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Sida Decentralised Evaluation

Adam Pain
Bjørn Johannessen
[Name protected]
[Name protected]

Evaluation of Sida's Support to the Rural Access Improvement Programme (Phase I-III) in Afghanistan

Final Report

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**Final Report
March 2015**

**Adam Pain
Bjørn Johannessen
[Name protected]
[Name protected]**

Authors: Adam Pain, Bjørn Johannessen, [Name protected] and [Name protected]

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SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY

Address: S-105 25 Stockholm, Sweden. Office: Valhallavägen 199, Stockholm

Telephone: +46 (0)8-698 50 00. Telefax: +46 (0)8-20 88 64

E-mail: info@sida.se. Homepage: <http://www.sida.se>

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

	[Name protected]
ANDS	Afghanistan National Development Strategy
ARAP	Afghanistan Rural Access Project
APRP	Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Project
AUSAID	Australian Agency for International Development
	[Name protected]
	[Name protected]
DFID	Department For International Development
	[Name protected]
	[Name protected]
EM	Emergency Maintenance
GIROA	Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
	[Name protected]
	[Name protected]
	[Name protected]
	[Name protected]
	[Name protected]
	[Name protected]
	[Name protected]
	[Name protected]
	[Name protected]
NABDP	National Area Based Development Programme
NEEP	National Emergency Employment Programme
NEEPRA	National Emergency Employment Rural Access Project
NERAP	National Emergency Rural Access Project
NPP	National Priority Programme
NRAP	National Road Access Program
NSP	National Solidarity Programme
PBGF	Performance Based Governor's Fund
	[Name protected]
	[Name protected]
PDP	Provincial Development Plan
	[Name protected]
	[Name protected]
PIU	Programme Implementation Unit
QA/QC	Quality Assurance & Quality Control
	[Name protected]
	[Name protected]

PRRD	Provincial Rural Rehabilitation and Development
	[Name protected]
PWD	Public Works Department
RAIP	Rural Access Implementation Programme
RISF	Road Infrastructure Support Fund
SCA	Swedish Committee for Afghanistan
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
ToR	Terms of Reference
TST	Transitional Support Team
UNDSS	United Nations Department of Safety and Security
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
URAP	Uruzgan Rural Access Project
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank

Preface

In April 2014, the Afghanistan Unit at Sida Stockholm commissioned an Evaluation of the Rural Access Improvement Programme 2007 – 2015 (Phases I-III) in Northern Afghanistan. Indevelop was contracted to carry out the evaluation under Sida's framework agreement for reviews and evaluations. The main purpose of the evaluation is to provide Sida with lessons from RAIP I-III as a basis for the design of new interventions. The lessons to be drawn relate to conclusions and recommendations with regards to the effectiveness of RAIP, the role of UNOPS as an implementing partner, the focus of the programme and cooperation with stakeholders and reflections on implementation modalities for future support.

The review was originally intended to be carried out in September 2014 but due to security concerns was postponed to December 2014. The evaluation was carried out by Dr Adam Pain (team leader), Bjørn Johannessen (rural road specialist), [Name protected] (gender specialist) and [Name protected] (national consultant). Quality assurance was provided by Ian Christoplos while Jessica Rothman was responsible for the management of the process.

We are deeply grateful for the level of cooperation and degree of openness during the field review, the excellent organisation of the fieldwork by the current project manager and his colleagues, and for the presence of the former project manager who returned to Afghanistan for this evaluation.

Executive Summary

The Rural Access Improvement Programme (RAIP) was initiated in late 2007 and implemented in three phases (I, II, and III). RAIP was designed to support the expansion of a rural roads network in Northern Afghanistan. It is now in the second year of its third phase and this will end on December 31st 2015. The implementation has been contracted to the United Nations Office of Project Services (UNOPS) in all three phases. The core content of the three phases of RAIP has been infrastructure works, primarily of rural roads and bridges. In Phase II and III a small scale infrastructure works component (RISF Projects) at village level was added by Sida. These included projects to promote women's economic activity. A consistent overall objective of RAIP I-III has been to contribute to poverty reduction and support economic development of the region. Sida has provided funding of M SEK 420.945 over the three phases.

An evaluation was commissioned to assess RAIP's performance and impact and this report presents its findings and conclusions. The evaluation had three purposes. The first was to provide an assessment of the lessons learnt from RAIP I-III as a basis for the design of new Sida-financed interventions. The second has been to provide Sida with recommendations on the focus of RAIP, an assessment of the cooperation between stakeholders engaged in it, the role of UNOPS as an implementing partner and the overall effectiveness of the RAIP project, drawing from the overall objectives of RAIP over its three phases. The third prospective element has been to consider the different ways in which a future project might be implemented and supported. The overall analysis has been undertaken within the frame of the five DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.

The evaluation concludes that RAIP has made a significant contribution to the development of rural road infrastructure in its four project provinces over its seven years of operation. With respect to its roads, bridge and maintenance activities which have accounted for just over 87% of all expenditure, the activities have been highly relevant, implemented with great efficiency and effective in terms of RAIP's more immediate objectives. It has established the necessary pre-conditions for rural access and economic development, provided effective maintenance of the investments are continued after RAIP's completion. The project has contributed to the necessary capacities to provide maintenance during the course of the project. Less certain is whether these capacities will be maintained beyond the project. Project management has also been very effective at building relationships at all levels and has had positive effects on policy making at the provincial level both by design and example.

However with respect to the broader project objectives related to improved access to social services and markets and the creation of employment opportunities the evalua-

tion conclusions are more equivocal. A judgment of the evaluation is that RAIP could have paid more attention to these aspects in its design, monitoring and reporting. The evaluation considers that more employment generation by RAIP would have been possible although the steps taken are in the right direction. However the demand for employment in rural areas is considerable considering the poor health of the rural economy. There are limits to what RAIP could have contributed to overall employment.

Access to basic social services has improved and this can be linked to the development of the road network. However it has to be recognised that access is more than just physical availability and examples were found where new schools and health facilities were not staffed, or staffed with poorly qualified personnel and therefore not used.

The RISF projects, with their gender component were added onto RAIP II by Sida after the main project design had been agreed and these activities were continued into RAIP III. They have comprised about 12% of all expenditure. The project purpose for RAIP II was not rethought to accommodate this addition but was included in RAIP III as bridging objectives. The expectation that including gender components in this way would lead to mainstreaming of gender given the pre-existing project design and staffing was not realised.

It was unrealistic to expect that short term income generating activities could lead to women's economic empowerment. Empowerment is more complex and the evidence on the informal regulation of markets in Afghanistan suggests much greater strategic and long term support is required for women to achieve this. The UNOPS office was not staffed to provide this and the objective has not been achieved.

This evaluation makes a number of recommendations which should be addressed before completion of RAIP III. These include giving the project management delegated authority, undertaking an impact study, evaluating the success of the gender projects, concentrating of works consolidation in the final period and preparing a complete project exit strategy.

Recommendations with respect to the longer term suggest a focus on capacity and maintenance of improved roads, the application of higher design standards to respond to increased mobility, working within government structures and building on Sida's reputation in northern Afghanistan. A clear understanding of the context within which a new project is to operate will be fundamental to its design and objectives.

1 Introduction

The Rural Access Improvement Programme¹ (RAIP) was initiated in late 2007 and implemented in three phases (I, II, and III). RAIP was designed to support the expansion of a rural roads network in Northern Afghanistan. It is now in the second year of phase III and will end on December 31st 2015. The implementation has been contracted to the United Nations Office of Project Services (UNOPS²) in all three phases. The project has been linked to Sweden's support to the NATO security forces and the placement of a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT), subsequently named the Transition Support Team, (TST³) in Mazar-e-Sharif (hereafter Mazar) in Balkh Province. The support by Sida to RAIP reflected Sweden's commitment,⁴ to the economic development of Afghanistan, and the Northern provinces in particular. RAIP has evolved through its three overlapping phases (see table 1). In Phase I it was confined to Samangan and Sari-Pul provinces, funded for two years but not completed until December 2010. RAIP II was initiated in early 2010 and finished at the end of December 2013 and was designed to cover the same two provinces. However after contract signature, the design was subject to a number of amendments. These, *inter alia* expanded the geographical coverage of RAIP from two to four provinces, adding Balkh and Jawzjan, and adding, on the initiative of Sida, a new component – an infrastructure support programme (RISF) for small scale public works for villages close to the road construction in all provinces. These were continued into the third phase.

Table 1. The three phases of RAIP and their total budgets

	RAIP I	RAIP II	RAIP III
Project Period	Dec. 2007 – Dec. 2010	Feb.2010 – Dec. 2013	April 2013 – Dec. 2015
Budget (M. SEK)⁵	44,000,000	177,945,427	199,000,000
Budget (USD)	6,818,002	26,551,975	30,000,000

¹ The Sida characterises RAIP as a programme. UNOPS has treated it as a project with a project manager. To avoid confusion with Afghanistan national road programmes, this report will use the term RAIP or where necessary talk of the RAIP project.

² UNOPS is an operational arm of the UN which provides procurement and project management services and also implements infrastructure works.

³ The TST closed down in June 2014.

⁴ Four Ministry of Foreign Affairs Results Strategies cover the three phases of RAIP. The most recent (2014) does not include a specific focus on the Northern Provinces.

⁵ The contractual agreement between Sida and UNOPS is based on the Swedish Krona (SEK); UNOPS operates in US\$ and with currency fluctuations (the SEK has appreciated over the project period) the dollar budget has risen in all three phases.

This evaluation was commissioned (see Annex 1 for the ToR) by Sida to assess RAIP's performance and impact and this report presents its findings and conclusions. The evaluation has had three purposes. The first had been to provide an assessment of the lessons learnt from RAIP I-III as a basis for the design of new Sida-financed interventions. The second has been to provide Sida with recommendations on the focus of RAIP, an assessment of the cooperation between stakeholders engaged in it, the role of UNOPS as an implementing partner and the overall effectiveness of the RAIP project, drawing from the overall objectives of RAIP over its three phases (see table 2). The third prospective element has been to consider the different ways in which such a future related project might be implemented and supported. The overall analysis has followed the five DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability and the 21 evaluative questions (see Annex 2, inception report) structured by these DAC criteria.

This report has six parts including this introduction. Part 2 summarises the key aspects of RAIP and the context within which it has been implemented. Part 3 describes the methods used in the evaluation. In part 4 the report discusses the findings organised by the DAC evaluation criteria and responds to the specific evaluative questions. Part 5 provides the summary evaluation and Part 6 presents the recommendations.

Table 2: Comparison of overall objectives and programme purpose of the three phases of RAIP

	RAIP I	RAIP II	RAIP III
Overall Objective	To contribute to the Government's overall objective of Equitable Growth through Poverty Reduction	To contribute to reduction of poverty in rural areas, bridge regional disparities and support the GoA's efforts towards equitable growth.	To contribute to the reduction of poverty in rural areas; bridge disparities between urban and rural areas and support the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan's efforts towards equitable growth
Programme Purpose	A: To support enhanced livelihoods by providing sustainable access infrastructure and targeted employment in critical times of the year	A: Increase and sustain the access of people living within the project area to social services and market centres in larger regional towns,	A: To increase and sustain accessibility to social services and market centres in the project area
		B: Develop road construction and maintenance capacity in the provinces and	B: To develop road construction and maintenance capacity
		C: Create employment opportunities	C: To create employment opportunities

2 RAIP and its context

RAIP Components

The core content of the three phases of RAIP was infrastructure works, primarily of rural roads and bridges. A consistent overall objective of RAIP I-III has been to contribute to poverty reduction and support economic development of the region (table 2). RAIP's purpose however expanded from a focus on access to public goods and employment to include market access and development of road construction and maintenance capacity. It aimed to build close cooperation and engage with various partners at multiple levels and develop skills and capacities to design, build and maintain these rural roads. Further it has sought, through the road works, to build significant employment and economic opportunities for men and women, particularly in phases II and III. A summary of outputs delivered during phases I and II of RAIP and plans for phase III are presented in Table 3. Phase III has seen an increasing attention to maintenance and training activities at various levels.

Table 3: Main Phase I and II RAIP outputs and plans for RAIP III (Source: UNOPs 2013, Atlas for RAIP)

Activity	RAIP I and II	RAIP III	
		Secondary Road	Tertiary Road
Road Construction/ Rehabilitation	431 km	79	78
Bridge Construction	26		
Periodic Road Maintenance	65 km	160	
Routine Road Maintenance	492 km	1059	236
Snow clearing	119 km		
RISF Projects (RAIP II)	96	Various**	
Person days employment	50975 (RAIP I), 10% women 349549 (RAIP II*) 25% women	584000 paid labour days, establish 20 women's groups providing 72000 days of paid employment	

* to September 31st 2013. ** including 50 km village roads, 10 water supply schemes, 30 water well and hand pumps, 5 water supply.

Expenditure on roads, bridges, maintenance and emergency work (snow clearing, bridge reconstruction after floods, etc.) accounted for over 87% of expenditure (table 4). The remaining 12% has been spent on the RISF projects, which has included the income generation projects for women.

Table 4 : Percentage breakdown of total expenditure (M. US\$) RAIP I-III by province and activity on infrastructure and RISF activities (excluding UNOPS costs etc.)

	Roads	Bridges	Maintenance	Emergencies	RISF	
Saripul	47.22	60.76	27.22	58.95	24.30	44.41
Samangan	22.08	12.75	69.89	28.03	17.40	24.64
Balkh	18.99	12.72	1.51	3.68	29.71	17.91
Jawzjan	11.71	13.77	1.38	9.35	28.59	13.04
All	69.70	5.91	7.07	5.13	12.19	100
Value	23.673	2.005	2.400	1.74	4.139	33.962

Source : UNOPS Project Office, July 28th 2014. This does not include expenditure planned for 2015.

