

RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICE DELIVERY IN AFGHANISTAN

National Solidarity Program (NSP)

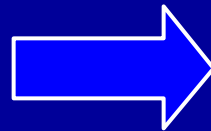
July 17, 2004

CURRENT STATUS

End April 2004 – 1 year into implementation

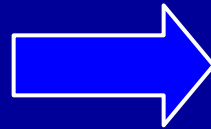
Implementation ongoing in 4,900 communities of 95 districts in all 32 provinces of the country (approximately one-third of the country's rural communities)

Community development councils elected:



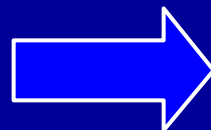
4,160 communities

Percentage of female voters:



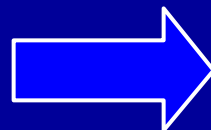
77%

Block grant disbursements (mid-May)



**\$10.7 million
(installments paid to communities)**

Block grant commitments:



\$21 million (project costs committed) in more than 2,000 communities

FOUR CORE ELEMENTS

Facilitation at the community level to:

- Help establish inclusive community institutions through secret-ballot elections
- Reach consensus on priorities and corresponding sub-project activities
- Develop eligible sub-proposals that comply with NSP appraisal criteria
- Implement approved project sub-proposals

Direct block grant transfers to communities for their sub-projects

Capacity building activities (financial management, procurement, technical skills, and transparency)

Linking community institutions with government administration and aid agencies

BLOCK GRANT ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Proposed by a representative Development Council elected through a community-wide secret ballot

Endorsed through an inclusive community-wide consultation process

Provides equitable access to benefits

Technically and financially sound

Includes an operation and maintenance plan

At least 10% community contributions in estimated monetary equivalent towards capital costs and full responsibility for operation and maintenance

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

NSP is executed by the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD)

Multi-ministry Steering Committee advises MRRD on program policy formulation, direction, and implementation

MRRD is supported by an internationally recruited program Oversight Consultant (GTZ Consulting and DAI)

Performance-based contracts with facilitating partners (Afghan and international NGOs and UN-Habitat) to assist communities and build local capacity. Contracts renewable on an annual basis

Key program management roles include:

- **Appraisal of project proposals from communities**
- **Transfer of block grant funds and disbursement for approved community projects**
- **Management of relations with facilitating partners**
- **Implementation supervision, monitoring and reporting**
- **Capacity building for MRRD and facilitating partners**

COUNTRY CONTEXT LIMITS ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Program contributes to nation-building objective – key to strengthen legitimacy of central government

No elected local governments exist at this stage

District-level administration not functional in most locations

However, secret-ballot elections of community development committees creates positive precedents for future local government elections