gender mainstreaming activities in the ministries (possibilities: gender focal points, “a gender endorsement” system for policy documents.)
- Coordinate such efforts with relevant ministries like MoWA and development partners.
- it is recommended that the gender focal point of NIBP meets regularly with the CDAs and CDOs to discuss with them possibilities to increase for instance participation of women in training courses. There are many different reasons for non-participating which need to be discussed and understood first. Hereafter pro-active measures could be considered.

3. Project Framework

3.1 Project concept

In this chapter we describe and comment on the basic NIBP project concept. The One-Ministry Approach evolved later (2011 or 2012) and will be discussed later in this report.

3.1.1 Perceptions of the concept

The NIBP project concept is unique in Afghanistan. The long term presence of CDAs and CDOs in various ministries at various levels provides opportunities for capacity development which are not possible in more traditional capacity development efforts (providing physical means and training).

The most important added value is on-the-job coaching and mentoring at both policy development level and implementation level. This is a powerful CD mechanisms in which NIBP is achieving unique results.

There is still insufficient understanding of the principle that NIBP is a organizational Capacity Development effort. Coaching at policy and implementation levels can be part of it, but only after vision, organizational constraints and external actors and factors are mapped and understood in a comprehensive framework, including a sound understanding of how to make change happen. The Organizational assessments and CDPs are meant to do just that, but most CDPs are inadequate and focus almost solely on skill development. In MAIL restructuring became a topic of discussion between the CDA and senior officials later. It was not included in the CDP. There are no references to theories of change.

Coaching and mapping at implementation level at request of GIRA officials (maybe through mapping of training and skill development needs, or ad-hoc at requests) as frequently happens in the NIBP project lacks the essence of organizational Capacity Development, that is helping organizations as an organic entity to realize its mission and vision.

3.1.2 Institutional setting

The Director General of Extension & Agricultural Development, stressed the need for NIBP to coordinate the training and Capacity Development efforts with other players like the Worldbank and USAID. Some staff of MAIL are already “capacitated” by others and duplication should be avoided. The most important actors at the moment are:

The Worldbank at the moment is rolling out a large Capacity Development for Results Framework (CBRF) programme (budget of around 350 million USD). In this budget 30 million is earmarked for skill development, other budget lines are for topping-up salaries of high level civil servants. Ministries are clustered in 3 groups according level of capacity, and the level of assistance varies for each group.

USAID is supporting skill development in 16 ministries. Existing and desired competencies were mapped and skill development activities organized.

Noteworthy is also the initiative of HELP (from Germany) in developing and sponsoring 6-months Foundation Courses for civil servants in Afghanistan.

No doubt there are many more smaller initiatives, often embedded in projects implemented through line-ministries.

The Interministerial Commission for Capacity Development (ICCD) of the Ministry of Economy has the task of coordinating all these capacity development efforts, and maintains a database. As a part of their work they gather also all assessment reports. The capacity of ICCD is said to be still weak. A CDA has recently joined the Ministry of Economy, which is running the ICCD. and one CDA of NIBP is stationed there.

3.1.2 South-South co-operation

Cultural affinity

The project has been praised by various interviewees for its characteristics. First of all: coaching, mentoring and training is provided mainly by Asian CDAs.

Dr. Geert Hofstede defined four dimensions of culture: level of acceptance of power distances, level of collectivity, level of masculinity and level of uncertainty avoidance. Cultures of many nations are measured on these dimensions and scores are widely available on the internet. Scores are national averages, but cultural differences do exist within countries (rural-urban, young-old, different ethnic groups).

Comparing Afghanistan with for instance a close neighbor like India shows that both nations have a strong hierarchical culture. In both nations the “boss” is seen to be the patron - the society is based on patronage from the one most powerful. The boss might for instance be asked for loans for the family of the employee and many other favors not usually considered appropriate in the west. NIBP has to decide if it wants to participate in the patronage system, or prefer to ignore it. (One solution which worked well for a foreign company who has worked for almost 15 years in Afghanistan was to establish a fund managed by senior trustworthy Afghan nationals to for when Afghan employees came asking for loans.)

Both countries score somehow medium on collectivity versus individuality. In both cultures families are very important. Afghans having a strong sense of belonging to clans and less with larger social entities. In both countries honor and avoiding “shaming” is important.

Afghanistan culture is more masculine than Indian culture. Afghanistan scores high, India medium. In stronger masculine countries self-esteem and respect from others are more important. This implies that men are more reluctant to take on roles usually done by women. This has an impact on the gender aspects of the NIBP program.

Usually in countries in war or in a post-war situation people are less able to deal with more uncertainty and anxiety. This translates in a emotional need for strong leadership, clear rules and directions and uniform concepts. This to some extent is also true for Afghanistan and less so in India.

What this short exploration illustrates is:

- being from the same region does not imply sharing the same culture in all aspects, but it helps, cultural differences between Afghanistan and western countries are bigger
- being from the same region could also mean sharing the same patronage system and maybe other elements, which managers from the west might consider unhelpful.

Political commitments

There are also political reasons to promote South-South co-operation. Since the formulation of the Millennium Development Goals in 2000 nations have been meeting regularly to discuss financing modalities and improving aid effectiveness. The Paris Declaration in 2005 (see annex 6) stressed ownership by national governments, Capacity Development of governments and alignment of development partners. Recently in Busan (South Korea) (annex 7) many of the earlier commitments were reinforced, and an effort was made to go beyond the traditional developed and developing countries dichotomy. A number of previous poor countries are now middle income countries, and in Busan nations committed themselves to promote south-south cooperation, maybe not always in financial terms, but especially in terms of providing technical assistance and sharing of experiences. The NIBP project concept of employing / contracting CDAs mainly from Asian countries fits well in the Busan declaration.

3.1.3 CDAs from the civil service

CDAs who come from the civil service are better able to advise the Afghan Government officials than CDAs without civil service experience, because of they understand better how bureaucracies work. This is true and in the same time also needs some nuances:

- Understanding how bureaucracies work can be explained as understanding the related values and culture, which are similar to the national cultures already discussed.
- One can also look at it from a professional perspective. Bureaucracies work through – sometimes a bit excessive – systems. This could be useful background experience. The past CDA in MoTCA for instance designed and tried to improve systems. This is not done by many CDAs significantly. In that aspect potentially beneficial civil service experience might remain still untapped.
- Another task of a CDA is to be a “change agent”. The NIBP approach is “friendly lobbying” rather than “rocking the boat”. I believe that this is a wise choice in the Afghan context. Some, but not all civil servants are good lobbyists.
- To build rapport it helps if the CDA is a good technical expert.
- Yet another task is to do organizational assessments, in which most CDAs are not trained.
- Mentoring, coaching and training are other tasks CDAs are supposed to do, and which do not come naturally with civil servants.

The conclusion is that

- Good technical experts from the (Asian) civil service are needed

- CDAs are given also many tasks which do not naturally come with a civil service background

The requirements and tasks for a CDA are too many to find easily in one person. Added to the difficulty of finding qualified people willing to work in Afghanistan, compromises seems unavoidable.

3.1.4 Twinning arrangements

An interesting feature of the projects are the twinning arrangements and MOUs between various Afghan Ministries with Line ministries in other countries. MOUs and Twinning arrangements might be worked out in various ways. In some cases a certain country provides budget support to the NIBP project and in return the NIBP / GIRA buy capacity development support from the same government (CDAs, exposure visits, etc.).

In the board meeting on 23rd July 2012 David Akopyan, Deputy Country Director, mentioned to the board members and a number of potential donors plans to expand the project at the sub-national level, while expanding (largely South-to-South) collaboration to governments of Switzerland, South Korea, Poland, Italy, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Singapore, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, among others.

NIBP combines MoUs with standard contractual procedures of UNDP (e.g. the RFP for Leadership training; LTA with ITC). This enhances efficiency and cuts bureaucracy. According the NIBP management the costs of trainings in India have at average been lower than similar trainings elsewhere.

3.1.5 Recommendations

Beyond the need for coordination with for instance the Worldbank and USAID there is also the need for NIBP to strategically position itself. To prove that it has an added value besides these bigger players. To be able to do that, it is recommended that:

- NIBP maps the “playing field”, who are the current players and what are they doing in the field of capacity development
- NIBP further develops its concept, proving its added value
- NIBP provides clearer conceptual clarity to its CDAs and CDOs.

To some extend this is done already, but it could be further elaborated and shared.

NIBP’s current efforts to expand collaboration and twinning arrangements are recommendable. NIBP could be more pro-active and clear what it wants to get out of a twinning arrangements with certain nations..

Competency based recruitment has been there from the start of NIBP. It is very difficult to find CDAs with all the required competencies: being a technical expert as well as a Capacity Development expert. For that sake compromises have been made. In stead of employing for

instance an expert on education a person who worked in the Ministry of Education was selected as the best possible choice. Increasing the number of collaborating countries would improve the “resource pool” to select from.

My recommendation is not to compromise, but start to think differently. Start thinking in terms of teams or working groups in stead of persons. It will be easier to form teams with all the required competencies, than to find ideal persons. The available and non-available competencies in a team or working group also inform recruitment policies.

3.2 The project document

The NIBP project is a part of the wider UNDAF framework. It contributes to outcome and output 2 of UNDAF 2010-2013 programme. Area of Cooperation: Governance, Rule of Law and Human rights

3.2.1 The Resources and Results Framework

The RRF of the current project document states:

Outcome 2: Government capacity to deliver services to the poor and vulnerable is enhanced.

Output 2.1: Institutions have strengthened capacity to develop and implement quality pro-poor service delivery and employment policies.

The NIBP project also contributes to outcome 3 of the UNDP Country Programme Results Framework: The state has improved ability to deliver services to foster human development and elected bodies have greater oversight capacity. The related outputs and indicators in the Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) are (draft version):

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>CPAP Output 3.1: Inclusive legislation, policies and programmes are in place, and government institutions are strengthened to improve the quality of service delivery.</p> <p>.</p> | <p>CPAP indicator for Output 3.1</p> <p>Indicator 3.1.2: Presence of systems and processes for government bodies to manage and monitor human development-sensitive service delivery.</p> <p>Baseline: basic capacity and framework in place.</p> <p>Target: Policies and performance measurement systems in place; financial management, human resources management and procurement guidelines and work processes designed and approved; and capacity development in these areas carried out in of government bodies at the national and sub national levels.</p> |
|--|---|

| | |
|--|--|
| CPAP Output 3.2: PAR management and coordination capacity of IARCSC strengthened and institutional and policy support for implementing required training programmes for civil servants established | <p>Indicator for Output 3.2:</p> <p>Indicator 3.2.1: A National Training Policy (NTP) for civil services developed and implemented.</p> <p>Baseline: None exists.</p> <p>Target: NTP approved and implemented.</p> <p>Indicator 3.2.2: Institutional arrangements are put in place to deliver required organization specific, job specific and generic training programmes for civil servants in accordance with the requirements of Civil Servant's Law and ANDS targets.</p> <p>Baseline: less than 10% capacity exists.</p> <p>Target: By 2013, the capacity of ACSI and Regional and Provincial Training Centres is developed to meet the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS) target of conducting training for each civil servant at least once in two years.</p> |
|--|--|

Table 1: The Result Framework (CPAP)

The NIBP project outputs are based on the UNDP CDAP outputs, and in the project document an attempt is made to define indicators.

| Project outputs | Performance Indicators (baseline and benchmark) |
|--|--|
| Output 1: Institutional and Organizational capacity of select government entities strengthened by policy and strategy development and systems improvement through coaching and advisory services to improve service delivery and to support Public Administration Reform (PAR) objectives. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of government institutions implementing reform plans. - Number of government institutions strengthened for improved delivery of development assistance. - Number of policies/strategies prepared. - Number of manuals / user guides prepared to bring about systems improvement in government institutions. - Increase in level of satisfaction of the public at central and sub-national level with the public service delivery. - Number of civil servants coached for on-the-job training in each government institution in each functional area at national and sub national level |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of twinning arrangements between select ministries / agencies of GIRA and other regional |