The balance of expenditure between provinces has not been equal. Sari-pul has received over 44% expenditure, comprising almost 50% of the road costs and 60% of the bridge costs. The reduced level of expenditure in Samangan in part reflects the cessation of activities in the province for a period due to a dispute with the governor. The balance of expenditure in both Balkh and Jawzjan reflects the fact that investments were not made in these provinces until after the start of RAIP II. However attention needs to be drawn to the significance of RISF investments in these two provinces which is possibly related to the influence of the Swedish PRT.

A map is attached (Annex 10) indicating the location of investments in the different provinces.

Context

RAIP in its phases II-III has worked in two distinct agro-ecological terrains. Sari-pul and Samangan provinces which RAIP I was confined to, are essentially mountainous provinces characterised by ribbons of settlement and irrigated agriculture around semi-permanent and seasonal water sources. There is a significant hinterland of rain-fed settlement and transhumant livestock practices. These are primarily subsistence and food insecure economies with significant outmigration for employment and income. Accordingly, levels of poverty are significantly higher in these areas than in the plains⁶. In contrast the provinces of Jawzjan and Balkh into which RAIP expanded during phase II and III, are mainly plain economies (Balkh in the south contains the Arbus mountains) dominated by major irrigation schemes. They are agricultural surplus areas, well connected to markets and poverty levels are significantly lower.

⁶ [Name protected] and World Bank (2012) Poverty and Food Security in Afghanistan. Analysis based on the National Risk Vulnerability Assessment of 2007-8, Kabul: Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and World Bank.

There is however spatial variation in poverty levels with households downstream tending to be poorer than those upstream. These contrasts in agroecology have significance in relation to the pre-existing conditions prior to RAIP implementation, the economic potential of the provinces and the likely impacts that rural roads will generate⁷. Nevertheless the rural economy of Balkh is in poor health and the more vibrant urban economy has been driven by factors other than agriculture.⁸

There are also significant political differences. Balkh has historically been a core regional centre of power in Afghanistan, while the provinces of Samangan and Sari-pul have been on the periphery. Over the last decade the rise to power of Governor Atta in Balkh has consolidated Balkh's position, but also been a source of tension between Balkh and Jawzjan where a second key political player, General Dostum, has been based.⁹ Further the transition of former powerful commanders into formal positions has not brought a different (or more formalised) political order. The establishment of formal structures has failed to displace the informal networks of patronage and relationships that so often determine access to economic opportunities and services, creating what has been termed a 'government of relationships'.¹⁰ The relationship between the *de facto* and the *de jure* state is highly ambiguous with both cooperative and conflictual elements.¹¹ Evidence from the RAIP documentation of challenges of implementation in Samangan support this point,¹² but also indicates that in resource scarce provinces such as Sari-pul and Samangan road building programmes are more likely to be seen as a potential source of rent seeking than in the richer provinces of the plains.

The governance of the economic market place is equally challenging.¹³ The available evidence suggests that informal markets in Afghanistan display a complex array of features. They are subject to a high degree of informal regulation, determined by social identity, gender and geography. This regulation sets the terms and conditions of

⁷ These differences are reflected in the official categorisation of provinces. Balkh and Jawzjan are categorised as first level provinces (at least 1 million population, 8000 km² area) while Sari-pul and Jawzjan are third level provinces (at least 0.45 m population, 4000 km²) Draft Local Governance Law, April 2012.

⁸ Fishtein, P with [Name protected] an [Name protected]. (2013) Balkh's Economy in Transition. Kabul, [Name protected]

⁹ Antonio Giustozzi (2012) The Resilient Oligopoly: A Political Economy of Northern Afghanistan 2001 and Onwards. Kabul, [Name protected]

¹⁰ Nixon, H. (2008) Subnational State-Building in Afghanistan. Kabul: [Name protected], p. 26.

¹¹ Roitman, J. (2005) *Fiscal Disobedience: An Anthropology of Economic Regulation in Central Africa*. Princeton: Princeton UP, p. 18-9.

¹² UNOPS (2011) Annual Report: Annex 1

¹³ Pain, A and Mallet, R. (2014). Gender, youth and urban labour market participation: evidence from the tailoring sector in Kabul, Afghanistan. Working Paper, SLRC. Kabul & London. [Name protected] and ODI; [Name protected], [Name protected], and Pain, A. (2014). The social life of the onion: the informal regulation of the onion market in Nangarhar, Afghanistan. Working Paper, SLRC. Kabul & London. [Name protected] and ODI;

access and the distribution of returns. Market access therefore has to be understood with respect to its social regulatory dimensions as well as its physical accessibility.

The relative inequality of Afghan women is well documented. Afghanistan has some of the worst indicators globally for the situation of women and their rights. They are disadvantaged in terms of life expectancy, educational achievements and standard of living and there are significant gaps in terms of access to health and education, access to and control over resources, economic opportunities and political participation. As the National Risk and Vulnerability assessment of 2011-12 illustrates, women are distinctly disadvantaged in relation to engagement in the labour market, particularly so in rural areas. Various studies¹⁴ make clear how patriarchal gender structures within the household can act as strong barriers to market engagement. Pathways to skill acquisition and terms of labour market participation, even in urban areas, are socially regulated and deeply gendered.¹⁵ Even where women find opportunities to work outside the home, strong reasons exist to retain affiliation with the household that may limit a desire for autonomy. Within a market place that is governed by personal relationships, women face major challenges accessing, for example, informal credit. In sum, the barriers to women's market engagement are complex and variable.

As the RAIP quarterly and annual reports show, RAIP has been implemented in an environment of risk and uncertainty. Some of those dimensions relate to political uncertainty and insecurity which at times have brought implementation to a stop. Others relate to events such as flash floods. A dimension that has not been commented on in the RAIP documentation is that of economic insecurity. The significant rise in food prices during 2008 due to a poor harvest and a tightening of regional food supplies may have made the need for employment for food security particularly significant.¹⁶

¹⁴ [Name protected] [Name protected] and [Name protected] (2011) Afghan Values or Women's Rights? Gendered Narratives about Continuity and Change in Urban Afghanistan. IDS Working Paper 387

¹⁵ Adam Pain and Richard Mallet, (2014) "Gender, youth and urban labour market participation: evidence from the tailoring sector in Kabul, Afghanistan" SLRC, ODI/ [Name protected] p. VI.

¹⁶ [Name protected] and World Bank (2012) Poverty and Food Security in Afghanistan. Analysis based on the National Risk Vulnerability Assessment of 2007-8, Kabul: Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and World Bank.

3 Evaluation methods

The evaluation was carried out in two phases. The first part consisted of interviews (see Annex 3a) in Sweden in June and August 2014 with key Sida staff from the Afghanistan Unit. This included the then current desk officer for RAIP, the previous desk officer and the oversight consultant for the project. It had also been arranged to interview the former head of the Transition Support Team (TST) in Stockholm during August 2014 but this did not happen¹⁷ despite the best efforts of the evaluation team to arrange an interview. The fieldwork for the evaluation was planned for mid September but due to security concerns by the United Nations resulting from an uncertain outcome from the Afghanistan presidential election, the evaluation was postponed at the last moment. It was finally held between December 7 – 21st 2014. At the last moment, due to ill health, the gender specialist of the evaluation team was replaced with [Name protected].

The first part of the fieldwork (see Annex 3b for a detailed itinerary and list of people met) consisted of three days of interviews in Kabul. Relevant officials in the key Ministries ([Name protected] , [Name protected] and [Name protected]) including coordinators of relevant national programme (NRAP – National Rural Access Program) were met. Discussions were held with Director of UNOPS and the UNOPS RAIP team, including the former project manager who had been brought back to Afghanistan to be present during the evaluation. Team leaders of other UNOPS led projects concerned with rural infrastructure were also interviewed. Meetings were also held with the World Bank and the Embassy of Sweden.

The second part of the field evaluation which took place between 10 – 19th December consisted of field work in the four provinces in which RAIP has operated. In each province meetings were held with relevant provincial and district officials and field visits made to inspect rural infrastructure work undertaken under RAIP including the RISF projects, meet with women's groups and talk to men – individual and in groups from villages alongside the roads.

Security management was a significant constraint on the scope and depth of the fieldwork. The RAIP UNOPS team has to operate under UNDSS guidelines and in three of the provinces (Balkh, Jawzjan and Sari-pul) this required travelling with an armed police escort. In Sari-pul on the Shebergan to Sari-pul city road a military es-

¹⁷ There is an e mail correspondence which documents the planning for this meeting. However communication over this arrangement lapsed. A follow up e mail in January 2015 was not responded to.

cort was added for part of the road as this was seen to be a particular security risk. The requirement to return to Mazar city every night and by dusk limited the distance that could be travelled and the duration of interviews, which at times had to be cut short. The remoter areas of the provinces could not be reached and field visits were tightly constrained in terms of time that could be spent talking to people. In Jawzjan the district head of police stopped the evaluation team from travelling into the district. The presence of armed police was a constraint on being able to conduct open informal interviews. Where possible in more secure areas the evaluation team split up to separately meet with women, talk to villagers and inspect the infrastructure but this was not always possible. Fortunately in Samangan there were no security restrictions in place and this enabled a field visit to a remoter part of the province.

The data on which this evaluation draws comes from both a critical reading of the documentary record of the RAIP, interviews with informants from the RAIP team, government authorities at central and provincial level, members of rural households and Sida staff in Stockholm. The evaluation has drawn where relevant on academic literature. Summary interview notes of the case study interviews are included in Annex 5 (Field Informant Interviews) and Annex 6 (Case studies of Women's Project) since they are a key evidence source from which this evaluation has drawn. The necessity for these studies in part was driven by the absence of such understanding within the project documentation. As case studies they do not provide a basis for generalisation about the project as a whole but as case studies they raise important issues for the assessment of project impact.

4 Findings

4.1 OVERALL ASSESSMENT

The dilapidated state of the rural road network in Northern Afghanistan at the start of the Sida funding in 2007 is well understood and this review believe it has a good grasp of what rural road connectivity is now. The review is impressed by the contribution that RAIP has made to the improvement of rural road infrastructure in the project provinces. It was struck by the engagement and commitment of the UNOPS project staff that were met and the strong relationships and effective working partnerships that they have established with relevant provincial authorities. We wish to particularly acknowledge the role that the long term project manager has played in achieving this. The contribution of the project oversight consultant should also be acknowledged. In sum RAIP has made a significant contribution to the development of rural road infrastructure in its mandate provinces.

Finding 1: RAIP has made a significant contribution to the development of the rural road infrastructure in its four project provinces, and particularly so in Sari-pul and Samangan.

However that assessment is balanced with the view that the reporting of RAIP has focussed largely on the delivery of rural infrastructure – the activities and outputs of the project – which it has done in detail and well. However the relations between outputs and project purpose have received less attention and evidence of impact is much less clearly evidenced. Where it has been most strongly claimed – for example in the impact of women’s economic activities – we are not convinced that the evidence supports the claims. In part there appears to have been a limited understanding of how best project impact could be assessed and the project baseline studies are, in the view of the evaluation, unusable. But it has also become clear that the project has collected relevant data in relation to road traffic that it could have used more analytically and persuasively to show the impacts of RAIP.

Finding 2: RAIP has not done justice to its achievements in its analysis and reporting. It has not systematically investigated or analysed the relation between output delivery and project purpose and more could have been done.

4.2 THE RELEVANCE OF RAIP

4.2.1 Q1: To what extent have the interventions conformed to the needs and priorities of target groups and the policies of the Government of Afghanistan?

As a rural access programme, by definition the target groups are rural households. While no specific assessment has been done of rural households’ needs and priorities, which are many, it is revealing that of the rural infrastructure priorities identified un-

der the National Solidarity Programme¹⁸ (NSP), over 60 percent of infrastructure projects were for rural roads. Most of the informants interviewed in villages (see case studies in Annex 5) and in government expressed great appreciation of the RAIP built rural roads.

There have also been two National Priority Programmes since 2002 (NEEP and NRAP¹⁹) that have prioritised rural access, a government policy priority also reflected in the ANDS²⁰. The RISF projects are also clearly responding to a demand from villagers and despite their disparate and scattered nature are consistent with various government policies. In sum the evidence suggests that RAIP has conformed to the needs of both the target groups and Afghanistan government policy.

Relevance of employment generation

Although RAIP I did not specifically identify employment as an output, the number of workdays created for local villagers was already identified as one of the benefits of the project. Recognising the job creation potential in the road works, RAIP II and III included employment generation as a project purpose. Additional jobs were created through community contracts for works suitable for manual labour instead of using heavy construction equipment. The contribution of the project to longer term employment – e.g. through the creation of labour based maintenance systems will depend, as discussed later, on funding to support this. At present this is not in place.

The evaluation judges that considering the high demand for jobs in the project areas, more efforts could have been made to generate jobs in the construction works. There is clear evidence from earlier road works programmes in Afghanistan as well as from rural road works programmes in other countries that more jobs could have been created if the project had carried out a closer review of technology choice and considered more labour-intensive work methods for some of the work activities.²¹

During the early stages of RAIP, employment was also offered to women through the production of aggregate for concrete works and weaving of gabion boxes for retaining walls. These initiatives seem to have been discontinued during the later stages of the RAIP. Retaining walls often constitute a third of the costs of building rural roads in mountainous terrain and could have provided a significant source of employment in RAIP if the use of gabion structures had been favoured instead of mortar bound ma-

¹⁸ Beath, A., Christia, F. and Enikolopov, F. (2013), Randomised Impact Evaluation of Afghanistan's National Solidarity Programme. Final Report. Washington, World Bank

¹⁹ See Annex 9 for a brief summary of Afghanistan's road programme since 2002

²⁰ GIROA, (2010). Afghanistan National Development Strategy

²¹ Johannessen B., (1983). Employment-intensive infrastructure development for socio-economic growth, Geneva, International Labour Office; Coukis B., Labor-based Construction Programs: A Practical Guide for Planning and Management, World Bank; Banjo G. (2012). Rural Transport : Improving its Contribution to Growth and Poverty Reduction in Sub-Saharan Africa, World Bank; Veselinovic, Z., (1993). Rehabilitation of Feeder Roads Using Labour-based Methods, Technical Manual, UNOPS, Afghanistan Project Office, Peshawar.

sonry. Additional work opportunities could then have been generated through the continued manufacture of gabions, supply of stone, and assembly and erection of gabion structures.

It is generally recognised that key road work activities such as transport of building materials and compaction works require heavy construction equipment. However experience from other rural road programmes in similar terrain conditions, (see the Sida supported district road works programme in Lesotho²²), have proven that rural road works can generate significant employment. It is noted that the World Food Programme has been running a large Food for Work Programme in the RAIP project area in which some 5,700 km of earth roads have been constructed.²³ Although these roads have been built to rudimentary standards compared to the RAIP, it shows that more jobs could be created during road construction works. With a careful balance of the use of labour and machines, it is possible to increase employment opportunities and also achieve the same quality work outputs.

Relevance of capacity building

Capacity building has been given increased attention in RAIP II & III. This support has been highly relevant, considering the limited ability of government to deliver public services such as infrastructure provision. The fact that all three phases of RAIP were implemented by UNOPS reflects a lack of capacity within Government to deal with the state of physical infrastructure after many years of neglect. At the start of RAIP competences in government to manage the provision of secondary and tertiary roads²⁴ and extend roads to communities still not connected were absent.

The RAIP capacity building component for the road sector has focused on technical training for government engineers, contractors, project technical staff, university graduates and providing brief introductory courses in basic road works technology for members of community development committees. A local consultancy firm based in the project area has delivered the RAIP III training programme. Instructors and specialists have been contracted in from various places in Afghanistan to adequately cover the training subjects. The choice of training subjects seems relevant to typical

²² Lennartsson and Stiedl, (1995) Technology Choice, Man or Machines, Case Studies from Lesotho and Zimbabwe, ILO Harare

²³ Covering the provinces of Saripul, Samangan, Jawzjan, Balkh and Faryab.

²⁴ With no official classification of roads in Afghanistan, the evaluation has chosen to use the terms commonly used in the project, which is "district roads" and "tertiary roads". The district roads refer to roads which would serve as the secondary part of the network, i.e. branching out from the national roads to connect district centres and functioning as the collector roads to which tertiary roads connect. Tertiary roads are the village access roads, many of which are only simple tracks, however still very important as they often provide the single "road" access between communities and the rest of the road network. Secondary roads are strictly speaking not considered as a rural road although they contribute to rural access. In the context of Afghanistan, it is the tertiary roads which fit the common understanding of what a rural road is.

works in which road engineers are engaged. The relevance of the subjects has been further strengthened through field training sessions conducted at project work sites.

The civil engineering studies at the universities in the North do not offer any courses in road works technology. Therefore the training offered by the project to the engineering graduates constitutes a valuable addition to their education.

Providing training to engineers and contractors in contracts management is both beneficial to project implementation and contributes to improved procurement practices in the sector as a whole. The training of contractors in contracts management and engineering subjects also contribute to the skills and capacity improvements in the domestic construction industry. Equally, the theoretical and on-the-job training provided in financial management and accounting to local administrative staff within RAIP is a valuable asset to the country.

Capacity building, however, is not only a technical issue or just about training. Experience shows that improving technical skills is the easiest part in any capacity building programme. The heavy challenges are related to supervision of works programmes, contracts management and financial management. Capacities are needed to ensure that such activities are delivered in a timely manner and carried out applying good governance standards in terms of transparency and accountability. This is also the case in Afghanistan, and it is in these fields the challenges still remain the largest.

It is evident that such capacity has been developed in the RAIP project management team. Since most team members are Afghan nationals, this type of skills development is valuable for the sector. Although this was not realistic at the start of RAIP given the lack of staff within government, in future projects it is likely to be more relevant to install such capacity directly within the technical line agencies responsible for the provision of various types of public infrastructure.

4.2.2 Q2: To what extent have the interventions been complementary to other actions by development banks, donors and the government including the rehabilitation and maintenance responsibilities of the secondary road network by the Directorate of Public Works?

Given the focus of RAIP on district roads and the evidence found of close consultation by the RAIP project with provincial authorities, both in its connectivity planning and infrastructure works implementation, it would be surprising if there was no complementarity. Further given the significant role of RAIP in the two more remote provinces of Sari-pul and Samangan the scope for duplication has been limited. Field evidence was found both in Samangan and in Balkh of clear and planned synergies among different actors in the road sector. On the road maintenance side, and given the limited resources that [Name protected] have had for road maintenance there is clearly coordination between donors on maintenance activities.

On the RISF projects we can be less certain. Examples were found of possible duplication. For example in Balk a RISF well and water tank had been installed in one village which had received a well installation from the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan two years earlier. In Jawzjan an informant reported that a new RAIP gravel road had previously been rehabilitated by an NGO and prior to that an NSP project has resurfaced a road (Annex 5, case 7). The scale of duplication we cannot assess but

it is not evident that, for example, a full evaluation of NSP projects delivered was done in relation to an assessment of the RISF project priorities. It also appears that the gender projects were done largely in ignorance of programming activities of other agencies (see Annex 6, case 11) with a longer history of seeking women's economic empowerment. However the small scale and duration of these RISF projects has limited complementarity or disconnect with interventions by other agencies.

4.2.3 Q3: To what extent have the programmes been in line with the policies of the Swedish government, and especially on the objectives stated in the current strategy for Swedish development Cooperation in Afghanistan

In the 2012-2014 Swedish development cooperation strategy²⁵ specific focus was given to the four provinces of Northern Afghanistan and the role of support to the development and maintenance of local roads as pro-development investment activities. Although in the more recent strategy²⁶ a specific focus to Northern Afghanistan is not stated, there is still a focus on the provision of infrastructure to rural areas, rural development and private sector development. Thus RAIP has been in line with Swedish Government policy in general and specifically given RAIP's focus on the perspectives of the poor – e.g. their demand for roads and attention to gender issues.

4.2.4 Q4: To what extent were issues of relevance included in the Road Connectivity Development Plans and to what extent was the prioritisation of the RCDP followed?

The selection of road works resulted from extensive discussions with local authorities. This process was structured by the preparation of road connectivity development plans²⁷ in which priority rehabilitation works were identified. The process was closely coordinated with other interventions by other donors and programmes. For the secondary road works the road connectivity plans provide a clear rationale behind the selection and priority of works based on an objective assessment of the original condition of the roads, the location of major access constraints and connectivity needs. As a result there is no doubt about the relevance of the district road works. For the tertiary roads and RISF, the prioritisation process is less clear, partly because there is no complete inventory of existing assets and needs.

Relevance of the road construction programme

RAIP I concentrated on improving key secondary roads which at the time were identified as the main access constraints in the project area. Once district roads had been improved, RAIP II and III placed more emphasis on (i) district road maintenance and

²⁵ Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sweden. (2011). Revised development cooperation strategy: Afghanistan. January 2012 – December 2014.

²⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sweden, (2014). Results strategy for Sweden's international development cooperation with Afghanistan. 2014-2019.

²⁷ See for example UNOPS, (2009) Road Connectivity Network Development Plan (Final Draft) Saripul Province. RAIP

(ii) improving access to communities away from the district roads through the construction of tertiary roads. This is a logical evolution of the road works programme – commonly seen in rural access improvement programmes. The district roads provide the main transport arteries into the rural areas and to which all other access roads connect. It therefore makes sense to first improve the main routes into the project area before tertiary access roads are added to the network.

Although, the rationale behind the selection of tertiary road works is not as obvious, the traffic counts carried out on these roads give evidence of their relevance. Observed traffic volumes on the RAIP tertiary roads²⁸ range from 60 to 1,200 vehicles per day, which is generally considered as sufficient justification for investing in such improvement works.²⁹

Relevance of road maintenance programme

There are two reasons for the importance of this component. First, there is very limited capacity within government to maintain rehabilitated roads. Budgets for such purposes are extremely limited, while the demand is growing as a result of more roads being improved to maintainable standards. Without this support, it is highly probable that the roads improved by RAIP would not have received the maintenance they require. Without such inputs, the roads would have quickly fallen into disrepair and the benefits from improved access would not have materialised. The benefits of improved roads are only sustained if the roads are maintained to good standards.

Second, most of the roads have been improved with a gravel surface. Although all types of roads require regular maintenance, gravel roads demand more attention. The resulting significant traffic increases on the improved roads further emphasise the need for continuous maintenance. In addition, many project roads pass through mountains where erosion from rivers and streams create extra maintenance demands.

The increasing traffic on roads several years after they were improved is proof of both the relevance and impact of the maintenance works. The field observations carried out during this evaluation confirm that the roads included in the RAIP maintenance programme remain in good condition and allow easy access by all types of vehicles.

4.2.5 Q5: To what extent has the roads programme taken account of and sought to build synergies with other drivers of socio-economic development and poverty reduction?

Roads by definition are the main arteries through which social and economic development is possible. Where roads lead, development in other sectors, including public goods delivery is likely to follow. Road thus are a necessary condition for socio-

²⁸ See annex 7

²⁹ Jerry Lebo and Dieter Schelling, (2001). Design and Appraisal of Rural Transport Infrastructure: Ensuring Basic Access for Rural Communities, World Bank Technical Paper No. 496

economic development and the priority activities within PDCs have clearly recognised this. However it has to be recognised that roads are not sufficient in themselves and the broader political preconditions for growth and severe water constraints that many rural areas face, have not provided a conducive environment for socio-economic development. Deep levels of poverty mean that many poor rural households cannot afford to pay for transport on the improved roads (see for example Annex 5, case 3).

Finding 3: RAIP, particularly in its rural infrastructure, capacity building, maintenance and employment activities has had high relevance to its target groups, the government of Afghanistan policy and the policies of the Swedish Government. It could have done more with respect to employment. It has on the whole been highly complementary to other actions and interventions. Nevertheless the contribution of the roads programme to socio-economic development has been limited due to factors beyond RAIP's scope of influence.

4.3 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF RAIP

4.3.1 Q6 To what extent have the objectives of the roads programme been met, focusing on intended outcome and impact.

RAIP has had three objectives to be achieved in the near term:

- To increase and sustain accessibility to social services and market centres in the project areas
- To develop road construction and maintenance capacity
- To create employment opportunities

On the first, improved physical access to clinics and schools has been found. In some cases this has been because as a result of improved roads, new infrastructure for services could be easily constructed. In other cases, roads enabled greater mobility at cheaper cost to reach such services (Annex 5, case 2). In two cases (Annex 5, Case 11 & 12) however a new school was built but not staffed so access had not changed. In the same case the district clinics were poorly staffed so not used. In relation to market access two cases were found (Annex 5, case 2 and 10) where richer households in well resourced (irrigated) areas with good access to roads had expanded production to engage with markets. However in many cases in the remoter higher altitude environments (Annex 5, Case 11 and 12) and in the plains at the bottom end of river irrigation systems (Annex 5, Case 8), which are water scarce grain deficit economies, market access had not changed. Remittances in many remoter villages from migrant labour remain the major source of income and this has been the case at least for the last decade. Improved connectivity may have made such migration easier.

On the second objective, road construction and maintenance capacity has increased within the RAIP team, in the construction industry and for community level maintenance. The creation of village level maintenance teams has been for some a critical source of employment (see annex 5, case 6). However this is less certain within relevant provincial government departments, raising sustainability concerns.

This matters as the improvement works have resulted in many gravel roads having traffic volumes in excess of what is normally considered as cost efficient management of rural roads. High traffic volumes cause heavy wear of the gravel surfaces and as a result regravelling works are required more frequently. While originally RAIP aimed to improve basic access to the district centres, the purpose of RAIP has changed. Now the main challenge is to maintain good access to the same communities through timely and regular maintenance of district roads.

Since the roads were improved, traffic levels in many places have reached levels which now warrant an asphalt surface when considering the combined costs of improvement and maintenance costs during the lifetime of the road. A commonly used rule of thumb is that gravel roads are manageable with traffic volumes up to 100 vehicles per day. When traffic increases beyond this level it is often more economic to provide an asphalt seal. Most of the secondary roads upgraded by RAIP experience traffic levels well above this threshold.

Without looking at the savings in transport and vehicle operating costs, a simple calculation using project unit costs illustrates this argument. At present, the project pays on average 15,000 US\$/km to regrave a district road. In comparison, the costs of upgrading a road with an asphalt surface is estimated at around 75,000 US\$/km which is expected to last for roughly 10 years. On many district roads there is a need to regrave every two years, which implies that over a 10 year period it would cost a total of 75,000 US\$/km. Although the two solutions may appear to have similar costs, the gravel solution involves more frequent maintenance interventions. Furthermore, the gravel solution places a more immediate maintenance burden on the government once the project ends as compared to when a road is asphalted.