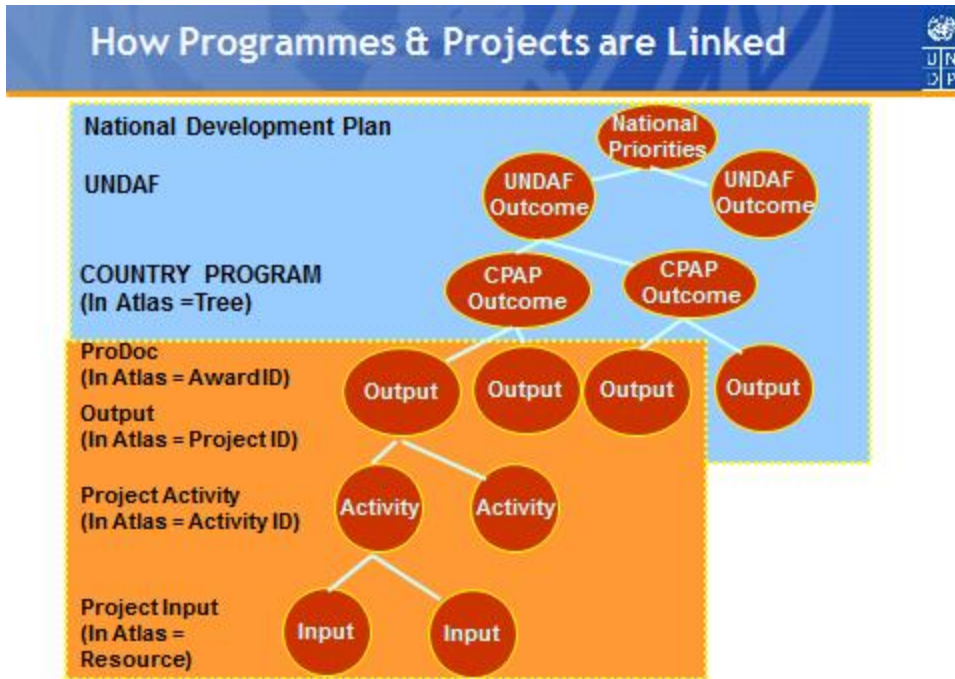
| | |
|---|---|
| | governments in place. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of trainees attending short term trainings at ministries / agencies of regional governments and its training institutions. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A gender mainstreaming strategy developed and implemented. - Number of awareness / training programmes on Gender Mainstreaming / empowerment conducted. - Number of government institutions in which level of gender awareness significantly improved. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ICCD Secretariat fully staffed. - ICCD Secretariat fully operational and providing efficient services. - ICCD meeting on a regular basis providing policy oversight. - MIS developed and implemented. |
| Output 2: Institutional and Organizational capacity development of select government entities through coaching and advisory services in alignment with Civilian Technical Assistance Plan (CTAP). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of government institutions implementing reform plans. - Number of government institutions strengthened for improved delivery of development assistance. - Increase in level of satisfaction of the public at central and sub-national level with the public service delivery. - Number of civil servants coached for on-the-job training in each government institution in each functional area at nation |
| Output 3: PAR management and coordination capacity of IARCSC strengthened and institutional and policy support for implementing required training programmes for civil servants established. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CSMD strengthened for effective supervision and implementation of PAR. - M&E unit in IARCSC and ACSI at both central and regional level strengthened for development and implementation of tools and instruments for public sector CD results. - GDPDM strengthened for effective management of programmes of IARCSC. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A National Training Policy developed and implemented. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Institutional management and operational capacity of IARCSC strengthened. - Strategic Plan of ACSI implemented. |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Operational capacity of ACSI in training and development strengthened. - Development of manuals, curriculum and training material for selected training programmes. - Number of training programmes conducted at national & sub national level. - Number of civil servants of different management levels at both national & sub-national level trained. - Number of women civil servants benefited from CD efforts of the project. - An e-learning module and a distance learning module developed and implemented. - Twinning arrangements with select civil services training institutes of the region, in place. |
| | <p>Institutional management and operational capacity of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - regional and provincial training centers strengthened. - A responsive training management and delivery system in regional and provincial centres designed and implemented. |

Table 2: The Result Framework (NIBP)

3.2.2 Outputs and Outcomes

UNDP in Afghanistan is a large organizations with a number of projects. Efforts are made to create cohesion and synergy between the various projects. Ideally all projects fit in one comprehensive result chain, with more levels of outcomes.

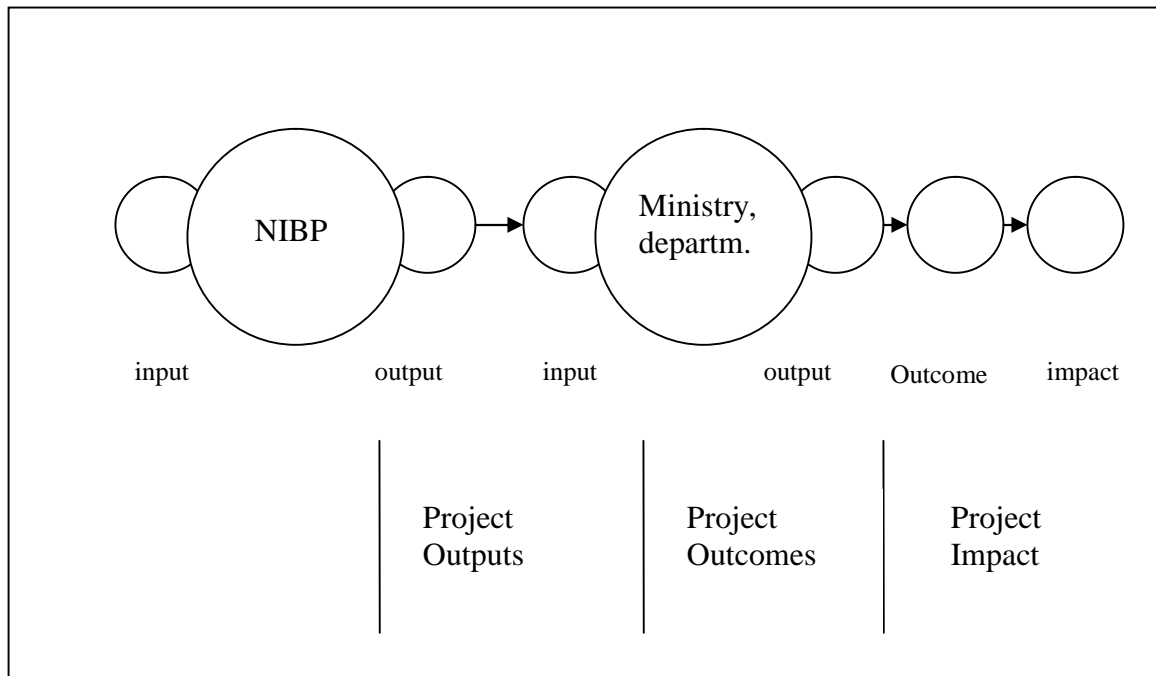


Picture 3: How UNDP projects are linked

In the UNDP jargon “improved capacity of as ministry” is called an output. This is not in line with the definition of outputs widely accepted and used by international development partners (EU, WB, USAID, ADB, etc.). Outputs are considered much closer and under more control of the service providers than that. Outputs are for instance: # number of people trained in, system X set up, policy Y formulated. Immediate outcomes are: people are using acquired knowledge and skills, using system X, and policy document Y. Measuring immediate outcomes eventually lead to a more general appreciation of the capacity of a Ministry, and maybe the quality of its service delivery.

The inconsistency with the terminology used but “the world outside UNDP” easily leads to confusion, and might even compromise funding to UNDP. Donors are for instance interested in funding outcomes, not outputs (not in building toilets, but in improved hygiene, not in building schools, but more and better educated children). The use of the services is a legitimate concern of any donor. It might be difficult to sell a project with only outputs as the ultimate project purpose.

A possible way of defining project outputs and outcomes is:



Picture 1: The result chain

The outputs of the NIBP project are one of the inputs of the Ministries (see picture 1). The outputs of the ministry are the services they deliver to the people of Afghanistan or other departments and ministries. Their outcomes are the real use of these services. Their impact is for instance better living conditions in Afghanistan.

The outcomes NIBP project are defined as enhanced capacity of the client Ministries and Departments, and improved service delivery. Project impact could for instance be defined as improved use of government services and better living conditions.

It is a long chain. This chain is consistent with the UNDP principles, it only opens up the result chain a little further and tries to avoid the short-cuts the UNDP jargon seem to encourage.

This is not only a technical or conceptual issue. The consequences are also practical and influence project achievements, for instance:

- What is monitored through the MIS and what not.
- What is monitored through dedicated surveys and what not.
- Who is responsible and accountable for what.
- Who can claim credit for what. Often service suppliers claim credit for outcomes and impacts over which they have no control, and which are the domain of what is sometimes called their “boundary partners” (here the line ministries).
- If UNDP limits the highest project purpose to output level, there is likely to be a consistency with the back donor reporting requirement, as they usually are interested in outcome level as well.

3.2.3 Embedded statements

The Outputs in the project are what I would like to call “embedded statements” For example:

Output 1: Institutional and Organizational capacity of selected government entities strengthened by policy and strategy development and systems improvement, through: coaching and advisory services to improve service delivery and to support Public Administration Reform (PAR) objectives.

First of all Output 1 I prefer to call an outcome and not an output. We discussed that already. Secondly the words “by” and “through” refer to the lower levels of the intervention logic (outputs and activities) and should be avoided. The words: “to support” refer to a higher level in the Resources and Results Framework (RRF). So the outcome is presented as an “embedded statement” covering almost the whole range of the intervention logic: from activities to impact. This is not good practice in a result framework, it obscures clarity. If we peel off the unnecessary layers, we get:

Outcome 1: Institutional and Organizational capacity of selected government entities strengthened.

There is still lack of clarity: what do we mean with the word “institutional capacity”. I will not open the subject here, it suffices to mention that it can be deleted without harming the outcome statement:

Outcome 1: Organizational capacity of selected government entities strengthened.

That is clear enough, provided you name the entities.

3.2.4 The indicators

The practice in NIBP is that during the implementation project the CDAs in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders develop a Capacity Development Plan for the related Ministry or Department, which is hereafter endorsed and implemented. This makes it impossible to predict exactly what the delivered outputs of the projects are, because these are to a large extent defined in the CDPs. The project document therefore tries to sell something what is not yet precisely defined. In the usual project cycle need assessments are done and interventions defined before donors are approached. Not so in NIBP. This could be one of the reasons for limited donor support so far.

As a results outputs and outcomes are defined only in very general terms and not quantified. One can answer the question to what extent outputs and outcomes are achieved only in very

general terms. It is possible to be a bit more specific on the achievements of the outputs and outcomes of a certain CDPs, provided that these are well defined in that CDP.

Apart of the impossibility of quantifying the indicators, the confusion between output and outcomes and the embedded statements, there is also the problem that some indicators in the project document are not indicators at all, and that there overall far too many. Some examples:

The related indicators in the project document are:

| Outcome 1: Organizational capacity of selected government entities strengthened. | |
|--|---|
| Indicator | Comment |
| Number of government institutions strengthened for improved delivery of development assistance | This is not an indicator, this is a repetition of the outcome statement |
| Number of policies/strategies prepared. Number of manuals / user guides prepared to bring about systems improvement in government institutions. | These are output, not outcome indicators |
| Increase in level of satisfaction of the public at central and sub-national level with the public service delivery. | This is better, though not specific enough. It is difficult to attribute public satisfaction to NIBP efforts. |
| Number of twinning arrangements between select ministries / agencies of GIRA and other regional governments in place. | This is an indicator related to the input to the ministries, and as such a project output, not an outcome. |
| Number of trainees attending short term trainings at ministries / agencies of regional governments and its training institutions. | Not an indicator but activities |

Table 3: Examples of indicators in the NIBP Result Framework

These examples are not exhaustive, but hopefully drive the point home.

3.2.5 Project Monitoring

The basis of a project monitoring or management information system is the project document, in which goals are defined in measurable terms and benchmarks set. This is not the case in NIBP. In NIBP goals are only defined in measurable terms in the CDPs and Annual Work Plans (AWPs), and then only at activity and output level. Moreover the result framework of the project

documents has lacks clarity. Without conceptual clarity monitoring systems tend to become muddy.

Recently the M&E expert has started to design a monitoring system. A good thing is that he started to collect gender disaggregated data.

During this mid-term evaluation some mentoring was provided to support the design of the NIBP M&E system.

Op the second quarterly reports the NIBP progress reports are limited to reporting on activities and outputs, not on outcomes. In the 3rd quarterly report outcomes and impact are to some extend mentioned, but only in a wishful and somehow pretentious way, through statements like: The One-Ministry Approach pioneered by NIBP is a simple mechanism tying the center to the provincial, fueling empowerment and ownership at sub-national where good governance and service delivery will ultimately have a beneficial impact felt by the majority of the Afghan population. How will NIBP ever be able to measure the achievements and progress towards such ambitions? There is a long chain between project activities and the Afghan population.

3.2.6 Recommendation

Create greater conceptual clarity among CDAs and CDOs and other relevant NIBP on the project the result chain, of the difference between outputs and the different shades of grey of outcomes.

NIBP has already decided to review and reformulate the current project document for 2013. Make also use of the CDPs and AWP while doing so. Tiden up also the logic, terminology and the indicators and define specific goals. Also define outcome goals.

It is suggested that some senior NIBP staff members (for instance Sultan and Mitch) isolate them somewhere, so that they are able to focus properly. Provide expert mentoring for this exercise.