A common approach to this issue is to first address the basic access challenges, by improving existing earth and gravel roads. Once road connectivity is secured, the next step is to look at how the network is best managed. When the costs of maintaining a gravel road exceeds a certain level due to increasing traffic, the obvious measure would be to further upgrade it with a more durable surface.

The discussion on choice of gravel or asphalt surfaces in rural access programmes is not new and is also a hot topic in Afghanistan. Since many villages are still without any road connections, demands for new road access remains high. When budgets are limited, there are some hard choices to be made. When allocating funds to various road activities, there will always be competing demands. In this case, the choice is between upgrading existing roads to asphalt standard or building new access roads to communities still not connected to the network. This is not to say that all the good works carried out so far have been wasted. RAIP has improved road alignments, installed durable river protection and retaining walls, constructed durable river cross-

ings and good road drainage which are all investments which form the basis for any solid road, irrelevant of the choice of road surface. The remaining gravel surfaces can also act as a firm base for a future asphalt surface.

NRAP has attempted to provide guidelines on how to balance demands between new connectivity and higher investments in asphalt surfaces on gravel roads with excessive traffic.³⁰ These guidelines have also been adopted by RAIP. Due to budget limitations all demands have not been possible to address. Still, it seems as if RAIP have attempted to meet demands both in terms of providing asphalt surfaces on roads with high traffic and at the same time connecting more communities with all-year access through a growing programme of tertiary road construction.

RAIP has certainly provided employment in its construction and maintenance activities and there is some evidence of the significance of the maintenance work as a means to provide income for the very poor (Annex 5, Case 6), but the long term availability of this income source is uncertain. But employment generation has been modest compared to the demand for jobs. In the recruitment arrangements for the community works in RAIP I, each person employed only received three days of work in order to give employment to all households. The fact that jobs had to be rationed to this extent shows the great need for jobs in the project area. Since most of the population served by the roads are households with limited land and opportunity for generating surplus harvests, there is a great demand for additional sources of income.

The project proposal for RAIP II envisaged a total of 813,675 workdays generated. At first sight this figure may seem impressive but it is only equivalent to 2,700 years of full employment during a four year period³¹ – or an average of 170 full time jobs each year in each of the project provinces. The project achieved roughly half of this planned job creation at 466,895 workdays – equivalent to an average of 97 full-time jobs each year in each of the four provinces. In RAIP III, the planned employment creation has been reduced to 584,000 workdays. In later stages of the RAIP, more employment was generated through the growing maintenance programme and in particular the routine maintenance works mostly carried out with manual labour.

Finding 4: The RAIP Programme has partially achieved the stated programme purposes. However these programme purposes were ambitious given the context within which RAIP was implemented. The use of rural roads has changed as a result of RAIP activities but factors beyond RAIP'S control have limited its wider impacts.

³⁰ See Annex 9 in the Afghanistan Rural Access Project, ARAP

³¹ $813,675 / 12 \text{ months} / 25 \text{ days per month} = 2700 \text{ work years}$. $2700 \text{ work years over } 4 \text{ years} = 2700 / 4 \text{ years} / 4 \text{ provinces} = 170 \text{ works years annually in each provinces}$. $466,895 \text{ workdays} = 466,895 / 25 \text{ days} / 4 \text{ years} / 4 \text{ provinces} = 97 \text{ work years annual in each province}$

4.3.2 Q7: What factors, internal and external to the programmes, have influenced the fulfilment of objectives (positively or negatively)?

As noted above the management and implementation of the project has been to a very high standard. It has clearly largely resisted external attempts to direct programme delivery by powerful actors in formal and informal positions³² although understanding micro level politics about division of resources between villages may have been more limited (see Annex 5, case 11). As a result the construction of the road network is likely to have mitigated some of the more negative external factors – in other words, things would have been worse without the road project. A core negative factor has been the decline of the rural economy in the north, attributable in part to acute water scarcities in many parts. However note has to be taken of the fact that the expansion of the project mandate from two to four provinces and from high altitude to include lower altitude regions may have diluted the poverty focus of the programme. Equally the implicit incorporation of security objectives into the programme is seen by the evaluation as problematic (discussed in section 4.5.5). The expansion of the mandate of the project from a narrow road works scope, moving it to a multi-sectoral approach may have weakened the focus.

On the other hand RAIP project implementation arrangements have built ownership and engagement from the side of the donor to an extent which one would normally not see in the case of budget support arrangements. This ownership has taken Sida through three phases of RAIP and may lead to continued engagement in road access in the project area. The fact that Sida is now supporting a “Roads to Jobs” project appears to be a result of past direct engagement in the project area. Continued presence in the project area, thus committing Sida to engaging with local authorities, is important as long as Sida wishes to continue supporting rural development. It allows for improved insight in local challenges which is not possible to obtain when predominantly dealing with central authorities through a budget support scheme (similar to Sida’s engagement in NRAP).

Since RAIP has been a stand alone project and locally managed, Sida has had the opportunity to monitor progress directly and when necessary been able to successfully address contentious issues, and respond to emergencies (e.g. flood rehabilitation works and snow clearance). Through the continuous fielding of a technical specialist and other involvement such as from the embassy, Sida has been able to deal with specific issues to a level of detail which is normally not achieved in a nationwide programme such as NRAP. It is firmly believed that through such direct interventions, the project has been able to achieve more than the challenges would at first have suggested was possible.

But despite the fact that the RAIP has been managed locally, they have not fully exploited the full potential of this advantage. With the project located in Mazar, there

³² See Annex 1, UNOPS (2012) RAIP II, Annual Progress Report for 2011.p27

has been potential to further strengthen capacity in local government and private sector. Equally, with their proximity to project work sites, more efforts could have been made to explore aspects such as work methods which generate more employment, application of alternative surfacing solutions, promote greater involvement of women, closer monitoring of impact of roads through traffic surveys and origin and destination surveys, spatial planning for selection of tertiary roads, closer coordination with other related programmes such as NSP, WFP and education and health sectors.

4.3.3 Q8: How has the choice of implementing a specific programme instead of contributing e.g. to the National Rural Access Programme (NRAP) contributed (positively or negatively) to effectiveness?

In the view of the evaluation the implementation modality was appropriate at the time of project design and given the strong management RAIP has enabled a delivery that is likely not to have been possible if the funding had been provided to NRAP (and see response to Q7 above). The delegated authority held by the long term project manager (but not by the current one) has been critical to this. As noted above (4.3.2) the choice of implementation through UNOPS has allowed flexibility and responsiveness at the provincial level. This would have been more difficult to provide if the project had been implemented under NRAP. One key reason for this is that the provincial units of NRAP do not have delegated financial authority and therefore have limited ability to provide immediate response to disasters, for example. Further the staff of the provincial units of NRAP are on contract and do not hold established positions in government. Accordingly even if RAIP had been implemented through NRAP, sustainability of individual and organisational capacity would not have necessarily been assured.

Finding 5: The evaluation considers that RAIP has been as effective as it could be given the context within which it has operated. However it has not fully achieved all its stated purposes, both for reasons of design, project modifications and external constraining factors.

4.4 THE EFFICIENCY OF RAIP

4.4.1 Q9. What have been the unit costs of the results achieved, how have these varied and why and to what extent are they comparable with infrastructure costs elsewhere in Afghanistan.

In general the road works have been carried out at competitive costs and to good quality standards. Unit costs of works appear to be lower than what has been achieved in other comparable programmes. A comparison with the current cost estimates and the average unit costs provided by the Northern Region PIU of ARAP confirms this observation. The cost of the works are also competitive in comparison with the costs of rural roads works in other countries (see annex 8).

There are large variations in the construction costs, ranging from 15,000 to 45,000 US\$/km. These are due to the condition of the road before improvement. The severity and variability of the terrain through which the roads pass also has had a significant impact on construction costs. A large portion of the roads are located in mountains with extensive needs for river crossings, retaining walls and high volumes of earth-

works. Cost of works is also influenced by the distances to material sources. Good quality gravel is not always readily available at the work sites and at times must be transported from quarries located up to 80 km away. Some road sections have been realigned due to excessive gradients on the existing roads or tracks or to avoid flooding. This means that entirely new road sections have been constructed, thereby increasing the cost of improvement works.

Similar conclusions can be drawn in terms of the maintenance works. Periodic maintenance costs of gravel roads averaging 15,000 US\$/km are a positive sign, considering the high demand for such work. It also appears that the project has carefully organised routine maintenance to make it cost-effective by concentrating activities to certain periods of the year when such work is more important.

Asphalt sealing works cost around 75,000 US\$/km which is within the expected price range. Although its use is cost-effective on roads with high traffic volumes, there are less costly asphalt seal solutions which would be useful for the project to introduce for roads with traffic volumes of 150 to 1000 vehicles per day.

4.4.2 Q10: Are there noticeable differences between the Sida supported road programme and the road programmes implemented by the Government of Afghanistan with support from other donors, if so which and what are the reasons for these?

UNOPS has during the last 10 years played a major role in the implementation of secondary and tertiary roads in Afghanistan and for this reason, there are large similarities between RAIP and other major programmes such as NRAP and ARAP. Its role though has either been advisory or as a direct implementer and it has not had a coordination role. UNOPS still provide technical assistance to NRAP although in later years it has shifted to a more advisory role.³³ RAIP has maintained the same arrangements throughout the three phases relying on UNOPS for all aspects of implementation. While the NRAP earlier relied on similar arrangements, new projects such as ARAP have a greater involvement of the line agencies in works implementation and UNOPS plays a more advisory role. In terms of planning and screening methods, technical designs, work methods, contracting arrangements and maintenance works, there seems to be a common standard to which all the projects and programmes are adhering.

In contrast to the main rural infrastructure development programmes, all of which are centrally based and covering the entire country, RAIP covers four provinces with its project management strategically located in the centre of the project area. The origin of this choice is linked to the area of operation of the Swedish armed forces.

Finding 6: Information on costs, observed quality and timeliness of outputs suggests that the implementation has been highly efficient.

³³ UNOPS remains in charge of all financial management activities in ARAP.

4.4.3 Q11: What have been the pros and cons with the chosen modality of implementation through UNOPS?

At the time of the design of RAIP, UNOPS was identified as the best placed agency to implement the project. Government capacity to plan and implement road works was weak and it made sense to choose this implementation arrangement which was also applied to other major rural road works programmes such as NRAP. UNOPS had a proven capacity to implement road works in Afghanistan through its support to other major road works programmes. Operating under the UN banner also provided a level of security and freedom of operation in the project area.

RAIP could also have been incorporated as a part of NRAP under its central management in Kabul as opposed to setting up an independent project office based in Mazar. Having the project management based in Mazar facilitated closer interaction with local government authorities as well as other Swedish interventions in the project area. The fact that key management decisions were handled by the RAIP management in Mazar allowed for a faster decision-making process and a higher degree of responsiveness to local needs and requests. The high level of responsiveness of the project was commented on by key RAIP partners, including the provincial departments of [Name protected] and [Name protected]. The fact that all aspects of project implementation were vested with UNOPS through a management team based in the project area with the requisite authority has had a major impact on the timely delivery of project outputs.

This choice of implementation arrangements does however concentrate the implementation capacity in the UNOPS project team, and limits the opportunity for building capacity within the relevant government line agencies. There is now a growing recognition in the sector that these agencies at province level need to take a stronger role in the provision of secondary and tertiary roads. This requires substantial capacity building in all aspects of project management, which can only be effectively carried out through their increased involvement in current road works programmes.

While infrastructure works are a core competence of UNOPS, it is less evident that working on women's economic empowerment is and the expectation that a roads project could take this on was probably unrealistic.

Finding 7: At the start of RAIP, the chosen mode of implementation was optimal. But Government capacity has improved and in turn UNOPS support in other projects has moved to a more advisory role in relation to road works programmes. UNOPS probably does not have core competences in women's economic empowerment.

4.4.4 Q12 Are the chosen technical standards appropriate and efficient in relation to traffic volumes, intended impact and sustainability? Would higher/lower standards have given better results? Which?

A majority of the road improvement works have been carried out to provide basic year round access to district centres. This has consisted of improving the roads and tracks which provide the district or secondary road networks in the project provinces. Most of these roads have been improved through the installation of adequate drainage structures and river crossings, widening of narrow sections and providing a gravel surface. A few roads with higher traffic levels have been upgraded to a higher standard with an asphalt surface. Great emphasis has been placed on the installation of retaining walls to protect the roads from seasonal floods and soil erosion. These

measures have had a significant effect in reducing travel times and vehicle operating costs. The works have also provided safe and reliable access to the districts being served by the roads. The chosen technical standards are appropriate and consistent with those applied by other road works programmes in the country. The applied technical designs are also similar to those used on similar rural road works in other countries.

It is acknowledged that some roads have experienced traffic densities which at this stage warrant a new look at the optimal choice of surface treatments. From the traffic counts carried out by the project, it is clear that the combined costs of improvement and maintenance over the life time of some roads, but certainly not all, justifies the provision of a more durable surface such as a bitumen-based seal. Already a select number of roads have been asphalted by the project. But as noted some gravel roads now carry excessive volumes of vehicle traffic. Such roads should be treated as a stage development exercise in which the project first provided the initial connectivity and basic all-year access.

Floods and soil erosion have been a constant challenge when designing and maintaining several project roads. To protect the roads, a significant number of retaining and river training walls have been erected. Given the topography and soil conditions, flood control and erosion protection is a continuous challenge, particularly in mountains and damage was noted on recently constructed works.³⁴ The costs of the investments done in this respect are fully justified and further emphasis on such works will result in more effective management of the road network.

Fewer roads with higher quality versus expanding access to more communities is a recurrent discussion in the road sector. First of all, it is important to recognise that the road connectivity planning did not foresee the extensive increases in traffic because forecasting traffic increases on rural roads is fraught with uncertainties. The plans were developed using sober projections of future traffic which in hindsight can be considered as too conservative.

There is no doubt that improving the secondary roads to the chosen standards can be justified. It was only when traffic increased further that the choice had to be made between improvements to asphalt standards or giving more emphasis to tertiary roads which connect communities not located along the secondary roads. This is where compromises are needed. Keeping communities in isolation is not a good solution. With a strong poverty focus, this is contrary to the intentions.

From a pure road management point of view it may be better to use scarce resources to manage the existing network before expanding it. On the other hand, it is fairly common to see secondary roads in developing countries in a poor condition while

³⁴ This was noted on the Aybak to Sarbagh/Ruyi Road on December 16th: this is an example of a 'black spot' referred to under recommendation 4

substantial investments are made in tertiary roads – simply to take rural communities out of isolation. The political compromise is therefore to accept that some funding is used to provide access to unconnected communities while the secondary roads are not given the full attention they require. These are the difficult choices that RAIP had to make and the evaluation believes that they made the right ones. It does however raise the risk of sustainability of works, in particular on the high traffic volume secondary roads with a gravel surface.

Thus in answer to the question if one should concentrate on raising quality of secondary roads or expand the tertiary road network? Probably the largest impact on the poor is by building tertiary roads. But the secondary roads also need to be kept open in order to reach the tertiary roads. With prevailing volumes of traffic on many of these roads, this is done best with an asphalt surface, rather than frequent rehabilitation and regravelling works.

In sum the improvement of rural access requires a long term investment to reach the desired goals. Three phases of RAIP is a testament to this. This also provides the justification for a fourth phase.

Finding 8: Overall, it is believed that the roads have been built to appropriate standards, given the project mandate area, the context and the resources available.

4.5 THE IMPACT OF RAIP

4.5.1 Introduction

The impacts of RAIP as noted earlier were seen to be threefold: improved access to social services and markets, improved road construction and maintenance capacity and the creation of employment opportunities. The baseline studies that RAIP carried out³⁵ presumably for impact assessment have effectively been shelved because they do not provide the basis for impact to be assessed. The evaluation is also of the view that the design, implementation and reporting on the baselines does not provide the basis for assessing impact. It is understood that the baseline questionnaire was based on the design of the NERAP evaluation and it should be noted that the NERAP evaluation also failed to assess impact due to multiple problems with data, poor survey design and security concerns.³⁶ Proposals are made in the recommendations about how an impact assessment could be done, but the evaluation has had limited evidence from which to draw in making its own assessment.

³⁵ [Name protected] . (2009) Socioeconomic Report (Final Draft) Sari pul and Samangan. Volume 1. UNOPS. UNOPS (2012) Socio-Economic Baseline Survey: Jawzjan and Balkh Provinces. RAIP II

³⁶ NERAP, (2014), NERAP Final Report (Draft)

4.5.2 Q13: What measures has the programme taken in terms of mainstreaming gender into the programme, for instance in the analysis, the design of the results framework as well as in the promotion of women to taking part in decision-making, planning and training and what results have been achieved?

Gender mainstreaming requires that the concerns of women and men of any planned action are integral to the design, staffing, budgeting, monitoring and reporting of any programme. This was not included at the start in the overall design of RAIP I. Nor was it included in the design of RAIP II. A gender component as gender specific activities and as a project amendment with a second income generation pilot intervention was included by Sida in the implementation of RAIP II. This along with some women's activities in RAIP I has been reported on. The inclusion of this gender component in phase II which was carried over into RAIP III also did not lead to gender mainstreaming in RAIP III either. The draft final report for RAIP II³⁷ has acknowledged the need for the development of a clear strategy and methodology for gender inclusion reflecting the position also of NRAP³⁸ but this has not happened.

The section on Gender inclusion in the 2012 Annual Report³⁹ indicates RAIPs approach to gender. It talks of providing women with skills in relation to specific activities and working through the male members of communities to persuade them to involve women in projects. The 2013 Annual Report (p21) simply lists activities. There is no evidence of a gender perspective in the analysis, design or support for women's engagement in RAIP.

Within the staffing and recruitment of the RAIP office there have been attempts to recruit women but this has not been easy. UNOPS have had one female engineer and a second female officer. However both got scholarships for an overseas masters and left. Six women engineers who had recently graduated from Jawzjan University were recently trained by UNOPS as part of the capacity building programme. Balkh has one of the oldest engineering schools, with 5 to 10 women engineers trained every year. These graduates could have provided an opportunity for affirmative action in UNOPS staff recruitment or as a condition for contracting infrastructure works.

Within the design of project interventions in relation to the rural infrastructure works and the RISF projects there appears to be have been a degree of consultation with women in the selection of the projects. But in activities that have not been specifically a women's project, the visibility of women in the decision making or planning was either absent or scarcely reported. Nor was any reporting found on gender training or awareness being given to the male engineers for example.

³⁷ RAIP II 2014. Final Report. Draft. P.22

³⁸ 'The development of a clear strategy and methodology for gender inclusion under NRAP was identified as an outstanding need to ensure the full participation of NRAP beneficiaries' (RAIP II. 2014 Final Report Draft, p22)

³⁹ UNOPS (2013) RAIP II, Annual Report :p9

Despite challenging social norms in Afghanistan, there have been changes in cultural attitudes in the last few years due to migration, education among younger women and socio-political shifts. RAIP has not been proactive in building on these opportunities and recognising potential dialogue partners. In Shibarghan the governor's chief of staff for the last nine years has been a woman. There is a female district governor in the province and also a very active director of [Name protected]. In one of the UNOPS projects in Sari-pul we met a woman who has been head of a mixed male and female [Name protected]. Other examples of women in [Name protected] were found in Jawzjan and Sari-pul.

The team leader in the Shibarghan bakery project (Annex 6, Case 4) was a member of the [Name protected] and also looked after the accounts for road construction material. The ActionAid NSP facilitator in Chirmardan district Jowzjan, has tried to involve women in rural infrastructure development through the management of the accounts. Malika Sadat the head of a [Name protected] who is also running multiple projects for women including a bakery project under UNOPS (Annex 6, Case 9) was of the view that women can work in construction in very specific situations: "I was asked to recruit a woman and two men for roadside maintenance and I said it is not possible". She added "that it was not possible to bring women to a new work area without the company of other women but if they had told me to hire two women and a man it would have been possible".

There is also a political will. In our debriefing meetings in Kabul and Balkh, the government officials specifically asked about finding ways to include more women in road construction works. There appears to have been insufficient acknowledgement of how working women can act as role models and inspiration for other women (and men) to play more equal roles in economic life.

Finding 9: Gender has not been mainstreamed in the project design, in staffing policy or in budgeting. Rather, separate income generating projects have been implemented in the project area. As a result limited results have been achieved.

4.5.3 Q14: To what extent has the programme contributed to the promotion of issues on women's economic empowerment and employment?

From the gender projects visited (see Annex 6) it was found that each project duration was for about three months including 10 days training. This is consistent with the overall duration of all the gender projects under RISF. For a group of women who are mostly non-literate and with no previous business skills or experience, the expectation that with some assistance they can sustain economic activities beyond the project life is over-ambitious and unrealistic. In many of the projects that had ended, such as the bakery project in Sari-pul or the tailoring in Khoja-du koh in Jawzjan (Annex 6, cases 6 & 9), it was reported that more than 50% of the participants had already left because the key incentive for them was the stipend they received during the project life. Few of the projects were likely to continue. There have been a few interventions involving women in road construction activities. The gabion weaving project was a good initiative, although after the project finished there appears to have been no formal monitoring of what has happened since.

The income generating interventions and ideas of cooperative work for women have created a good social space for networking and solidarity that has not been utilised to

full. It was found that at the project locations, the use of the project space was limited to production activities only. It could have been used for literacy, women's right discussions, health education, facilitation of training of team leaders or community mobilisers as practiced by many women organisations such as [Name protected] in Balkh. However UNOPS does not appear to have the appropriate capacities to take advantage of such opportunities.

Finding 10: The women's income generation projects have been short term with overambitious goals and are unlikely to have contributed to women's empowerment

4.5.4 Q15 To what extent has the programme contributed to socio-economic development and poverty reduction and more specifically to access to markets and social services for men and women respectively?

The first phase of RAIP focused on increasing connectivity to district centres through the improvement of secondary roads and bridges that provided the main access. This continued during RAIP II-III, while at the same time providing regular maintenance to the roads already improved by the project. RAIP III has also included a substantial tertiary road works component, thereby expanding connectivity into villages not located along the secondary road network.

Due to many years of neglect, roads were in very poor condition. Some were no more than donkey tracks, limiting both access and travel speed. The construction and maintenance works have provided good quality all-year access, thereby significantly improving the reliability of road connectivity, reducing travel time, facilitating an increase in transport services and reduction in travel fares. Evidence of the effect of the road improvement interventions can be found in the project monitoring reports⁴⁰ which document that traffic on some roads increased more than two-fold as a result of the improvement works. Unfortunately, there seems to be limited documentation on traffic volumes before improvement works started. However, during the last two years the project has conducted annual traffic surveys on the RAIP roads.

At present, most secondary roads improved and maintained by RAIP cater for traffic volumes well above 200 vehicles per day (vpd) and commonly in the order of 400 to 500 vpd (see annex 7). Some road sections, including both asphalt and gravel roads, have traffic numbers well above 1,000 vpd. Most tertiary roads improved by RAIP receive less traffic, in the order of 100 to 300 vpd, although some of these roads also cater for higher traffic volumes. Although the selection of the roads was justified on social and security grounds, the level of traffic on these roads indicates that the investments made in improvement and maintenance works can also be justified from an investment viewpoint.

⁴⁰ RAIP I (2010) Final Completion Report

The traffic surveys in 2013 and 2014 also show that traffic volumes continue to grow with a 26 percent increase in this period (see Annex 7). The surveys also show that the majority of the individual roads have experienced traffic increases of this magnitude.⁴¹ The continued increase in traffic can be attributed to the road maintenance provided. The highest increase in traffic was found on the roads improved in Jawzjan Province where an increase of 52 percent was recorded from 2013 to 2014. This is probably due to the fact that most roads selected for improvement in this province are in peri-urban areas in close proximity to the main population centres.

The traffic surveys show that the tertiary roads have experienced increases in traffic of 45 percent, as compared to a 22 percent increase on district roads. The higher increase on tertiary roads is probably due to the initial effect of road improvement works since most have been built recently. Higher traffic volumes indicate that people living in the rural areas travel more frequently. This is consistent with studies carried out in other road development programmes⁴². Such studies also indicate that people make more frequent visits to markets as well as accessing various government facilities such as markets, agricultural extension services, etc. The roads also facilitate access for government services in the rural communities. The reasons why people travel and the purpose of their more frequent trips can easily be established through origin and destination surveys, but RAIP has not done this. Such surveys can establish the volumes and types of freight transported as well as cost and frequency of transport services. Although the project reporting provides some anecdotal evidence of increased visits to markets and social services, a systematic use of this type of surveys would have given a better picture of the extent of the changes in travel patterns.

Nevertheless the evidence of increased traffic on the road does point to an effect of the roads stimulating transport and possibly market services. This is likely to have had job creation effects but there is no systematic evidence on this.

However as noted section 4.3.1 (and see Annex 5 for cases and case 12 in particular) many of the poor cannot afford to pay for travel and field observations on the significant use of donkeys for transporting people and goods to district centres confirm that many people do not use motorised transport, largely for reasons of cost.

⁴¹ The traffic surveys also show that some few tertiary roads have experienced a slight reduction in traffic. This is not surprising since the variations in traffic on some of the roads receiving less traffic may result in a reduction when sample surveys are limited to once a year. Another probable cause of the reduction may be a deteriorating security situation at the time of the last survey. The results of the surveys are also influenced by local market days, when traffic increases.

⁴² Barwell I, (nd) Transport and the Village, Findings from African Village-Level Travel and Transport Surveys and Related Studies, World Bank; Impact Assessment of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) in the States of Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Mizoram, Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, Ministry of Rural Development (Monitoring Division) New Delhi

The World Bank has developed a rural access index which is a simple indicator measuring the percentage of the rural population living in close vicinity (2 km) of an all-weather road.⁴³ The advantage of this indicator is two-fold. First its use encourages planners to establish a full overview of physical access in a given project area, i.e., mapping all villages and the extent to which they are connected to a road network. This provides a good overview of the total investments required in order to provide all locations with reliable road access. Such an inventory is also useful when there are several actors involved in improving rural access.⁴⁴ Second it provides an immediate overview of the effect any given project can have in terms of contributing to an increase in the number of households with improved road access.

Although the immediate effect of building tertiary roads is improved access to motorised transport services, the ultimate desired effect of such interventions is to improve access to basic social services and economic opportunities. Such impacts require additional monitoring of travel patterns and use of basic services such as health and education facilities. Attempts to measure such impact have not been very successful in RAIP. This is also the case for other rural road works programmes in Afghanistan. Attempts were made to establish baselines but the quality of such surveys – both done by RAIP and NERAP⁴⁵ - indicate a lack of experience and knowledge by the designers and implementers of the studies in measuring impacts from improved road access.

Physical access to services such as hospitals and clinics has increased. Many women at RAIP sites reported spending less time and money in reaching city hospitals and clinics. There needs however to be a recognition of the differentiated dimensions of poverty. There are two key aspects to this. The first is the degree of social differentiation within a village. While there may be larger landowners with surplus who have the potential to engage in markets, for the majority of villages visited there is a sizeable majority of households who by virtue of small farm sizes or being landless are food insecure. They depend either on farm labour, casual labour or remittance income. Second there are those who live in remote marginal and usually higher altitude environments who are even more food insecure and where a majority of the labour is absent working in cities, mines or abroad. Such communities depend on remittances.