It is recommended to be more modest and start surveying the immediate outcomes, the first step after the outputs, that is the use of what has been learned due to coaching, trainings and exposure visits, and the use of policy documents. Eventually such accumulation of data will help in making an informed statement on the improved capacity of the Ministry, and maybe to a limited extend translate this even in terms of improved service delivery.

Possible (immediate) outcome indicators:

- # % of trainees # months after the training are able to give at least # concrete examples of application of the learnings in their work-place, or:
- The self-assessment score of skills at the ministry for those elements in which NIBP actively contributed significantly to skill-development has increased with # %.

For monitoring or surveying training outcomes it is important to formulate clear and measurable training objectives for each session or training event. This is also necessary for the exposure visits. Learning objectives can be defined in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes. It makes for instance a lot of difference whether the training aims to enhance peoples knowledge on filing

systems, or to master a certain filing system, or are able to apply a filing system, or have more appreciation for filing systems. Encourage to set also learning objectives in terms of outcomes, or use of the learnings in the work situations.

Learning objectives can be easily and immediately measured through well defined pre- and post tests. This is most easy for learning objectives in the knowledge domain. It is also possible for attitudes, but such tests are more difficult to design. For measuring competencies, skills and application of learnings in most cases a dedicated survey some time after the training is necessary.

It is recommended to collect personal achievements; stories with a picture a name, description of the learning event and how it changed practises and lives, and include these in t reports to the donors.

3.3 Organizational Capacity Assessments and Capacity Development Plans

3.3.1 Current practice

As a principle CDAs make and facilitate Organizational Capacity Assessments (OCA) and, based on this OCA, make and facilitate a Capacity Development Plan (CDP) in collaboration with relevant stakeholders. In doing the capacity assessments the CDAs are advised to follow the UNDP approach.

Step 1: engaging stakeholders on capacity development

Step 2: assess capacity assets and needs

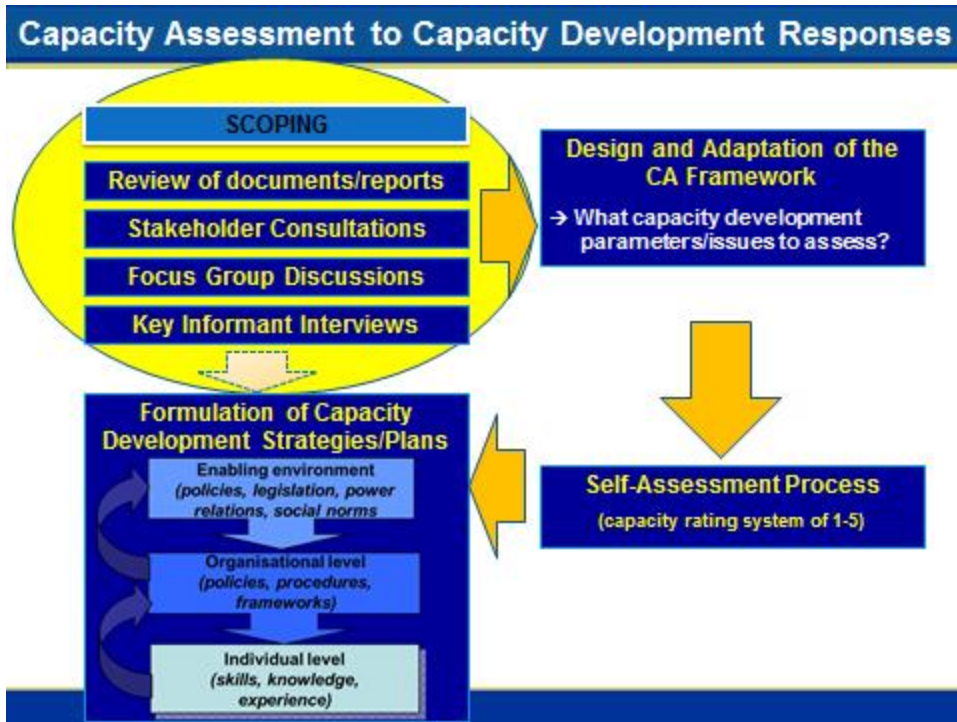
Step 3: formulate a capacity development response

Step 4: implement a capacity development response

Step 5: evaluate capacity development

The guidance given to do a capacity assessment is broadly:

- Collect information (documents, interviews, focused groups discussions consult stakeholders, and use existing assessments as much as possible)
- Let them do a self-assessment on core issues (scoring on a scale 1-5)
- Decide on the point of entry
 - o enabling environment level
 - o organization level
 - o individual level



Picture 4: The UNDP approach From Capacity Assessment to Response matrix

Between March and July 2011 CDPs for 2011-2013 were endorsed for:

- Deputy Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (DMoLSA)
- Central Statistics Organization (CSO)
- Ministry of Transportation and Civil Aviation (MoTCA)
- Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL)
- Deputy Ministry of Information and Media (DMoI&M)
- Deputy Ministry of Youth Affairs (DMoYA)

Not all Ministries in which NIBP is present have a CDP yet.

These six CDPs have a common structure:

- Introduction
- Situational analysis (context, internal)
- Point of entry
- Identifying core issues
- Scoring on a scale of 1-5
- A response matrix

3.3.2 Analysis

The CDPs are widely believed to be NIBP CDPs, in which NIBP capacity development activities are defined. As a principle the CDPs are not NIBP CDPs but Ministerial or Departmental CDPs. NIBP of course has a number of Capacity Development activities defined in the response matrix, but not all. The Ministries are supposed to use the document to attract additional support for implementing the CDP. This never happened.

The quality of the **description of the external environment** or context is fairly comprehensive good in all six plans. That means that most relevant external actors and factors seem to be mentioned.

The **description of the organization** tends to focus on: historical background, structure, resources, vision and mission and outputs. Strategies were mentioned in 3 out of 6 CDPs. Notably absent are description of main systems and “soft” characteristics like management style, organizational culture and staff characteristics (male-female, old-young etc.) The CDP of DMOYA gives a simple SWOT analysis as part of the description, which doesn’t fit there, and in which opportunities (present features in the external environment which are helpful and can be used) are confused with strategic options (what can be done in the near future).

Point of entry: The CDPs of DMOYA and DMO&I correctly put internal strategies at organizational level. Internal strategies are defining how the Ministry wants to achieve its mission. The broader legal or policy framework is enabling environment. The other 4 CDPs (DMOLSA, MAIL, MOTCA and CSO) consider all strategies and policies as enabling environment. This is wrong.

Three CDPs (DMOYA, DMO&I and DMOLSA) choose the organization as the entry point, while the other three CDPs (CSO, MOTCA and MAIL) focus on all three levels. This is however in most cases not consistent with the subsequent response matrices. Near all proposed Capacity Development Activities are on individual level (skill development, training and coaching).

Interventions on organizational level are limited to policy advice (which is wrongly considered to be working on the enabling environment). The CDP of the DMO&I is a positive exception as it addresses also organizational issues like restructuring, better coordination, and addressing the broader legal framework.

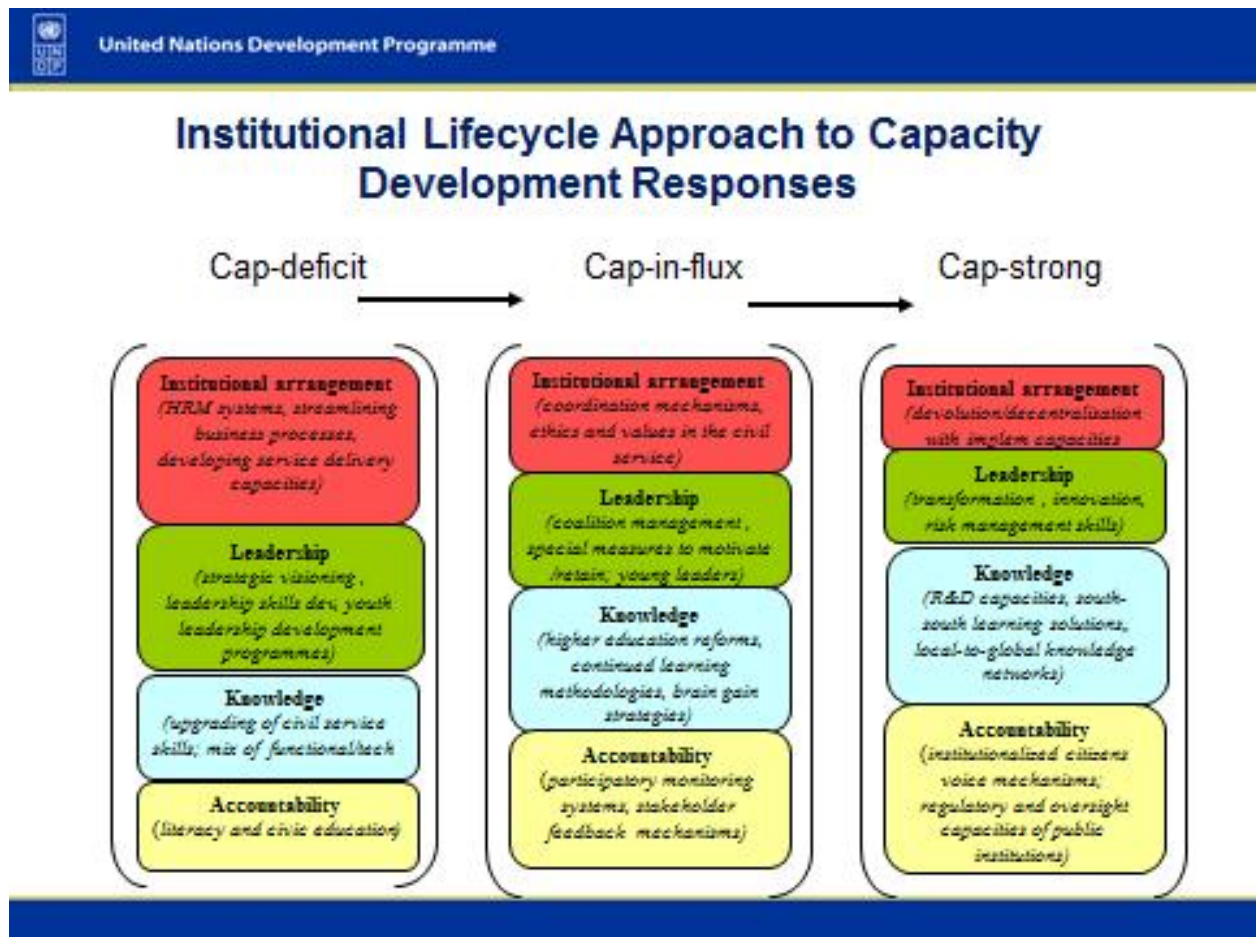
Core issues: All CDPs identify 3 to 5 core issues. Core issues most frequently mentioned are:

- Capacity to develop policies, vision
- Leadership
- Management (including budgeting and M&E)
- Multi stakeholder dialogue and coordination
- Human Resource Management
- Financial resources
- Human resources with required competencies
- Staff commitment

The core issues gravitate towards issues which can to some extent be addressed with financial resources, training and coaching. Sensitive issues like restructuring and integrity of the

leadership are barely touched upon. Systems would easier to analyze and address, keeping in mind that these to some extent are embedded in the legal framework.

The current practice in NIBP is not in line with the UNDP recommended “Institutional Life Cycle Approach to Capacity Development responses”. One could position Afghanistan somewhere between Capacity-deficit and Capacity-strong, probably a bit toward the deficit side of the scale. In that phase institutional arrangements and leadership development require considerable attention.



Picture 5: The UNDP approach, Institutional Lifecycle approaches

Scoring on a scale from 1 to 5: For the sake of ownership UNDP advises to engage in self-assessments. In MAIL and MoTCA this is done in a simple and general way. In the other four CDPs efforts are made to improve quality and objectivity in the scoring by breaking down the core issues in underlying elements, what is good practice. In the DMOYA a Capacity Assessment was done in 2007 under the CAP. Using the same method in 2011 enabled comparing the scores of 2007 and 2011. A notable improvement was measured (2007: most scores between 1 and 2, in 2011 most between 2 and 3).

Response matrixes: These are elaborate in all CDPs. In MAIL the response matrix is put in the wider CDP of the Ministry. Focus is skill development, sometimes with references to organizational functioning (like training in filing system to improve the MIS). The CDPs of DMoM&I and DMoLSA address organizational issues directly (DMoM&I: like restructuring and coordination; DMoLSA: IT, database, stakeholder dialogue, compliance machinery).

3.3.3 Theory of change

In his book “colours of change” (2003) Prof. Dr. de Caluwé classifies fundamentally different ways change happens in organizations, including ministries. I will use this theory to open up the important “change management” issue. The statements in the following table are generic and do not specifically refer to the situation in Afghanistan.

| Mechanisms creating change | Supposition (things will change if....) | Intervention | Role of change agent |
|--|--|--|--|
| Power and politics Socio-political, interests, conflicts, power | Bringing interests together, force taking opinions, creating win-win situations, showing advantages of power, getting noses in one direction | Forming alliances, mediation, negotiation, topstructuring, use of third parties. Results by forcing change | Facipulator, process-consultant Political skills, independence, ability to handle complex field of interests |
| Rationality Rational design and implementation, projectwise working, outcome, results, first <i>think first than act</i> | Formulating goals beforehand on rational basis, plan of action in steps, monitoring, reduce complexity, control and keep things stable | Rational planning and formulating indicators, monitoring, project management, rational analysis, business process redesign, and time-management. Optimal predictability of outcome | Expert Bringing in expert-knowledge that supports rationality, planning, stick to objectives. Mandate important |

| | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| Staff motivation Human relations, seduce and stimulate, reward and punishment, belongingness, HRM instruments, team spirit | Stimulating, triggering and seducing, make things attractive, rewarding and punishing, exchanging, specified HRM procedures | HRM systems (reward, incentives), planning diversity, career planning, teambuilding activities, motivating. Result of change is difficult to predict | Expert in procedures and animator Careful, different-thinking, trustworthy, enthusiastic |
| Skill development Action learning, learning organisation, getting things moving, motivation, learning potential, learning processes | Awareness of own weaknesses, helping in showing new things, creating common learning situations, people change | Motivation, feedback, experimenting, learning by doing, reflection Result of change is difficult to predict | Facilitator coaching, empathic, knows didactics, role model. Focussed on setting and communication |

Table 4: Theories of change

In reality one finds always a combination of different change mechanisms; different parts of organizations have different dynamics and there are trends, changes over time. It is therefore difficult to generalize. In the following table I do make an attempt, for the sake of structuring the argument.

| Mechanisms facilitating change | Required attention in Afghanistan | Effort in NIBP |
|---|--|------------------------|
| Power and politics | High | Medium (policy advice) |
| Rational analysis (for instance systems approach or Result Based Management) | High | Low to medium |
| Staff motivation | High | Low |
| Skill development | High | High |

Table 5 NIBP efforts versus required change efforts

3.3.4 Recommendation

Clarify to relevant GIRA high level government officials what the CDPs are and what not. Support GIRA in mobilizing additional support for implementing the CDPs.

Make CDPs for the ministries NIBP is engaged in who do yet have such plan.

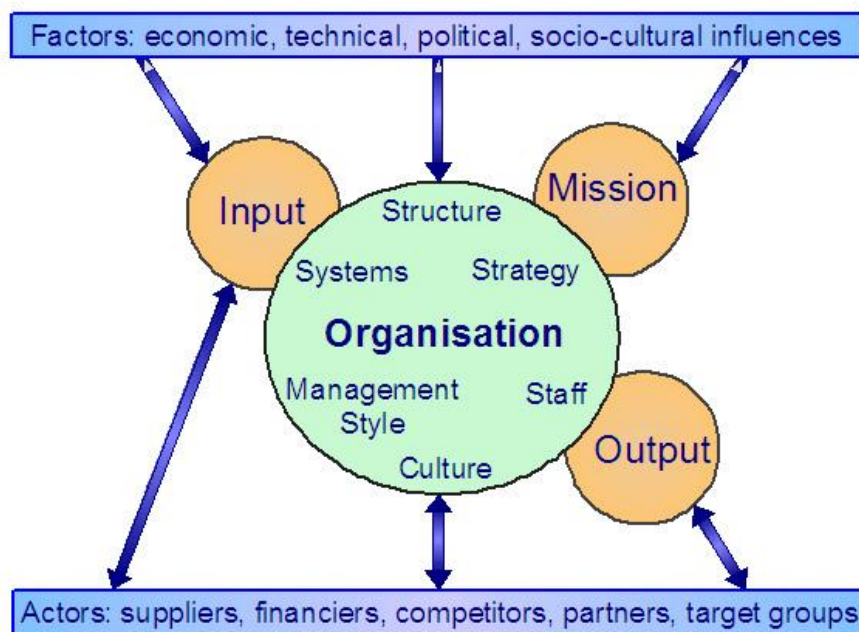
The intention of NIBP is to broaden the scope of Capacity Development from coaching individuals (during the CAP phase) to a more comprehensive approach, addressing also organizational and contextual issues. This only happened to a very limited extend. The biggest change from CAP was to include more trainings, many abroad. So far NIBP has not lived up to its initial ambitions in this regard.

A part of the problem is that the UNDP guidelines are very general only. Most CDAs don't have a Capacity Development background and like knowledge of organizational model and a proper understanding of what enabling environment is, and how to a comprehensive organizational assessment.

In September 2012 a two-day "boot camp" was organized, a training workshop for CDAs on how to capacity assessments, making use of UNDP models, power points and training material. Looking at the material one gets the impression that two days was too short to engage the participants in effective adult learning methodologies on all the content. In the same time the training material does not provide practical models and tools for doing an organizational assessment.

Make the "organizational level" a mandatory entry point. Consider the 'enabling environment' only from the perspective of organizational Capacity Development, while the individual level would be one of more intervention strategies for a certain ministry.

It is recommended to train the CDAs and CDOs further in Organizational Assessments. Training in using the Integrated Model to understand organizations, and in mastering the related toolkit to assess the various element of the IOM would be helpful.



Picture 2: The Integrated Organizational Model

As mentioned earlier USAID, the Worldbank and some other development partners are also engaged in doing organizational assessments of ministries. The ICCD has a database with all capacity assessments done, which is a rich source of information. It is recommended to use existing assessments, but only as a secondary source. It is important that the CDA gets engaged in a dialogue with the ministry for sake of understanding of the situation both by the CDA and Ministry, and developing a sense of ownership by the Ministry.

Moreover CDAs and CDOs need to be able change agents. NIBP needs to have a clearer vision on Capacity Development and a related “theory of change” and related strategy. Applying one model gave the insight that NIBP could benefit from attempts to:

- Increase efforts in the “power and politics domain” (like providing advisory services to ministers). One could consider lobby and advocacy training for CDAs. Of all 4 mechanisms this one is probably the most important one. It is related to theories dealing with building personal commitment for change and lobby and advocacy.
- Increase efforts on improving “rationality” in ministries (analyzing systems, compliance issues)
- Increase understanding and efforts of staff motivation issues (level of salary is important, but by far not the only motivating or demotivating factor.)

3.4 the One-ministry approach

3.4.1 The Project ambition

The project document 2009-2013 does not refer to the One Ministry Approach. The concept came into focus, during the implementation phase. It was the suggestion of donors like the Government of Japan to put more emphasis on improving capacities at sub-national level.

A key component of the One-Ministry Approach is indeed capacity development at sub-national levels. Service delivery typically happen at sub-national levels. The skills and qualifications of sub-national staff are typically quite weak, many sub-national offices are only partially staffed or hardly staffed at all, and many sub-national government entities lack basic facilities, assets and equipment required to function at properly. Therefore, the focus on CD initiatives especially at the sub-national level is important.

NIBP also hopes to some extend to “bridge the national – sub-national governance gap, facilitating integration and developing synergies towards attainment of a shared vision for the development of the sector”, and “to integrate input and feedback from the provinces to influence policy and national strategy development disseminating from the center.” And: “we try to think globally but act locally. We believe small initiatives – if neatly managed – will become catalysts bringing national and sub national levels together; and allowing opportunity

for better interaction/cooperation first within but then also hopefully between various ministries both at national and sub national levels.”

This raises the question of what kind of relationship exists between the national and sub-national level, or, because the project is pioneered in the ministry of Agriculture, between MAIL and DAIL.

3.4.2 The existing relationship between MAIL and DAIL Herat.

A core element of the relationship between MAIL and DAIL is the flow of funds. DAIL receives core-funding from DAIL, that means money for paying salaries, and office running costs. There is no decentralized development budget. Development money comes mostly from external donors, and are often channeled through the Ministry of Finance and earmarked specific purposes. Projects for Agricultural development are formulated almost solely at MAIL level. Sometimes DAIL gets information that MAIL is implementing a project in Herat. Staffing and procurement is done mainly in Kabul through Mail, but office stationeries would sometimes be purchased locally.

The relationship between MAIL and DAIL is top-down. The NIBP promotes a relationship with more consultations, influence and control by sub-national levels. Various interviewees gave three reasons which hinder decentralization:

- Lack of competencies at sub-national level
- Lack of trust from the central level in sub-national level (fear for misuse of funds).
- The strong hierarchical culture of Afghanistan. Decisions by the top is the default mode. It must be noted that the Afghan culture does allow for extensive consultations before the top takes a decision.

In DAIL Herat there is not much room in the annual planning cycle of the government. This cycle is all about the core-budget, bargaining for more staff or salary increases. It hardly relates to efforts to improve service delivery to the farmers.

In 2012 MAIL has agreed that projects below a limited amount (around USD 15,000) do not need approval and involvement of MAIL, but can be dealt with directly at DAIL level. This is an opportunity for DAIL to prove its competencies and trustworthiness in dealing with this responsibility. NIBP could assist in improving proposal writing skills and project management skills, including monitoring and reporting.

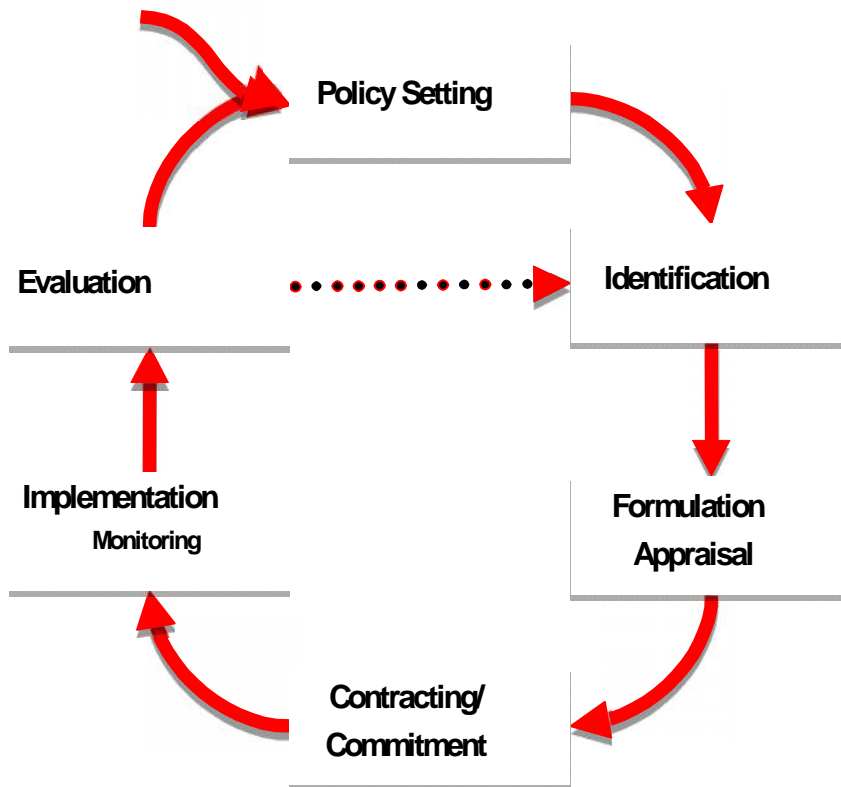
3.4.3 Recommendations

For 2013 choose for a more in-depth understanding of the One-Ministry approach in MAIL and DAIL. Get a better understanding of:

- the existing legal framework
- the annual government planning cycle
- the processes in defining core budgets