Poverty is one dimension that limits access to markets. A second is the socially regulated nature of markets in Afghanistan where it is networks based on trust and reputation that govern who gets access to what. Geography, identity and gender are key factors that govern the ways such networks function and to whose advantage.⁴⁶

⁴³ Roberts, [Name protected] and [Name protected] , (2006), Rural Access Index: A Key Development Indicator, World Bank ⁴⁴ In the case of the RAIP project area, tertiary road works is also carried out by NRAP, NSP and WFP. ⁴⁵ NERAP, 2014, NERAP Final Report (Draft)

⁴⁶ Pain, A and Mallet, R. (2014). Gender, youth and urban labour market participation: evidence from the tailoring sector in Kabul, Afghanistan. Working Paper, SLRC. Kabul & London. [Name protected] and ODI; [Name protected] , [Name protected] , and Pain, A. (2014). The social life of the onion: the informal regulation of the onion market in Nangarhar, Afghanistan. Working Paper, SLRC. Kabul & London. [Name protected] and ODI;

Finding 11: In the view of the evaluation, the contribution of RAIP to socio-economic development and poverty reduction has been limited in the short term. However this is largely seen to be factors outside the control of RAIP.

4.5.5 Q16 Have there been any positive or negative, intended or unintended effects beyond those reflected in the explicit objectives of the interventions?

It is very clear that Sweden has acquired a very good reputation for the implementation of RAIP which is widely seen to have been successful and responsive to the needs of the provinces. It has also, given the way it has operated particularly with respect to the RISF projects, created expectations and wish lists delivered from villages up to district and provincial governors. That may have detracted from directing demands and expectations for service delivery to central government. Programme interventions may have reinforced differences between better off and the poorer households. This might have been limited if a stronger poverty perspective had driven a focus on more remote and inaccessible places. But the development of a secondary road network is also a precondition for doing that.

RAIP influence on policy making at the provincial level

RAIP's main channels of communication with Government have been with the authorities in the four provinces covered by the project. Its main partners have been the provincial departments of [Name protected] and [Name protected] with which the project has maintained close working relationships. We see some significant and positive effects of this as discussed below.

Design issues

Road designs draw from practices established during earlier programmes before the start of RAIP, which have also been applied in NRAP. The fact that the design standards are consistent with current practice in the sector and are well adapted to local conditions, have reinforced their legitimacy and resulted in a general concurrence within government on this issue. Standard designs do however contain several design solutions. The main point of discussion seems to be in terms of when roads should be upgraded to asphalt standards. Again, it is important to stress that when roads are upgraded to asphalt standards, there seems to be no discussion as regards to the detailed designs applied.

Maintenance issues

As a result of the significant road maintenance component in RAIP, this important aspect of managing a road network has generated effects with the provincial authorities, in particular for the secondary roads. Due to increasing traffic levels as well as seasonal flooding, secondary roads in the project area need continuous attention in order to serve their intended purpose. This has been well recognised by the authorities and RAIP interventions here seem well appreciated. The fact that RAIP has been asked to take charge of maintenance of roads improved by other agencies also confirms this observation.

An important feature of both RAIP and NRAP is that it includes a significant maintenance component in its works programme. While rural access improvement programmes often only focus on road improvement works, the practice in Afghanistan

taking a more comprehensive approach to operating a local road network is far more effective.

Employment issues including for women

The most significant policy influence in terms of employment generation is the routine road maintenance works in which the use of local manual labour is central to the chosen approach (see 4.3.1). This arrangement is important in terms of establishing cost-effective preventive measures to protect the improved road assets. The use of manual labour to carry out this task in RAIP is also a clear recognition of the need for creating new jobs in the rural areas.

This approach is not only advocated by RAIP but is also part of the maintenance programme of NRAP. The consistency in the approach is important in terms of instilling good maintenance practices which also have a positive effect in terms of employment generation. There seems to be good support for such work within local government and with a growing network of maintainable roads, this arrangement can become a significant generator of jobs in the rural areas.

Although the overall employment impact of the RAIP gender mainstreaming activities are modest, it is believed that the presence of such interventions in all the project districts has raised awareness on these issues. In discussions with local authorities, the evaluation was told that employment and business opportunities for women are regarded as one of many development challenges where progress has been limited.

Capacity building

The RAIP capacity building component has contributed to skills development among staff in the technical departments. This in turn has strengthened their belief in their ability to take on a stronger role in future infrastructure development programmes. This was observed in the ministries at central level as well as in their provincial departments. It is important in terms of building the capacity within government to take on future development challenges. Confidence in their own staff and institutions will be a key driver in the current change process in which Afghans take the lead in managing future development programmes. Skills development and other capacity development measures may contribute both to such confidence as well as their ability to take charge.

Participatory issues

All community infrastructure development work seems to come from requests made by the [Name protected]. This is important as it strengthens the authority and legitimacy of the [Name protected] (but note the hazards of this as well, Annex 5, case1).

The selection of tertiary road improvement works and sub-projects in the RISF component are based on the priorities of [Name protected] and the district and provincial development forums. But the basis for the prioritisation and selection of interventions appears to be a product of wish lists and horse-trading between various districts and communities. In the absence of proper inventories of key community infrastructure, such as local roads, water supply, education and medical facilities, it is difficult to secure a planned approach to such development activities.

Local communities have been involved in monitoring of works. RAIP has provided local [Name protected] with basic training in road works technology thereby giving them a better

understanding of essential road building principles and important factors that affect the quality of completed works. Some improvement and repair works have also been organised through community contracts awarded to the [Name protected]. Finally, [Name protected] are also directly involved in the implementation of the routine road maintenance works.

It is generally recognised that strong community involvement in rural infrastructure works is important in Afghanistan. Such involvement builds ownership and support of interventions and also has a positive effect on security aspects. The community contracting activities provides good examples to local authorities on how such involvement can be effectively organised within a road works programme.

However the evaluation is concerned about the way in which security objectives have crept into the RAIP mandate, driven partly by military interests as well as operating considerations by the project as discussed below.

Finding 12: On balance the evaluation finds that the mode of operation of RAIP both by design and practice has generated positive unintended effects in relation to provincial capacities which will have future benefits.

4.5.6 Q17 To what extent have there been synergies with other Swedish interventions in the project area and have they contributed to or detracted from the impact?

Other Swedish interventions in the project provinces mainly consist of the (i) presence of Swedish military forces and (ii) the development work carried out by the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan, with which it is possible to see clear synergies.

The core activity of the RAIP, improving and maintaining district roads improved access for the military forces as well as SCA. The argument was made that the easier access for the military improved security which in turn may have improved working conditions for the project. On the other hand, the synergy between the Sida supported road works and the resulting facilitation of military presence can also have been perceived by parties to the conflict as Sida support to the military campaign by the foreign intervention forces. There are specific examples where a road was constructed for security reasons (in Chimal, Balkh).⁴⁷

The role of the military in forwarding requests for RISF projects to RAIP assumes a 'hearts and minds' approach to security. RAIP was explicit that this was a logic behind their selection of RISF projects which contributes to an explanation of their spatial locations and as observed earlier, their concentration in Balkh and Jawzjan provinces. However the evidence on a 'hearts and minds' approach achieving security is unkind to its assumptions⁴⁸ and the durability of a *quid pro quo* is doubtful. The eval-

⁴⁷ It was also reported on the field visit to Samangan that a specific bridge had been rebuilt so that armoured military vehicles could use it.

⁴⁸ Fishtein, P and Wilder, A. (2012). Winning Hearts and Minds? Examining the Relationship between

uation sees this as poor development practice. Equally, such an approach risks compromising the neutrality of the UN.

Synergies between the work of the SCA and RAIP are of a less controversial nature. The improved roads facilitate the access for complementary development initiatives of programmes such as those of the SCA which is engaged in improving water supply, health and education services in communities, some of which are served by the project roads. The fact that a majority of road works have taken place on the district road network, which are the roads proving the main access into the districts, implies that any rural development programme operating within these areas benefits from the improved connectivity/access resulting from the RAIP road works. As regards to the works on tertiary road, this connection is less obvious, partly due to the limited extent and coverage of this project component.

Finding 13: There are clear synergies with other Swedish interventions in the project area. Work by other rural development programmes, including that of the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan, have been complementary to RAIP. The security objectives that influenced project activities are more problematic.

4.5.7 Q18: Has the broad scope of the programme contributed positively or negatively to the impact?

The scope of the programme with its emphasis on improvement and maintenance of district roads has had a clear impact in terms of connecting the districts with reliable good quality all weather access. The significant maintenance component within the road works programme has protected the developed infrastructure assets from deteriorating and thereby sustained the improved service levels and resulting benefits over the duration of the three RAIP phases. RAIP seems to have maintained an appropriate balance and trade-offs between improvement and maintenance.

At the start of the RAIP, the main challenge was connectivity to district centres. The project focus on improving district roads addressed this major access problem. Evidence of improved connectivity is found in reduced travel times, improved transport services and more frequent travel. There is still a significant demand for expanding the network of tertiary roads to reach communities located outside the main transport corridors. However, to do so, it was first necessary to improve the district road network to which tertiary roads connect.

Originally the project covered the two provinces of Samangan and Sari Pul but was eventually expanded to cover Balkh and Jawzjan provinces. Since budgets were increased to cater for the expanded budgets, significant impact could be maintained in the two original provinces as well as in the new ones. With the size of available budgets, the RAIP has been a major player in terms of improving and maintaining the district road networks in the four provinces.

As regards to the tertiary road works, RISF and gender mainstreaming activities, RAIP has not managed to address a similar portion of perceived demand. Addressing the full demands for tertiary roads is a larger task than upgrading the secondary road network. Similarly, the number of RISF interventions are limited in comparison to the demand. But these components are a smaller portion of the overall RAIP budget.

Finding 14: The district road component of the project scope has had the strongest impact. Project management has managed well the trade-off between road improvements and road maintenance. However the additional RISF components may have reduced the focus of the project.

Impact of capacity building

The impact of the capacity building programme has probably been highest among the RAIP staff. The training courses have provided them with the basic knowledge in various road works subjects. However, the most significant skills development has taken place through their involvement in the planning, construction and maintenance works taking place in RAIP. This on-the-job training and skills development is the most valuable asset resulting from the capacity building which has taken place in the project.

The fact that RAIP has given adequate attention to maintenance of improved roads has raised awareness of (i) its importance and (ii) demonstrated how it can be effectively be carried out. The approaches and work methods applied in the provision of maintenance are consistent with those of NRAP and strengthens the case for providing timely maintenance on improved roads.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge the capacity building efforts in relation to the construction firms who have been involved in RAIP. It is evident from the completed works that local contractors doing business in these provinces are capable of building quality rural roads and bridges and also maintaining such infrastructure assets.

The impact of the capacity building component on the provincial departments of the technical line agencies remains questionable. Despite the training offered to the engineers in the local offices of [Name protected] and [Name protected], such support is only a small portion of what is required in order to build effective technical agencies in charge of improving and maintaining local roads.

4.6 SUSTAINABILITY

4.6.1 Q19: What is the likelihood that the roads and other infrastructure built by the programme will continue to be maintained?

Sustainability of road works

The sustainability of the RAIP road works depends on future maintenance arrangements and funding for the village [Name protected] to oversee continued road maintenance. For the duration of RAIP, the project has taken responsibility for all maintenance required on the improved road network. A similar approach is applied in NRAP. The provincial departments of [Name protected] and [Name protected] have had a limited role in the maintenance of secondary and tertiary roads. This has been due to their limited budgets and capacity to take on such responsibilities.

There are on-going initiatives driven by the WB to improve the capacity of the government to maintain the public road network. Plans have been designed to establish a road maintenance fund with the necessary structures to effectively manage such revenue and thereby ensure that maintenance takes place on a regular basis and to the extent required. Efforts to establish a Road Fund may eventually address the maintenance needs on secondary and tertiary roads including those specifically related to the RAIP roads. There is however an issue of timing. The RAIP ends in 2015 and there is still a long process left before a road fund and corresponding Road Authority are operational.

While the project has involved the provincial technical agencies in the management of road maintenance, it is clear that there is insufficient funding available at this stage allowing government to continue such maintenance works. The provincial departments of [Name protected] receive some funding for road maintenance, most of which is used on national roads. All works under the jurisdiction of [Name protected] is currently provided through nationwide development programmes such as NRAP, NSP, NABDP and RuWatSan. Provincial departments of [Name protected] do not have any maintenance budgets outside the provisions in these programmes.

This implies that future maintenance of infrastructure built or improved by the RAIP will need to be handed over to these programmes. NRAP has been designed with a sound asset management approach with considerable outputs in terms of maintenance of secondary and tertiary roads, so there is no reason why the infrastructure works of RAIP could not be incorporated into this programme. This needs to be explored and discussions between the two projects need to start as soon as possible to ensure that it takes place.

The fact that many RAIP roads are receiving traffic volumes beyond what is considered appropriate for gravel roads, places an additional urgency to the handover issue. A gap in the maintenance works after RAIP ends may cause significant damage to these roads. When new funding is secured for continued maintenance, it important that the gravel roads with the highest traffic are considered for upgrading to asphalt standards.