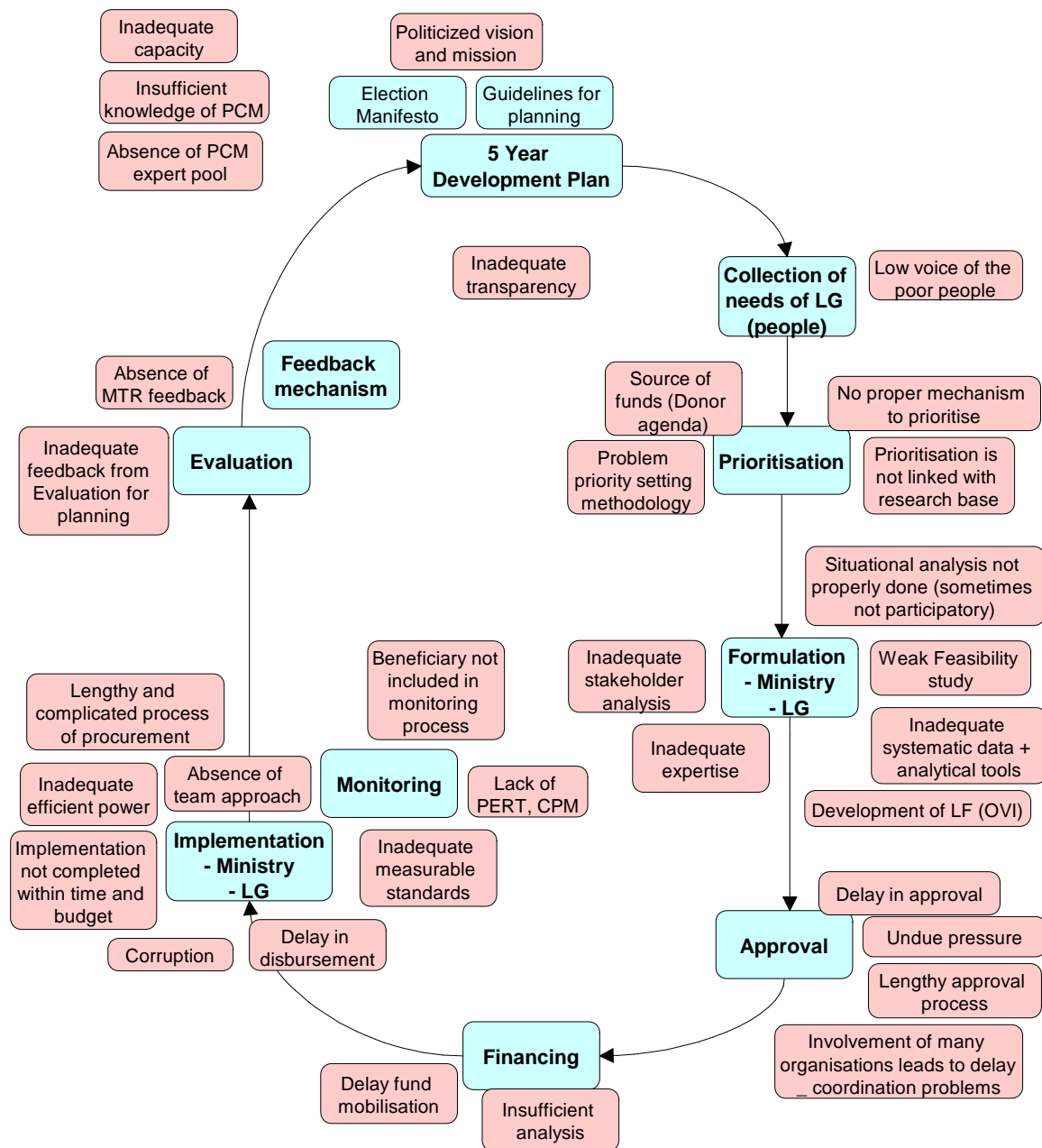
- the processes in defining development budgets
- the various departments and key actors involved
- issues and challenges

It is recommended to use the project cycle as a structuring model:



Picture 6: The Project Cycle

I recently analyzed the Bangladesh Annual Government Planning Cycle, what might serve as an illustration and inspiration, and give some ideas how such analysis could look like. Red boxes are issues to be addressed.



Picture 7: The Bangladesh Government Planning Cycle analyzed using the Project Cycle

Decentralization is not only about the relation between MAIL and DAIL. It is also about the relationships within DAIL, between the province and the districts, and the relationship with the farmers. Here are good opportunities for NIBP to show results, also in other departments.

The Director of DOLSA Herat for instance seems to be supportive for a more decentralized an achievement oriented organizational culture, and eventually structure. I would recommend not to start with changing formal mandates and job-descriptions, but with changing practises.

Another idea is promote stake-holder consultations, for instance with farmers or manufactures, encouraging dialogue and consultation. Staff from the Planning Department in Kabul or for instance the Deputy Minister could be invited to Herat to meet stakeholders. The CDA at MAIL could be instrumental too make this happen.

3.4.4 NIBP's links within the one-ministry approach

The One-Ministry Approach is not only about linking the levels of the ministry and departments, but also about strengthening link between the CDA and CDOs at MAIL and the CDA and CDOs at DAIL. This could be done by visits of Kabul positioned CDAs and CDOs to Herat and the other way around. Eventually all AIL and DAIL CDAs and CDOs could share a common vision and strategy, form a team in which they play different roles. The CDA at MAIL is for instance well positioned to lobby with the minister. CDAs and CDOs have various complementary skills, which could be better made use of.

DAIL has already started to develop horizontal links between DAIL in Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif and Bamyan. Now the vertical links could be strengthened.

CDAs and CDOs in MAIL and DAIL should form a group with a common agenda on the one-ministry approach. This group needs to meet regularly to get on the same wavelength and develop a vision and a strategy.

After NIBP has strengthened its vision and strategy of the One-Ministry approach in MAIL-DAIL it is recommended to expand the One-Ministry Approach to other Ministries and Departments.

3.5 Sustainability

3.5.1 Sustainability of project results

The project builds the capacity of government officials. This is mainly done through skill-development. Qualified government employees tend to leave the civil service, because they often can get better salaries in the NGO-sector or in the UN. This is unavoidable, and as long they stay in Afghanistan the project still contributes to the development of Afghanistan. This stresses the point that training is an ongoing concern. You don't train government staff and after training the job is done. Over a number of years the capacity of the government again deteriorates, because of staff leaving for better-paid positions elsewhere.

The same is true for organization development, like formulating policy papers and improving systems. Over a number of years policy papers become outdated and systems need maintenance.

The CDOs each earn considerably more than a government employee (tashkeel staff). A project has a beginning and an end. When NIBP stops most CDOs obviously will leave the ministries. Some CDOs eventually might enter the civil service, either due to lack of alternatives, because of job-security, or because they are able to enter at an attractive high position.

To address the need for continued Capacity Development the government has Capacity Development Units in Human Resources Directorates, while also Planning and other Units engage sometimes in capacity development. These units are often understaffed, lack capable staff and basic equipment, or are absent. Worldbank and USAID are engaged in Capacity Development efforts, focusing on salary structure and skill-development, most likely to some extent building the capacity of these units as well.

3.5.2 recommendations

Possibilities for enhancing sustainability of results are:

- Enhancing the government's capacity to build capacity, for instance skill development. Have a dialogue with other development partners like the Worldbank, USAID and HELP and try to understand how they address this sustainability issue.
- For some issues internal Capacity Development units are not going to be effective. External change agents are in a little better position to advise on sensitive subjects. An idea is to organize the CDOs in an independent organization providing Capacity Development services. These services can then be hired by governments, UN agencies and other development partners. It is interesting concept which might also solve the "multiple bosses" issue and the high salary issue.

3.5.3 Sustainability of project entity

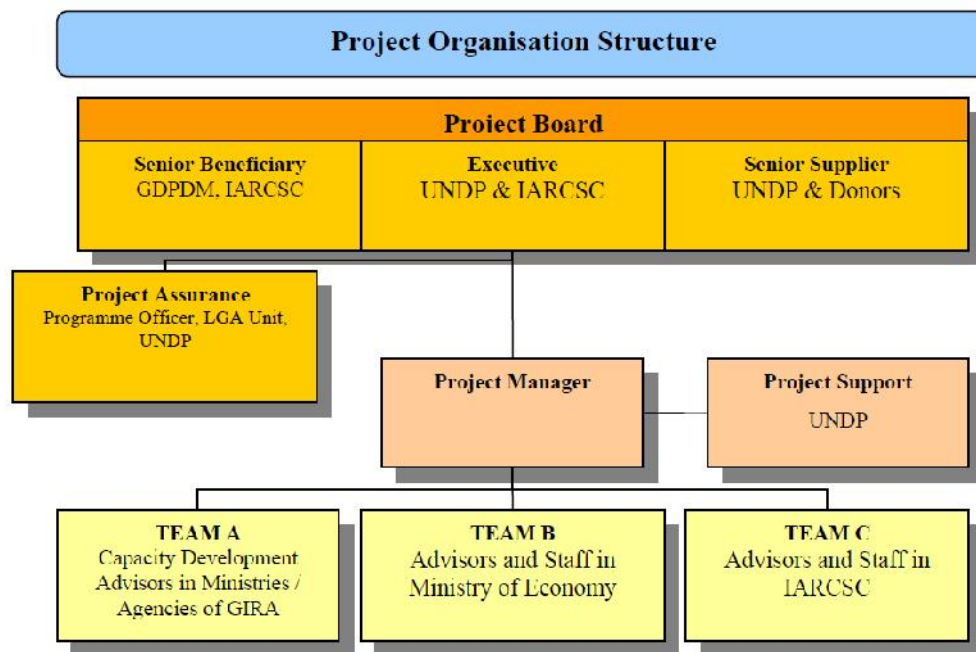
The General Directorate of Projects' Design and Management (GDPDM) is the national counterpart of the NIBP project. GDPDM resorts under the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission (IARCSC). The IARCSC is responsible for instance recruitment, appeals, policy formulation, pay & grading, civil service law implementation. IARCSC has established the General Directorate of Projects' Design and Management (GDPDM) to manage the implementation of its developmental programmes and projects.

The project document 2009-2013 writes: The Project will be initially implemented through the Direct Implementation Modality (DIM) of UNDP. After an initial period of 6 months, the project implementation responsibility will transfer to IARCSC in accordance with the principles of nationalization and UNDP will assume the role of a technical support agency.

The GDPDM shall be the implementing partner for NIBP and the NIBP will support its capacity development in terms of provision of staff and infrastructure support for its institutional development as well as undertaking capacity development programmes for its staff. The GDPDM shall be responsible and accountable for managing the project, including the monitoring

and evaluation of project interventions, achieving project outputs, and for the effective use of Project resources. The GDPDM may enter into agreements with other organizations or entities to assist in successfully delivering project outputs.

The management structure is described in the chart below:



Picture 8: NIBP Governance structure

The six-month period went by without UNDP handing over the project to the Afghan Government, except that CDOs from the start of the project were employed through GDPDM, and GDPDM was given the task of monitoring their work. This issue brought up during meetings at IARCSC and with Mr. David Akopyan, Deputy Country Director programmes of UNDP. The following became clear:

- For UNDP the project could serve as a model to bring more coherence in its currently too fragmented project approach.
- UNDP (at least David Akopyan) believes that currently IARCSC and GDPDM do not have yet sufficient capacity to implement the NIBP effectively and efficiently.
- NIBP is involved in a capacity development effort to strengthen IARCSC and GDPDM.

3.5.4 Recommendations

It is recommended that UNDP continues to respect the Paris and Busan declarations (annex 6 and 7), which prescribe that as much as possible governments should be in “the drivers’ seats, and not donors and UN agencies.

Tried to agree with IARCSC and GDPDM on a realistic roadmap to achieve this goal, even if it is a long way ahead.

Improve coordination between NIBP and GDPDM also at operational level. Have more regular meetings and minute these meetings.

That there is a need for continued efforts to strengthen the capacity of the Government of Afghanistan is undisputed. NIBP is an effective approach, potentially even more so. It is therefore recommended to engage in a participatory strategic planning exercise in the first half 2013, to prepare for a follow up project. Such an exercise would be informed by UNDP's countries strategy and experiences and insights gained during the previous phases, including CAP.

4 The Primary process or “work floor”: the CDAs and CDOs

4.1 Current perceptions and roles of CDAs

4.1.1 ToR and tasks

The following is a summary of the current generic ToR for CDAs under the NIBP. The first task is then to make in consultation with the Ministry a more specific ToR or job-description.

| | |
|------------------|--|
| do | make ministry specific ToR |
| advise | Ministry, Deputy Ministry, DG etc |
| advise / assist | policies |
| assist | develop knowledge products |
| coach and mentor | Senior + middle mgt |
| support | strategic plan |
| do | capacity Assessment |
| make | CDP |
| support | identify training service providers |
| advise / assist | cross cutting issues |
| develop capacity | procedures, systems |
| advise / assist | restructuring |
| do | anything else your NIBP manager asks you to do |

Table 6: Analysis of the generic CDA ToR

4.1.2 Kabul Based CDAs

This generic ToR was discussed in Kabul with 5 CDAs from the Indian Civil Service and the CDA placed in IARCSC. A number of them (not all) have a technical background relevant for their position. They insisted to add two activities on which they spend considerable time: coordinate

training programmes and exposure visits under twinning arrangement with India, and reporting to NIBP.

The CDAs were asked to score the amount of time they spend on the various elements of the generic ToR. The scoring revealed that the CDAs from the Indian Civil Service spend most of their time on organizing training and exposure visits to India, although most of them delegate this work to what they call the CDO they work with.

Much time is also spent on developing knowledge products, like policy documents, and on advising and coaching senior management, like the minister, deputy minister or Chief of Staff. Not much time is spent on organizational development issues like restructuring and developing procedures.

The time spent by the CDA positioned in the IARCSC is a little different. She focuses strongly on advising senior management and assists in writing policy papers. She is not engaged in organizing trainings and exposure visits. Like the CDAs from the Indian Civil Service she does not really address organizational issues.

Some interviewees mentioned that the CDAs focus more on the relation with the Minister and less on coaching of Middle Line Managers than earlier under the CAP. This is confirmed by the self-assessment of the CDAs; advising the ministry scored 5.0 on a scale of 1 to 5 and coaching middle line management scored 2.3 only.

4.1.3 CDAs in Herat and Mazar-i-Sharif

The CDAs placed in Herat and Mazar-i-Sharif are from the Philippines and Sri Lanka and do not have a civil service background. They are Organizational Development (OD) and/or Technical experts. They spend excessive time on logistical issues, due to lack of support structure. They feel very much on their own in finding their way, and would be happy with some more support from the NIBP management and support staff.

The CDA stationed at DoLSA after some trial and error engaged the Ministry staff in a systematic approach towards capacity or competency assessments. Starting with tasks and activities, required competencies were identified by the Ministry staff as concrete as possible. Then existing competencies and gaps were identified. This is still a far shot from comprehensive organizational Capacity Development, but it seems to be a meaningful start.

The CDAs at DAIL, also after trial and error, embarked on an approach in which they, with the departments of DAIL formulated projects to be implemented by UNDP by hiring external technical assistance. Three plans are developed.

- National Resource Management project in Bamyan, Herat and Mazar-i-Sharif
- Cooperative and Agro Business Development
- Mapping land use and cropping (using GIS)

These projects are now approved by Agricultural Department. Hereafter the CDAs will assist in formulating projects for other departments in DAIL. They also insist in coordination with donors, coordination among ministries, and monitor the follow up after training courses and after the projects are finished.

Also here a comprehensive approach to organizational development and Capacity Development is lacking. The CDAs become “brokers”, or agents who access to development funds, much in the same way as the Indian CDAs in Kabul provide access to training in India.

4.1.4 CDAs as Technical Advisors

Very few CDAs have a relevant technical background. The one in CSO in Kabul has, though not for all aspects of his work. The one in MAIL and MoTCA background was also not completely in line with the TAs requirements of their Ministries, but through extra efforts and self-study they managed to make good policy development contributions (Saffron policy, Transport and Civil Aviation policy). The CDA in Mazar-i-Sharif has a NRM background, which is not yet utilized.

Most CDAs from the Indian service were recruited based on their technical expertise. Two have a general civil service background (the ones in MoE and in DMoLSA).

Being a technical expert has contributed significantly for some CDAs to build rapport and become an advisor of very senior people like the minister. One Director in Herat said: “I don’t want an advisor who know English and computers, I want someone, who knows more than I do.”

4.1.5 CDAs as Capacity builders

Capacity Development, being an OD specialist, a trainer, a mentor or a coach requires specific skills and experience, which are not necessarily present in a civil servant or technical expert. Some of them have good coach coaching skills, and some of them do not. Not all of them of the are skilled in doing organizational assessments, some are.

After the first batch of CDAs from the Indian Civil Service NIBP started to recruit CDAs from other countries, many with more Capacity Development background.

4.1.6 Capacity Development versus capacity replacement

If one looks at verbs in the generic ToR for CDAs one notices a mix of “do - make”, “advise - coach – mentor – develop capacity”, and “assist - support”. What the CDA has to “do” (in consultation with) are:

- Making a more specific ToR
- Capacity Assessment and CDP
- And anything else what NIBP asks the CDA to do

“Advising” is limited to the relation with the Minister etc, and “coaching” and “mentoring” to senior and middle management. This relation is less strong in Kabul, while building the capacity for developing and adapting procedures and systems is hardly done in Kabul.

Assisting and supporting implies doing things together. These tasks are:

- Developing policies and strategic plans
- Develop knowledge products
- Identify training service providers
- Crosscutting issues
- Restructuring issues

I believe that the CDAs should only advise on crosscutting and restructuring issues, not “doing it together”. This is also true for gender.

The generic ToR is ambiguous, it leaves a lot of space for the CDAs to engage in capacity substitution. It is much easier and for many also more satisfying to write a policy paper yourself, than training someone in doing so. Writing a policy paper is a complex competency, it requires underlying elements like:

- English language skills
- Knowing and ability to use the generic process of policy development
- Ability to structure information
- In depth context knowledge
- In depth subject knowledge

It is quite a task to train people to acquire this competency. Moreover it requires capacity development and training competencies, which technical experts do not always have.

All CDAs are in varying degrees doing capacity substitution as well as in Capacity Development. This is difficult to quantify, but interviewees mentioned percentages between 20 % and 50 % of their time spend on capacity substitution. Capacity substitution only addresses only immediate needs. Sometimes these need to be addressed urgently. From the perspective of sustainability capacity substitution should be avoided as much as possible. When the technical expert leaves, nothing remains behind.

One interviewee mentioned that there is likely a correlation between being clear on one's role and the level of capacity substitution done. Clarity on one's role would decrease substitution and increase Capacity Development. Another factor mentioned is one's ability to say no without hampering good relations.

A proper induction or introduction of new CDAs would probably address the issue to some extent.

4.1.7 Perception of CDAs

In the Kabul Ministries the CDAs are all praised by the people they work with for their personal qualities, sometimes good technical expertise, sometimes good listening skills.

Surprisingly almost CDAs in Kabul are not or hardly known by lower levels of the hierarchy. “Don’t know what he/she is doing.” “See him/her walking around, but don’t know who he/she is.” This apparently reflects the strong focus of the CDA on working with the Minister or other very high level people and less with lower levels of the hierarchy. It also reflects an attitude of not mixing mix with Ministry Staff for social reasons. To some extent the language barrier might attribute to this situation. This is affirmed by the self-assessment of CDAs how on average they spend their time. Much less time was spend on advising middle-line management staff. This generalization is more valid for the Kabul based CDAs than the Herat based ones.

4.1.8 Recommendations

1.

Stop the CDAs spending excessive time on logistics. Provide alternative support.

2.

Recruitment of CDAs can be more specifically focused on the roles they are expected to play. The problem is that the project is always not very clear on the role of a CDA, leaving a lot of space to adapt to specific situations.

3.

Develop an induction training for all new CDAs. This work is already under preparation. Topics included could be:

- The Afghan context: administration, civil service, culture
- UNDP procedures, role of NIBP and GDPDM
- Role of CDAs, CDOs, one Ministry Approach

4.

Give all CDAs and CDOs training in:

- Organizational assessments (model and tools)
- Change management
- Trainers’ and coaching skills

These could be one-week courses.

5.

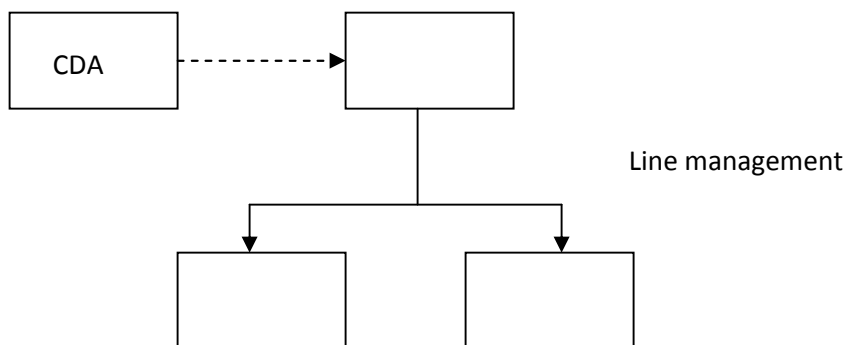
Introduce all CDAs and CDOs to their national counterparts, explaining roles etc. This realization is also not completely new for NIBP. That it did not always happen in the recent past was mainly due to lack of resources and staff.

4.2 Current perceptions on the roles of CDOs

4.2.1 Formal hierarchical position

A common (mis-)understanding is that the CDAs are the line-managers of the CDO. This is believed by some CDAs, some CDOs and many government officials. It is also repeated in the NIBP organogram. Formally (from an organogram perspective) this is not correct.

The CDAs are employed by the NIBP /UNDP, Their line manager is Mr. Sultan, the person at the top of the NIBP organogram. The CDAs engage in capacity development activities, and appear in the organograms of the ministries as advisors.



Picture 9: Position of the CDA in a hierarchy compared with line management functions

The position of the CDOs is more ambiguous. They work together with the CDA. The CDOs are employed by the GDPDM department of IARCSC (the Civil Service Commission). The CDOs send their monthly worksheets to GDPDM, who endorse these and send them to UNDP who hereafter pay the salaries of the CDOs. GDPDM also does the annual job-appraisals and conducts quarterly meetings with the CDOs. The formal line manager of the CDO is the Director or other high official in the ministry, who often mistakenly think that the CDA is the line-manager. In the same time the CDO is the advisor of – among others – his line manager.

The main justification as explained to me by David Akopyan is that is cheaper for the UN to employ the CDOs through GDPDM, avoiding the costs for providing security. Moreover bringing CDOs under the GDPDM was seen as a constructive step in handing over the project to the Afghan government. However, judging by the project organogram, UNDP still considers them to be under the line-management of the CDAs, if there is one.

The level of the salaries of the CDOs is such that they will never be paid this by the government, and will never become part of the Afghan tashkeel (civil service). From that point of view they are NIBP de facto project staff. NIBP also pays their salaries.

This is a complicated knot of relations. In a situation where there are more than one boss, there are three possible situations:

- the bosses coordinate well, or have systemized this coordination,
- the bosses at times send out conflicting tasks,
- all bosses think that other bosses take care, so as a result there is no boss.

Quite a number of CDOs feel neglected and are floating without proper monitoring and supervision.

A number of related issues came up during the evaluation:

- The project budget does not allow for salary increases and compensation for increasing costs of living,
- There is no achievement based grading pay-system. The issue has been taken up for discussion recently.
- CDOs submit their monthly activity report to GDPDM, but do not get feedback on these reports.
- CDOs (like the CDAs) get a generic job-description, and later sometimes in consultation with their line-manager, make a more specific and situational job-description. They are however annual appraised according the generic job-description, which does not always reflect the reality on the ground. This apparently caused one CDO in Herat to loose her job. She scored low for tasks she was not doing for good reasons.
- The appraisal formats do not have a section on improving performance. It is good practice that after looking into the performance of the CDO to agree on what improvements will be targeted, and how the CDO can be assisted to improve his or her performance. This part is lacking in the appraisals.
- The quarterly meetings deal more with administrative matters than with content. These meetings were not regularly. CDOs placed outside Kabul are usually not able to attend these meetings.
- Line managers in the ministry frequently ask the CDOs to implement tasks, which have not much to do with capacity development.
- The director of IARCSC in Herat explained the impact of the high payment of the CDO on his tashkeel staff. The CDO confirmed this story. The high salary of the CDO caused resentment and demotivation among government staff. "If het gets so much for his work, it is fair that we do less." The CDO had to prove his value and high salary, which he actually did. It helped that he lied about his salary to the staff in the department (he says he gets US\$ 1,000 in stead of US\$ 2,000). To justify US\$ 2,000 assumable his performance would have to be of heavily proportions.

4.2.2 How CDOs are spending their time

During a workshop with CDOs they were given a generic ToR and asked to score the amount of time / attention they give to the various elements. The conclusion is that CDOs are mostly involved in planning for training and implementing training. Work on behavioral change monitoring progress scored medium. “Implement M&E process” scored notably low.

The last line of the ToR reads something like: “do any other job given by your supervisor line-manager”. Sometimes it means that the CDO does anything the CDA asks him/her to do, in order places they are used by the government directors or department heads.

Deleting the last line is not going to make a difference, because in Afghanistan line managers have this line hardwired in their mind. A proper introduction of the CDO to the relevant authorities, explaining his/her position and responsibilities would help.

If a CDO is asked to do perform a certain task, he needs to reflect on possibilities to build the capacity of the requesting party to do it themselves in future.

4.2.3 Being the advisor of a high official

In the current project CDAs and CDOs should identify their own government counterparts to work with. Maybe two or three key counterparts at a time, who can intervene in the whole organizational change process. Counterparts should be selected based on NIBP program framework and interests, so that the proposed change process can be evaluated in the end.

One role of the CDAs and CDOs is being the advisor of the minister or other high level official. There are two pre-conditions for being an effective advisor:

- the advisor needs sufficient status or respectability with the persons he wants to advise. That persons has to take note of the advisor
- the advisor needs to build and maintain a good relationship

Only when this groundwork is done (comparable to the engagement phase in the UNDP model) the change agent work can start.

4.2.4 Status and respectability

Basically there are three sources for status or respectability: structural, attributed and professionalism.

- Structural status is related to the formal position in the hierarchy, who is the CDO or CDA advising?

- But it also relates to the informal position, with who is the CDA or CDO networked. Being perceived as close to a power holder in Afghanistan or a donor in one way or another raises status.
- Attributed status is status given because of who the CDO, CDA is. Age, gender, religion, titles, tribal affiliations all make a difference.
- Professional status: being good in his/her work earns respect.