Sustainability of other infrastructure

For community infrastructure developed under the RISF component of RAIP, there is greater uncertainty. The focus of the key national programmes of [Name protected] is on construction and improvement of community infrastructure. Only in ARAP does there appear to be a well formulated maintenance programme. ARAP can step in and take over maintenance of tertiary roads. The maintenance of other community infrastructure under RISF has bleaker prospects.

4.6.2 Q20: What measures has the programme taken to ensure that the government and communities will continue to maintain the infrastructure and are these measures sufficient?

Few measures seem to have been taken at this stage to ensure that government and communities will continue to maintain the infrastructure developed under RAIP. The project has provided training to [Name protected] and [Name protected] staff in the provinces. Equally, the project has involved these agencies in the management of routine road maintenance works. These are insufficient measures to ensure adequate maintenance of the improved infrastructure.

Funding and capacity of the line agencies to maintain existing infrastructure is still limited. As noted above, efforts to establish a road maintenance fund and a road authority with the core mandate to maintain the public road network are underway but will probably not be operational for many years to come. There is therefore an immediate issue of maintaining RAIP infrastructure when RAIP comes to an end. An intermediate solution is needed until such time as the road authority has gained the necessary technical and financial capacity to take on maintenance responsibilities.

4.6.3 Q21: The main risks of sustainability are related to future maintenance. Do the government and communities have the technical, financial and institutional means to maintain the infrastructure? If not (which is likely to be the case) how can this be achieved?

At present the Government has very limited financial capacity outside the existing rural development programmes to maintain the infrastructure developed by RAIP. There are also limitations to technical and managerial capacity to take on this responsibility. Building this capacity will take time, requiring the development and introduction of new management procedures, increasing personnel levels and further staff training and mentoring. This is best organised through increased involvement in ongoing development programmes, supported by technical assistance.

Sustainability of capacity building

The training and skills development provided by RAIP is a valuable asset for future individual career development. Some of the trainees will continue working in the road sector while others may leave for better opportunities elsewhere. But training of staff employed in major programmes involved in rural road works will over time improve capacity and skills levels in the sector. This training is a continuous process. Training demands are maintained by new people entering the sector as well as through new skills requirements. Staff development also requires follow-up training and mentorship. This has been possible to provide for the project staff due to the long duration of RAIP.

The challenge at this stage is how to continue such training once the project ends. One might hope that other road works programmes will continue such activities. This however leaves the future of training at a high risk of being discontinued. A more sustainable alternative would be to build up training capacity within existing organisations that can provide similar courses after the project is completed.

Finding 15: Future provision of maintenance of developed infrastructure assets remain unresolved and needs urgent attention.

Sustainability of employment generation

As noted earlier, the impact on employment generation has been modest due to both the limited job opportunities generated in the project and the demand for employment. It is however important to emphasise the importance of the jobs offered. Interviews with workers engaged in road maintenance as well as women involved in the gender mainstreaming activities all conclude that the opportunities given were well received - often for the simple reason that there are very few other job possibilities where they live.

Current arrangements for routine road maintenance based on the use of manual labour seem to be mainstreamed and therefore the labour-intensive approach will continue.⁴⁹ Whether the jobs currently available in RAIP maintenance works will continue to exist beyond the timeline of the project, depends on future maintenance budgets. Since most government funding for secondary and tertiary roads at present is channelled through NRAP, it is vital that the maintenance responsibility is handed over to this programme.

Most women involved in the RAIP gender mainstreaming activities have received wages paid by the project during the start-up period. It is doubtful whether many of these business development activities will survive when the direct wage payments are discontinued. As with many other interventions to promote entrepreneurship development, the chances that a significant portion of these “jobs” will be long term are small.

Although the employment created through the works carried out by local construction firms has not been included in the defined outputs, it is also worth acknowledging that these firms also provided jobs to local communities. Continued involvement of the private sector in road maintenance will allow such firms to continue to offer some employment opportunities to local communities.

⁴⁹ A similar approach is used in NRAP when carrying out routine maintenance works.

4.7 CONFLICT SENSITIVITY

4.7.1 Conflict Sensitivity

The terms of reference for this evaluation asked that special attention should be given to how conflict sensitivity perspectives have been integrated in planning, implementation and reporting. Four key dimensions can be used to assess the degree to which this was done:

- The extent of causal analysis of conflict (identifying sources of conflicts, the key actors and resources etc)
- The linking of causal analysis to project design and its potential impacts
- The linking of causal analysis to project implementation strategies, including identification and management of risks
- The linking of causal analysis to assessment of project results or impacts

Formally perspectives on conflict sensitivity were found not to be very visible in the planning, implementation or assessment and reporting of RAIP. Rather, in part reflecting the UN operating guidelines under which UNOPS operates where formal security management is managed by UNDSS, conflict sensitivity has largely had a security perspective. Thus the concern has been more to ensure the security of the RAIP staff for the implementation of the RAIP construction activities. The comment was specifically made that certain of the villages to which RISF projects were allocated were chosen because they were close to roads that the RAIP project staff would travel. Their selection was driven by a need build good relationships with these villages and ensure their goodwill, thereby assuring a degree of self interest by the village in assuring the security for the project staff.

This does not mean that the RAIP team were unaware of conflict issues and as observed earlier, RAIP was extremely effective in building good relationships and networks with the parties with which they were working. The processes by which the road connectivity plans were developed through close consultation with provincial bodies clearly played a role in ensuring an acceptance of the plans and strategies for the roads programme. These are likely to have had a significant role in risk management and are seen to have been effective. But the effects of the infrastructure works at the regional level in terms of resources to be bargained with by the major regional political players are unknown but not likely to have been major. There are likely to have been effects on more localised disputes between local powerholders within provinces and districts and on power relations between villages within districts but these also remain unknown.

5 Evaluative conclusions

As stated at the beginning of Section 4 (Findings), the evaluation concludes that RAIP has made a significant contribution to the development of rural road infrastructure in its four project provinces over its seven years of operation. With respect to its roads, bridge, maintenance and emergency activities which have accounted for just over 87% of all expenditure, we find the activities have been highly relevant, implemented with great efficiency and effective in terms of RAIP's more immediate objectives. It has established the necessary pre-conditions for rural access and economic development, provided effective maintenance of the investments are continued after RAIP's completion. Project management has also been very effective at building relationships at all levels and has had positive effects on policy making at the provincial level both by design and example.

The project has certainly contributed to the necessary capacities for this to happen even if these are not fully established. Thus while the findings of the evaluation are very positive about the investments that have been made, they are more reserved about the building of capacities to be able to maintain these investments into the future beyond RAIP. In part it would appear that there has not been a clarity on the nature of capacity building. The distinction and synergies between building individual skills, organisation capacities to manage core functions and institutional capacities has not been a core focus. There has been a bias towards building individual skills in maintenance for example rather than in the longer term organisational development for maintenance.

The evaluation concludes that the chosen modality of implementation through a direct contract with UNOPS was appropriate at the time. The evaluation would also commend the performance of the long term project manager and the support provided by the Sida monitoring consultant.

However, with respect the broader project objectives related to improved access to social services and markets and the creation of employment opportunities the evaluation conclusions are more equivocal. A judgment of the evaluation is that RAIP could have paid more attention to these aspects in its design, monitoring and reporting. The evaluation considers that more employment generation by RAIP would have been possible although the steps taken are in the right direction. The demand for employment in rural areas is considerable considering the poor health of the rural economy.

There are however limits to what RAIP could have contributed to overall employment. A more realistic assessment and understanding of the context within which RAIP was being implemented might have questioned what to the evaluation seem as

somewhat simplistic assumptions about roads, economic empowerment and economic development.

Improved rural infrastructure can create the conditions to help economic growth and the evaluation found evidence that for those households with sufficient land, with good irrigation and close proximity to provincial centres, the improved rural infrastructure has led to greater economic activity and sales of farm produce. It is also probable that the increased traffic recorded on the RAIP roads is the result of the stimulation of transport and market services which has job creation effects but there is no systematic evidence on this. However for the many more rural households with limited land holdings, poor access to irrigation and constrained by remoteness their economies are and will remain fundamentally subsistence based. Many households are grain deficit and food insecure and rely on migrant labour for remittances in an economy where there is very little decent work. Accordingly for many, new mobility opportunities created by better roads are not accessed because they cannot be afforded. There are many parts of the four provinces where the donkey remains the main mode of transport and mobility for most households.

Access to basic social services has certainly improved and this can be linked to the development of the road network. However it has to be recognised that access is more than just physical availability and examples were found where new schools and health facilities were not staffed, or staffed with poorly qualified personnel and therefore not used.

The RISF projects, with their gender component were added onto RAIP II after the main project design had been agreed and these activities were continued into RAIP III. They have comprised about 12% of expenditure. The project purpose for RAIP II was not rethought to accommodate this addition but was included in RAIP III as bridging objectives. The evaluation is surprised that no end of RAIP II evaluation was undertaken to assess whether or not these additions fitted or were effective in terms of what they were trying to achieve. The expectation that the gender components in particular would lead to mainstreaming of gender given the pre-existing project design and staffing was unrealistic.

The expectation that short term income generating activities – and the field evidence suggests very clearly that is what most of them are – can lead to women's economic empowerment is, to be blunt, naïve. Empowerment is much more complex than this and the comparative evidence on the informal regulation of markets in Afghanistan suggests much greater strategic and long term support is required for women to achieve this. The UNOPS office was not staffed to provide this and we see the objective therefore as unrealistic. This is not to say that the gender projects have not had benefits but at present they are limited.

On the RISF projects, the competence to undertake such works was present in the RAIP UNOPS office. However given the existence of NSP and similar activities by other agencies, we see these investments, while not bad in themselves, as a distraction

from the overall project purpose. The evaluation is not convinced of the security rationale that appears to have informed the choice of what and where to implement many of these RISF projects. It also finds the linkages in some cases of these to security objectives problematic. That said, the RAIP project has operated in a complex and difficult security environment where security threats can be both open as well as hidden and opaque. The project has operated under UNDSS guidelines with respect to the more open security threats. It appears to have been very successful and effective in handling the less evident threats posed by powerful political actors, both formal and informal. The relationships that it has established have been a key part of this.

A final comment needs to be made about what might be termed the underlying theory of change of the project. Acknowledging that the project had an organic life and developed from where it first started, it is clear that starting from a project with specific instrumental objectives (to build roads) it acquired additional objectives which might be seen as more transformative (promoting economic development, supporting gender equity, etc). The theory of change that links roads to increased mobility is entirely different from one related to the linkage of roads to economic development or roads and social transformation. In sum the ambitions for this project may have been too great and one might argue that inappropriate instruments have been used to seek multiple objectives that might not in themselves be commensurate. This raises fundamental questions about design and the detailed elaboration of appropriate theories of change.

6 Recommendations

The recommendations are divided into those that are short term and to be addressed within the life of RAIP III and those that will contribute to the design of future interventions by Sida in Afghanistan. The short term recommendations are primarily addressed to UNOPS. The longer term ones are primarily addressed to Sida.

6.1 SHORT TERM TO BE ADDRESSED BEFORE COMPLETION OF RAIP III

Finding 1 specifically commended the overall management of RAIP by the long term project manager. While his abilities were a key part of the management success of the project, it has also to be noted that by virtue of his delegated authority and financial powers, he was able to act quickly and flexibly to deal with everyday contingencies of operating in a difficult environment. His delegated authority was insisted on by Sida at the start of RAIP. This delegated authority has not been given to his successor (see 4.3.3). In the absence of such authority all decisions from authorisation to travel to replacement parts for generators have to be approved from Kabul. This is simply incompatible with effective project management and the effects were reported to the evaluation team both by external provincial officers and within the RAIP team.

Recommendation 1 (for UNOPS): The current project manager of RAIPS should be given delegated authority by UNOPS as a matter of urgency.

The project intends to carry out an impact study. It is suggested that this exercise use a similar approach and indicators as outlined in the project appraisal of ARAP, essentially focusing on measurable indicators related to improved connectivity, number of inhabitants provided with improved access, increase in traffic, provision of transport services, changes in travel times, and trips made to schools, hospitals and other socio-economic centres. The study needs to be carefully designed and an appropriate consultant selected with the implementation of study carefully monitored and reviewed.

Recommendation 2: (for UNOPS) An impact study of RAIP should be carried out using measurable indicators related to improved connectivity.

The income generation interventions for women have created good social spaces that can be built on for women's empowerment, access to markets and for identifying the right skills to build on for production. Wool spinning and gabion weaving are two of the interventions which according to community mobilisers and project beneficiaries have been proven to create income opportunities for women and can be built on. The projects have been short term and rather than continue to implement new ones, it might be more appropriate to focus now on supporting existing projects that show some signs of impact.

Recommendation 3 (for UNOPS): The existing gender projects should be evaluated in terms of their success and impact. Those projects that are seen to be more successful should be further supported, rather than new ones developed.

As part of any exit strategy when closing down the current phase of RAIP, it is strongly recommended that a condition survey of the project road network is carried out to identify possible maintenance black spots (see 4.4.4), i.e. locations along the roads or specific sections which are vulnerable to wear and tear, in particular from water and floods, with a view to install durable preventive measures while there is still funding available for such activities. Once RAIP funding is exhausted, it is unclear when new budgets are made available to allow for future maintenance and repair works.

Recommendation 4 (for UNOPS): A condition survey should be undertaken and a plan made to consolidate existing works as a priority over taking on new works.

During the course of the project, valuable experience has been acquired in terms of appropriate design solutions and quality of building materials. The technical standards applied on secondary and tertiary road works should be properly documented in a set of design guidelines for NRAP.

Recommendation 5 (for UNOPS): Prepare Design Guidelines based on works carried out.