To what extent the different sources of status contribute to the total depends on culture. In Afghanistan structural status and attributed status add each – say – 40 % and professional status 20 %. For some ministers probably professionalism weighs in more heavily. In the US or Europe professional status in general weighs in more heavily. At the end of the day the source of status doesn't matter, what matters is the total. How does this roll out for the CDOs and CDAs?

| Sources of status or respectability | CDA | CDO |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| Formal position | Initially the minister (or other high official) is not aware of the CDA, but others in the ministry treat the CDA with respect because he is supposed to become the advisor of the minister. Eventually that helps in make the minister himself to take note. | Less status, as he is only the counterpart of the CDA. |
| Informal position | Being associates with the “UN-clan” raises status. Being visible in charge of arranging trips abroad and being able to influence who will go abroad and pocket the DSA raises status. Formulating projects and contacting donors raises status. Deciding on participation though is a sensitive issue and CDAs might choose not to influence. For effectiveness sake maybe they should. | Being associates with the “UN-clan” raises status. Formulating projects and contacting donors raises status. If the CDO is actively arranging the trips abroad and can influence the list of people who will go, that will earn him/her some extra status. The CDO in MoTCA was forced in this position after the CDA left and was not replaced. A CDO who is connected to a high level government official or informal power holder earn extra status. Some CDOs are. |
| Attributed status | Age and gender work out in the | Being tribal affiliated is an |

| | | |
|---------------------|--|--|
| | same way for CDAs and CDOs. | <p>advantage, being Muslim is an advantage.</p> <p>Educational level and titles work the same with CDAs and CDOs, but because of factors like educational opportunities less CDOs have titles than CDAs.</p> |
| Professional status | A CDA who is a technical expert earns extra respect. There are clear examples in this project. (MAIL, CSO, DAIL Mazar-i-Sharif). | <p>The same is true for a CDO who is good in his-her work. Competencies like fluency in English, and proposal writing skills weigh in as well.</p> <p>Only very few CDOs have the same level of technical subject expertise as some of the CDAs.</p> |

Table 7: Analysis of contributing factors to the status of a CDA and CDO

In the following table the considerations are translated in a score from 1 to 5. The scoring is debatable and could be refined. It is a general impression. Every CDA and CDO could make a personal score for him- herself, and than see what the opportunities are for raising status, for instance by being more professional, earning a degree, being more perceived as well networked etc.

| Sources of status or respectability | CDA | CDO |
|-------------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Formal position | 5 | 3 |
| Informal position | 4 | 3 |
| Attributed status | 4 | 3 |
| Professional status | 4 | 3 |

Table 8: Quantifying contributing factors to the status of a CDA and CDO

The CDAs in general have a higher status than CDOs because of all the contributing factors mentioned. Though the situation is different for every CDA and CDO. Some CDAs score relatively

low, while some CDOs score relatively high, even higher than some CDAs. In general the CDOs are fighting an uphill battle. It is not impossible but more difficult for them to earn sufficient status and respectability. In a few aspects like local embedment, some of them have an advantage, but that doesn't really change the game. Maybe 10 to 20 % of the CDOs eventually might reach the desired level of respectability to be able to become the advisor of a minister or another high government official.

The situation is different in Herat where the CDAs are OD specialists and not technical subject experts. Also the directors at provincial level are lower in the tashkeel hierarchy than the ministers in Kabul. Both factors make it easier for the CDOs in Herat to replace the CDAs than it is for most of the CDOs at central level.

Changing the tile of CDO in National CDA will increase their status. The term "Officer" does not translate well in Dari language. In Dari the Arabic word "mamoor" is used. It means something like a person recruited by the government to implement some low level tasks, without decision making authority. Loosely similar to the English word "clerk", or "office assistant".

Initially the CDOS were called advisors. This apparently was opposed by some CDAs, who didn't see the CDOs advising ministers, but rather giving them support. The CDOs like to be called "advisors", because this title will give them some protection against being asked to other tasks. For the same reason, but then from the opposite angle, the director of IARCSC in Herat suggested to use the term "coach", not "advisor". Of course what matters is the job-description, not the tile, but in reality people often go by the title.

4.2.5 Maintaining good relationships

Status or respectability is a pre-condition. Once the minister or other high official takes note it is up to the CDA to take this opportunity and build and maintain a good relationship. I belief the CDOs, being Afghans, are in general able to maintain a good relationship with power holders like ministers. Their problem for them is to get access to such people, in other words to make those power holders to take note of them and take them seriously, in the first place.

The conclusion is that only 10 to 20 % of the CDOs might in the future become an advisor of a high official at national level for reasons which are difficult to address.

4.2.6 Change agent activities

In general the change cycle is a useful model:

- Creating awareness for the need for change (arrange exposure visits, share results of reviews and evaluations, visit beneficiaries, etc.)
- Creating willingness for change (make a relation with the effectiveness of the ministry and illustrate how the change will improve the ministry).

- Creating commitment for change. Most power holders don't buy in a change plan because it is good for the Ministry, but only because it is good for them personally. This is a big issue in Afghanistan, and a "minefield" when discussed. But without commitment there is no way forward. CDAs might need training and share experience on this subject. Maybe he/she can illustrate that the Minister might not gain immediately, but gain in the long run, etc.
- Enabling change: in this phase concrete Capacity Development activities are implemented.
- Consolidating change.

The change cycle is a broad model. Other UNDP models might be used as well, maybe complementary. What I missed in the UNDP model, at first glance at least, was the issue of personal commitment, personal losses and gains, or the "political domain".

4.2.7 Arranging training and exposure visits abroad.

The CDAs from the Indian Civil Service all believe that the CDOs cannot replace the CDAs as far as the Government of India is concerned. This is a large and complex bureaucracy, and the Government of India tends to listen to its own people a little more. Personal contacts also matter. In spite of this the CDO of MOTCA was forced to arrange the trips to India after his CDA left, and manages this reasonably well. It is of course more difficult for him than for the Indian CDAs.

4.2.8 Capacity Development of CDOs

Targeted efforts aiming at strengthening capacities of the CDOs (special training programmes, CDOs joining trainings abroad) have been launched by the project. Importance of the CDOs role and them not being technical staff has been brought to the attention of CDAs repeatedly, for instance by including them in exposure and training visits abroad. At this moment NIBP has employed a M&E expert intends to monitor progress made in this regard.

4.2.9 Summary of recommendations

"Tiden up" the formal position of CDOs, ensure that they have one boss only, or, alternatively, that the different bosses coordinate the supervision, monitoring and line-management tasks well.

Discuss with GDPDM the need to provide feedback on the monthly activity reports of the CDOs, and decide on who will supervise and monitor the CDOs.

Include a section on agreeing on improving performance in the appraisals. Alternatively NIBP to sit with the CDOs to discuss this element shortly after the appraisal. Use these meetings as an entry point for Capacity Development of CDOs.

Ensure that GDPDM is informed on the actual work and de facto job-descriptions of the CDOs.

Change the title of CDOs for instance in National CDAs, or Capacity Development Specialists.

In future budgets allow for compensation for increasing costs of living,

A merit based salary system is already under discussion.

Suggest GDPDM to increase the number of meetings with CDOs and/or NIBP to assist GDPDM in holding these meetings.

Introduce CDOs properly into their respective ministries and departments.

Also generic trainings are recommended, like:

- change management
- conducting organizational assessments
- conducting Training Need Assessments
- defining Training objectives and develop curricula
- adult learning
- competency based training
- coaching skills

Encourage self-learning. The internet is a rich source of relevant information. The previous CDA of MoTCA set a good example for the related CDO by engaging in very industrious self-learning in subjects he did not master well earlier. The same is true for the CDA in MAIL, who set a good example by studying saffron cultivation in depth, while being a forestry person by formal training.

I would recommend to take the current job-descriptions of the CDOs as an entry point for capacity development. The CDAs with the M&E expert and/or Capacity Development expert could sit with the CDOs shortly after their performance appraisal done by GDPDM, and discuss the appraisal, and ways to help the CDO to improve his or her performance and further his or her career. Some CDOs might for instance benefit from specific technical training courses.

4.3 Relationship between CDAs and CDOs

4.3.1 CDOs used as office assistants

Some CDAs use the CDOs as their assistant and translators. This is done with due respect, and also caused by the lack of other support staff. The practice is justified with arguments like: “if

they do the logistics for us, in due time they will be able to do this themselves, it is Capacity Development.” Usually with the addition: “in the field of technical expertise, they will never be like us.” Other CDAs do the logistics themselves. They spend say 80 % of their time on logistics.

One CDA complained that in the second training of CDOs in 2012 (in Sarena Hotel) the CDOs were told that they are not assistants of the CDA, and that hereafter his CDO engaged in what the CDA called “insubordination”, and that this mentality has created a learning barrier.

If the CDA needs a translator and an assistant to arrange visas and such, provide them with an assistant, which would be cheaper. It is even better if the Ministry provides such an assistant. It could be the beginning of cost-sharing.

In the provinces an alternative for giving each CDA an assistant is to place and admin-logistical person in the UNDP regional office, if there is one.

The CDA positioned in MoTCA left, and hereafter the implementation of the CDP came to a halt. With some support from UNDP the CDO managed to establish relationships with the relevant Indian institutions, and he is doing now all the networking and logistics himself.

4.3.2 CDOs respected as independent persons

Some CDAs don’t want to use the CDOs as office assistants, but respect them as advisors in their own right. This is the case in for instance the DMoLSA in Kabul. The CDOs are happy with that. The CDOs in DMoLSA basically respond to training requests. They have earned a high level of respect, maintain very good relationships in the ministry, and are also respected because of their professionalism. One of them has a sister who is married to the former DG of the IARCSC, what also helps. (It might also raise some eyebrows, because of conflict of interests.) So these two CDOs have fought their uphill battle very well.

What is missing here is a vision, a long term plan, guiding what they are doing. There is a Capacity Development Plan in the Deputy Ministry, but they feel that the CDP is for the CDA to implement, and deals with organizing trips to India. The CDOs make a separate Annual Work Plan and do connect this to the CDP. Hereafter they go their own way.

Other CDOs also, without much guidance, initiate some Capacity Development activities in areas in which they feel competent (for instance in MoTCA).

4.3.3 CDAs and CDOs working as a team or working group

In DAIL and DoLSA in Herat CDAs and CDOs have worked as teams. What changed the game is that the respective CDAs (from the Philippines) have an Organizational Development (OD) background.

There are serious shortcomings inhibiting effective functioning of these teams, like lack of vision and clear strategy, high staff turn over, lack of logistical support.

4.3.4 Standardized approach

During this mid-term evaluation I compared the NIBP a few times with – with due respect - a Zoo. Every department or person I met had its own unique features and stories. NIBP recognizes this fragmentation and one of the goals of the mid-term review to come up with suggestions for a more standardized approach.

Most pressing is the need for a common and shared vision and strategy among the NIBP staff, and subsequently clarity on of the CDAs and CDOs and their relationship. In the same time it is acknowledged that CDAs and CDOs work in different situations, and any approach needs to maintain sufficient adaptability. A one blue-print approach for all would not work.

It is suggested that all CDOs and CDAs are going to form teams whenever possible:

- CDOs and CDAs form teams with a common goal. They are commonly responsible for achieving that goal. If they succeed, they succeed together. If they fail, they fail together. They are mutual accountable. NIBP monitors team performance rather than individual performance.
- Team members have complementary skills. The manpower and specific skill needs (both technical and OD) of certain teams informs the recruitment policy if the NIBP project.
- Some team members could be called Technical Advisors with a very specific technical task, for instance IT, or writing one specific policy. others could have a coordination or supporting task. They are always team members, especially those with permanent or longer-term contracts, what means that they are co-responsible for the teams performing well and achieving their goals.
- There is no longer a hierarchy between CDAs and CDOs. In NIBP there will only be international and national capacity development advisors (ICDAs and NCDAs).
- Team members have the duty to support each other. This implies that the International CDAs have the responsibility to inform, coach and train the national CDAs in matters in which they have superior knowledge. And the other way round, the national CDAs have the responsibility to inform, coach and train the international CDAs in matters in which they have superior knowledge (for instance Afghan civil service characteristics, Afghan Law, Afghan culture, some specific technical subjects, Capacity Development knowledge and so on.)
- The principle is no longer that all CDO will be future CDAs.
- If a National Afghan is capable to fulfill the role of a International Advisor he will always be given priority in fulfilling vacancies.
- Being teams does not mean that all play the same role. In a football team some are strikers, another person is the goalkeeper. So an International CDA can be the advisor of the Minister, and a National CDA can have another role. These roles are

decided per team and depend on available competencies and inform – as said already – recruitment policies.

- While it is meaningful to define tasks and roles, there remains a lot of flexibility. The common goal is always overriding individual responsibilities. “This is not my cup of tea, that is his/her task” is an excuse which does not exist in an effective team. Team members always support one another and do their best to replace each other in case of absence of certain team members.

Team goals:

- There will be no teams without a clear defined goals, vision and strategy.
- The team goal, the tasks they perform together, are defined in the plans: the capacity development plans and annual workplans.

Multiple team approach:

- CDAs (national or international) can be member of more than one team. It is possible that the CDA at MAIL is also member of a team implementing the goals of a one-ministry programme team.
- In the provinces it is possible that one CDA (for instance stationed in Herat) is member of teams in various regions (for instance Bamyan, Herat and Mazar-i-Sharif).
- It is also possible that CDAs or CDOs with specific competencies are making their services available to other ministries and departments. Either on a ad-hoc basis, or as members of multiple teams. Of course they should remain sufficiently focused in their work.
- It is also conceivable that CDAs and CDOs stationed in Herat support each other. This is possible because most of them are OD experts, not technical subject experts. To some extent this is happening already. This is not a strong team approach, because the goals are fragmented over several ministries. While ad-hoc and even systematized cooperation among CDAs and CDOs in Herat is encouraged, this is unlikely to become be a team in the true sense, with a common goal, for which the team as a whole is accountable.
- One CDA commented on the draft rapport that he believes that also the whole NIBP project functions as a team. This is very true. It has clear leadership, clear goals, meets frequently, and members have a sense of belonging. This however does not negate the need for more teams for instance within the ministries.

Communication:

- All teams communicate informally by different ways, and also meet regularly face-to-face to discuss progress.
- The frequency of such meetings is decided by the teams.

Working groups are an alternative:

- If forming teams is a bridge too far at this moment, NIBP can choose to form working groups instead of teams. In a working group there is a stronger sense of individual responsibility rather than common responsibility. In a working group CDAs and CDOs still work together closely on a common task, but divide and coordinate the work.

Providing material support:

- It is recommended to include a budget line for material support to the Ministries in the next phase (not exceeding 10-20 % of the total budget). This will enhance effectiveness and efficiency of the project and further strengthen good rapport.

Support functions:

- In future support functions will be adequately addressed. One possibility is that teams have a person (maybe from the tashkeel) for translation and logistical support.
- Another possibility is to place a person for admin and logistic support through the NIBP project in the provincial UNDP office.
- There will be related support budgets.

To further foster a standardized approach:

- It is recommended that all CDAs and CDOs receive training on what team work really implies, and to make first steps towards teambuilding
- It is suggested that all new CDAs and CDOs will go through an induction training, during which they will be informed on the UNDP approach
- All persons engaged in making Capacity Development Plans will receive dedicated training prior to this activity. More clarity will be given on organizational elements (for instance what is enabling environment and what is not), intervention logic (for instance what is the difference between output and outcomes), hands-on tools for assessment (process flow charts, Mintzberg diagrams, staff motivation tools etc.), and data collecting principles.

A suggestion from Barry: "An inventory of the resource/skills base within the project would be immensely interesting, constructive and help fill the gaps."

5 Management, support and security issues

5.1 Structure

5.1.1 Description

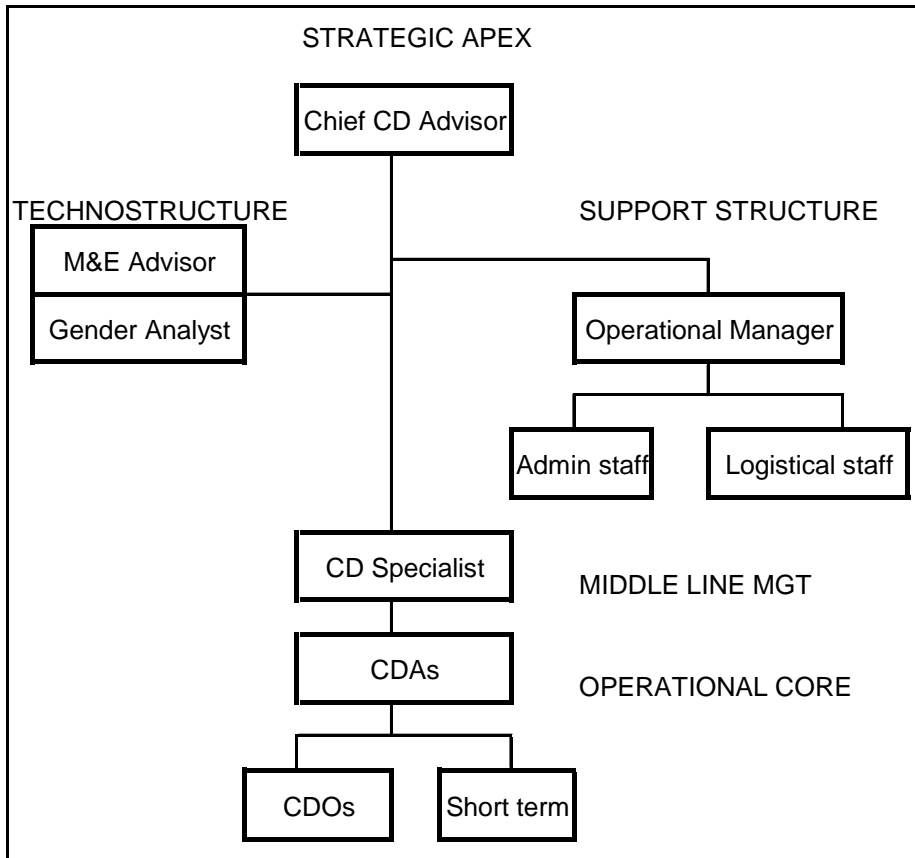
Project staff at the moment:

| Name: | Function: |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Mr. Sultan Hajiyeve | Chief Capacity Development Advisor and Acting Programme Director |
| Mr. Mitch Teberg | Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor |
| Mr. Barry Greville Eyres | Capacity Development Advisor |
| Mr. Mohammed Yusuf Walizada | Finance Associate |
| Dr. Nilofar Bazikzai | Gender Analyst |
| Ms. Sohaila Abhar | Project Associate |
| Mr. Aimal Feroz Zalland | Capacity Development Programme Officer |
| Mr. Haroon Haroon | Cleaner |
| Mr. Nawab | Driver |
| Mr. Khwaja Ahmad | Driver |
| Mr. Haroon | Driver |
| Mr. Rahulla | Driver |
| Mr. Amin | Driver |
| Mr. Abduleahman Farid | Admin / logistic Associate |

Table 9: NIBP management and office staff

There are 5 vehicles.

The organogram:



Picture 10: NIBP organogram

The Strategic apex also includes the Country Director, the concerned Deputy Country Director , M&E advisor, the CD-specialist and layers in the UNDP hierarchy above the Chief CD advisor. The purpose of the “technostructure” is to improve the functioning of NIBP. At present the support structure is being expanded.

5.1.2 Analysis

CDOs are not in a line-management relation in the NIBP, they are in a line-management function in the respective ministries and departments, employed by GDPDM and paid by NIBP.

The technostructure are those functions which aim at improving the functioning of the project. This function has only recently been established.

The function of Operational manager is vacant, meaning that the Chief CD Advisor, the M&E advisor, and the CD specialist spend a lot of time on operational issues. This compromises project efficiency considerably.

The present support structure (including number of cars) is barely sufficient for the current project operations, and will be insufficient for the anticipated expansion of the project in the

near future (13 new CDAs, 7 in provinces and 6 in Kabul, of the 7 in provinces 4 also in Kabul for security reasons).

There is a lot of resentment among CDOs because of late transfer of their salaries. Delays up to three weeks happen frequently. Underlying reasons

- In principle GDPDM has to collect all timesheets before they can proceed. The delay of one person delays payment to all. This is the UN system, and it is perceived as unfair.
- A formal endorsement is required at GDPDM, NIBP and UNDP Country Office level, which can take 1 to 3 days at all levels.
- There used to be huge delays in the bank-to bank (for instance AIB to Kabul Bank) transfers in Afghanistan. Apparently this has now been addressed.

At the moment the M&E expert (Mitch) has started to monitor and to some extent supervise and manage the CDAs. This is not his formal role, and most CDAs also see it that way. Mitch likes what he is doing.

Barry is at the moment too involved in other things like logistics and Capacity Development efforts. This will improve when the operational manager position is filled in.

Due to limited support staff and the UN bureaucracy payment to NIBP suppliers is often delayed too much. Sometimes creating resentment among suppliers, and in the same time demotivating CDAs.

5.1.3 Recommendations

It is recommended to differentiate roles (and related job-descriptions) more clearly.

- Depict the CDOs in the organogram in a way that does not suggest a formal line management function with the NIBP project.
- The M&E expert (Mitch) designs and improves the M&E system
- The M&E expert focuses on **evaluations and on outcome surveys**
- Regular monitoring and supervision of **activities and outputs** to be done through the middle line management (Barry), as it is his task to monitor and supervise the CDAs.
- When the project increases in size it might be wise to specialize top management roles. In many organizations the CEO (Sultan) focuses on external relationships and monitoring of project outcomes, and his deputy (here the middle line manager, Barry) is looking more inwards, so in this case managing the CDAs and CDOs.
- Another task is to organize training for CDAs and probably CDOs. At the moment this is a task of the middle line manager. With the expansion of the project and increased attention for Capacity Development of CDOs and CDAs it might be necessary to add a CD-expert in the technostucture. It is recommended to have two persons: one for Capacity Development, and one for middle line management functions (managing the CDAs).
- In a small set-up like NIBP it is possible that roles are more fluid, and coordination mechanisms can be largely informal and only little regulated. Also the frequent R&Rs demand such team spirit.
- CDAs are often from a far more regularized and formal background, and it is advised to be clear to them on roles of senior management (Sultan, Barry, Mitch). There is no harm

in Mitch combining middle-line management and M&E functions, if that is supported by all parties, but then formalize this role.

Expedite payment of salaries. Bring the deadline for submitting annual reports from the 22nd to the 15th of each month. Consider to register dates of submission of annual reports and make this lists available to CDOs.

Many CDAs and CDOs spend most of their time on logistical matters like organizing trips abroad, or on translations. This doesn't make sense in terms of efficiency. Add a national support person to teams for a much lower salary if necessary. This will free up time of CDAs and CDOs for new CD tasks, like tracing studies and surveying project outcomes.

Add an admin person in regional UNDP offices, for instance in Herat.

It is suggested that teams have limited discretionary budgets up to say USD 5,000. This will enable them to purchase for instance chairs, tables, computer, internet access, and so on. They still follow UN procedures like three quotations, but are allowed to spend the money immediately and do the paperwork afterwards. To have sufficient initial checks and balances, the purchase will be approved in a team meeting (minutes to be made) and more than one team member will have to formally sign and approve the expenditure.

5.2 Security

5.2.1 Description and analysis

NIBP CDAs are vulnerable to incidents related to security violation, as they operate from the premises of the government ministries where they have little control on visitors. Moreover, the security operations in these offices are managed by the ministries and UNDP cannot influence it beyond ensuring basic security and safety norms in the room where the CDAs are located.

The project strives to put in place measures to follow UNDP security guidelines and to be MOSS compliant in all its operations. The mitigation measure will be to train and appoint Afghans as national Capacity Development Officers (CDOs) and to place them in such locations as they are generally not subject to same level of risk as foreigners. Suitable CD strategies need to be adopted, such as conducting training and coaching at secure places and using distance learning or other modalities.

Not all CDAs work in a MOSS compliant environment. The CDA in the Ministry of Education is offered a proper place, but that is far away from his national counterpart, the Chief of Staff, and transport services in the project are limited.

CDOs are national staff. Associating them with UN could increase their security risk. CDOs might want to openly associate themselves with the UN, because that enhances their respectability and facilitates their role as advisors.

NIBP has the idea of combining international and national experience to cover provinces, including insecure parts of the country. While frequently unable to put internationals on the ground because of security considerations NIBP hopes to be able to channel their expertise through CDOs. .

The UN or NIBP prescribes some CDAs to be in the office for maximum 4 hours only. This compromises efficiency and in a few cases respectability. The rule is meaningful for ad-hoc presence, but it is not valid any more as soon as patterns emerge, as attacks are usual well planned. In one interview it became apparent that limited presence decreased respectability and support for the NIBP employee. If strong local embedment enhances security, than it is conceivable that compromising such local support might compromise security.

5.2.3 Recommendations

Disencourage CDOs to openly associate themselves with the UN, or at least do it with caution, for security reasons. CDOs are formally not UN employees, their security comes more from local embedment. To what extent that policy can be followed in more insecure regions needs more reflection. Wise decisions (travel in a UN car or not, go for UN security, or try to blend in) are to some extent situational as well.

Continue to make efforts in making the CDAs work in a MOSS compliant environment.

Suggest the UN security staff to re-evaluate the 4 hour rule applicable for some CDAs for regular presence in ministries.

6. Concluding remark

After this evaluation I am optimistic. I believe the NIBP is based on a viable and strong concept with an added value side by side with bigger players like the Worldbank and USAID. I hope that this mid-term evaluation further contributes to consolidating a sound strategy. In the same time in 2011-2012 progress had for a number of months been hampered by managerial and operational issues, which are now largely been solved, enabling the NIBP to make a significant contribution to better governance in Afghanistan.