During the remaining period of the project, there is a need to develop an exit strategy in which appropriate measures are agreed with Government and relevant donors on how the valuable infrastructure assets created in RAIP are safeguarded through continued maintenance. This applies first of all for the improved roads which constitute the greatest value, but are also more vulnerable to rapid deterioration if maintenance works are discontinued. Equally, the infrastructure developed in the RISF component needs to be handed over to the relevant line agencies in a manner securing that buildings and water supply installations are kept in good order and continue to serve the purpose for which they were built. This should include ensuring that a full inventory of works is provided to and incorporated into the national database held by the [Name protected].

Recommendation 6 (for UNOPS): Formulate a complete project exit strategy.

6.2 LONG TERM IN FUTURE PROGRAMME DESIGN / FUTURE FOCUS OF SIDA SUPPORT

It is noted that the RAIP project through its three phases has operated for seven years (2008- 2014) without an external evaluation and with the same key people in position. Key issues of project activities and outputs and their contributions to higher level objectives have not been systematically evaluated or tested. Questions concerning the design, for example, of gender specific interventions might have been raised. Furthermore, the programme might have engaged more with the growing capacities of government for coordination and management of the road programme. An external evaluation would have provided the opportunity to assess these issues.

Recommendation 7 (for Sida): External evaluations have an important role to play in long term programmes at mid as well as at completion. This must be included in future programme design.

The design of the road works programme was appropriate for the time when RAIP was implemented. Since the start of RAIP some efforts have been made to strengthen government institutions. While challenges still remain in terms of capacity requirements within technical agencies, it is today possible to organise infrastructure works with a stronger involvement of both local and central authorities. It would therefore be logical for future design of Sida support to rural infrastructure development in Afghanistan to work closer with the responsible agencies and in particular the provincial departments of public works and rural development. Such an approach not only leads to improved ownership but also further contributes to the institutional strengthening and capacity building among the technical and managerial staff of these organisations. Maintenance of existing good roads is important in terms of sustaining the achieved benefits. In order to reach sustainable arrangements for the provision of rural access, it is important to develop adequate capacity within local government institutions thus creating local mechanisms for protecting investments in rural infrastructure.

Recommendation 8 (for Sida): RAIP addressed urgent demands for connectivity. Current demands are primarily for maintenance of improved roads and capacity building and these are linked. This should be a key focus for a new project.

In a future Sida supported road works programme, it would be useful to give serious consideration to the introduction of low-cost asphalt seals, such as surface dressings, Otta seals and cold-mixed asphalt, to be used on roads with significant levels of traffic. Such measures may contribute to a wider use of bitumen based seals instead of relying on frequent regravelling of some of the more trafficked roads.

Recommendation 9 (for Sida): Design standards need to evolve with increasing mobility generated by improved rural infrastructure. This must be incorporated into the design of any new project.

However, and this was a point strongly emphasised in meetings with the Ministries, any future investments made in infrastructure development should be implemented through national programmes such as NRAP rather than separate from them. UNOPS engagement in an advisory or financial oversight capacity would be appropriate. Concerns over financial management by government remains and an externally contracted organisation to provide financial oversight is a mechanism being considered by other donors. However implementation of the project through government is fundamental to supporting government capacity building and ownership. But it was made absolutely clear that this does not in any way preclude Sida from targeting its support to specific geographical areas and building on what it has done so far. This would also not appear to exclude for a continuing role for a Sida funded oversight consultant to monitor Sida's targeted support.

Recommendation 10 (for Sida): Future support by Sida should be organised relying on government taking the lead role in works implementation in order to build local capacity and ownership.

The demand for improved road access in the four northern provinces remains and despite the significant investment through RAIP and its achievements, full road access coverage has not been achieved. A current exercise in establishing a national inventory of roads may make clearer the gap between provision and demand.

Through the RAIP, Sida and UNOPS have acquired good knowledge of the development challenges in the four project provinces. Equally, they have established good working relationships and goodwill with local authorities. These advantages should be utilised in future support to infrastructure development and therefore it would be logical for Sida to continue in close collaboration with the four RAIP provinces. With a new and stronger emphasis on capacity building, it would be possible to expand the coverage of future support to include more provinces – preferably in the proximity of the current RAIP project area. However in the design of such a road project care must be taken not to overburden the ambitions of the project with more than a road infrastructure works project can carry. If the primary objective of the roads project is instrumental – that is the provision of roads – careful thought in the design needs to be given as to if and how transformative goals related to economic development or gender equity can be linked with this and in what way (and see Recommendation 15).

Recommendation 11 (for Sida): Sida should continue to work at least in the current four provinces building of the good reputation it has established.

While the original function of RAIP was to rapidly improve access to the district centres, the new challenge is to extend connectivity to villages located further away from the district roads. The [Name protected] and DDAs should be considered as the only formal governance structures at village and district levels with which to engage for service delivery and this should be a key part of the design. In this process, it is important to introduce more objectivity into the identification and selection process. This can be done by establishing an inventory of where infrastructure has already been developed and where further investments are still required. The RAIP has a GIS unit which could be used for this purpose. This exercise would provide an improved picture of where demands are greatest, as well as improving synergies between various rural development programmes.

Through its national programmes, the government has established good mechanisms for investments in improved rural access, water supply, health and education. Rather than Sida seeking to promote its own small scale infrastructure investments in parallel to government programmes it is recommended that future RISF type interventions which Sida wishes to support to complement a road programme are channelled directly through the relevant national programmes such as NSP, even if that funding is targeted to Sida's project areas. This will keep the objectives of a road programme clearly focussed and be supportive of building government capacity more generally.

Recommendation 12 (for Sida): Any future support by Sida to rural infrastructure other than roads should be channelled through existing programmes and existing governance structures. Selection of sub-projects should be based on more informed choices and form part of the national programmes in the respective sectors.

Gender mainstreaming needs to be included by design at the start of the project and reflected in staffing, budgetary and monitoring practices. Adding small, short duration women focussed projects is unlikely to contribute to change. Gender focused

activities need to be central to focus of the intervention and the competencies of the implementing agency.

Recommendation 13 (for Sida): Gender mainstreaming must be part of the original design of the project and relevant activities must be central to the main focus of the intervention.

Rural development in the future in Afghanistan will still rely heavily on foreign support. The demands remain high in the rural areas and substantial capital investments are still required in order to deliver basic services to the majority of the rural population – and in the RAIP project area. Continued Sida support to rural access provision will certainly contribute to government efforts to deliver basic social services in the rural areas. Improvements in health and education lay the foundations for people's ability to search for and achieve new economic opportunities.

Recommendation 14 (for Sida): There is still a lack of basic services. An analysis of the role of roads and transport in ensuring access should be part of design and prioritisation of all support to basic services in any future Sida support.

The context within which RAIP has been implemented has been complex and challenging, facts not clearly recognised and catered for in the design of the project. The rural economy of northern Afghanistan is in poor health. A key need is for greater employment and it is not clear that agriculture growth can necessarily provide this. The political preconditions for economic growth are not present and understanding of the ways in which the economic market place is currently regulated must inform any future support to economic development. Generic models and approaches to private sector development are not likely to be effective. While roads are a necessary condition for economic development they are not sufficient in themselves. Future project investments by Sida need to develop robust and explicit theories of change in the design that are well informed by theory and context and careful attention given to the establishment and sequencing of objectives.

Recommendation 15 (for Sida). Support to economic growth is critical for the generation of employment in rural areas. Roads are necessary but not sufficient in themselves. Future support must be based on a robust understanding of the ways in which current economic life is regulated and tailored to address this, rather than generic models of what private sector development should be. This will require the development in the design stage of robust theories of change which will need to be carefully monitored and evaluated during implementation.

Annex 1 – Terms of Reference

Background

Sida has supported the expansion of a rural roads network in Northern Afghanistan, through the Rural Access Improvement Programme, since 2007. The programme is now in its third phase, running 2013-2015. UNOPS is engaged by Sida to implement the programme in close cooperation with different stakeholders- provincial authorities, provincial elected bodies, civil society organisations etc. RAIP I was operationally closed on 31 December 2010 and financially on 31 August 2013. Project final report for RAIP I was submitted and approved. Audit was conducted on RAIP I and clearance granted. RAIP II was operationally closed on 31 December 2013 and will be closing financially by 31 August 2015. RAIP II project final report (draft) is due on 30 April 2014 and project final report by 30 June 14. Except biannual project reviews no evaluation has been conducted so far of the programme. Of Sweden's total allocation to Afghanistan, the current strategy for development cooperation approved by the Swedish Government in 2011 states that 1/3 of the allocation shall be earmarked for northern Afghanistan. The funding for this programme is part of this earmarking and is funded fully by Sweden.

Evaluation Purpose and Objective

A new result strategy for Swedish development cooperation in Afghanistan for the period 2015-2019 is planned to be approved by the Swedish government during first half of 2014. Economic integration is one area stated by the government in its assignment to Sida to prepare a result proposal. In its proposal, Sida for this result area included the result "Improved access for women and men to markets" with the intention to continue to fund expansion of rural roads in selected areas of Afghanistan, but not necessarily limited to the provinces included in the present programme.

The main purpose of the evaluation is to provide Sida with lessons learned from RAIP I-III as a basis for design of new interventions. Secondly, the evaluation shall provide Sida with conclusions and recommendations on the effectiveness of the programme, UNOPS as implementing partner, focus of programme and cooperation with stakeholders. The evaluation shall in addition reflect on different implementation modalities for possible future support as well as on which role Sida shall take in relation to authorities and donor community.

Scope and Delimitations

The evaluation shall focus on the results of the core elements of the programme and the approach to participation of rural villages, civil society organisations, UN-organisations, provincial authorities and others in the programme. The evaluation shall also review RAIP's contribution to the broader development in the four northern provinces, and further review how the programme has influenced policy making at provincial level, in regard to design issues, maintenance issues, employment issues, especially for women, capacitybuilding issues and participatory issues. The evaluation shall further reflect on the relation to the Swedish PRT/TST in the four northern provinces. The evaluation shall include all the three phases of RAIP and the provinces, Sar e Pul, Jowsjan, Balkh and Samangan. Field visits shall be made in a relevant sample of project sites in all four provinces. The evaluation shall compare the approach and design of RAIP in comparison with the approach and design of the national road programmes (NRAP/ARAP etc), especially regarding efficiency and effectiveness and also draw conclusions on its alignment with national policy and priorities.

Organisation, Management and Stakeholders

The evaluation shall report to the Afghanistan Unit at Sida Stockholm. Close interaction with UNOPS Project Office in Mazar e Sharif, responsible for implementation of the programme, is essential. Meetings shall also be held with UNOPS Country office in Kabul. The evaluation shall closely interact with the respective stakeholders and i a conduct seminars, structured interviews, focus groups and similar approaches. The Team shall in the interaction ensure a fair representation of participation of female stakeholders. Meetings shall also be held with relevant officials of national authorities ([Name protected] [Name protected]) and donors. Interviews shall further be held with the TST team (former PRT) in Mazar e Sharif. As TST will be closing down mid June 2014 meetings with TST shall be held during Inception Phase. Interviews shall also be held with Sida's monitoring consultant to the programme, who, after request to and approval from Sida, will assist the team in retrieving documentation and if needed facilitate in other ways.

Evaluation Questions and Criteria

The evaluation shall include a *description* of the programme with respect to its context, content, processes and financial and institutional arrangements.

It shall further present *evidence on the results* of the cooperation, and *draw conclusions* on factors having contributed to success/failure. To this end, a review shall be made of the strategies and approaches that were applied by Sida and its partners, whether they have been successful or if possibly other strategies would have rendered better results. The evaluators shall also consider contextual factors. Socio-economic development is always the result of many factors and the interplay between road connectivity and such factors should be analysed.

The assessment shall be based on the five standard evaluation criteria of OECD/DAC (See OECD/DAC Glossary for definitions). The principal evaluation questions under the different evaluation criteria are the following:

Effectiveness

1. To what extent have the objectives of the roads programme been met, *focusing* on intended outcome and impact,
2. What factors, internal and external to the programmes, have influenced the fulfilment of objectives (positively or negatively)?
3. How has the choice of implementing a specific programme instead of contributing e.g. to the National Rural Access Programme (NRAP) contributed (positively or negatively) to effectiveness?

Impact

4. To what extent has the programme contributed to socio-economic development and poverty reduction and more specifically to access to markets and social services for men and women respectively?
5. To what extent has the programme contributed to further issues on women's economic empowerment and employment?
6. Have there been any positive or negative, intended or unintended effects beyond those reflected in the explicit objectives of the interventions?
7. To which extent have synergies with other Swedish interventions in the project area contributed to the impact?
8. Has the broad scope of the programme contributed positively or negatively to the impact?

Relevance

9. To what extent have the interventions conformed to the needs and priorities of target groups and the policies of the Government of Afghanistan?

10. To what extent have the programmes been in line with the policies of the Swedish government, and especially on the objectives stated in the current strategy for Swedish development Cooperation in Afghanistan?

11. How has the roads programme interacted with other factors to achieve socio-economic development and poverty reduction?

Sustainability

12. What is the likelihood that the results of the programme will be sustainable?

13. What measures has the programme taken to ensure sustainability?

14. What are main risks to sustainability observed, taking the technical, financial and institutional dimensions into account, and how can they be dealt with?

Efficiency

15. What have been the costs of the results achieved?

16. Are there noticeable differences between the Sida supported road programme and the road programmes implemented by the Government of Afghanistan with support from other donors, if so which and what are the reasons for these?

17. Which have been the pros and cons with the chosen modality of implementation through UNOPS?

18. What measures has the programme taken in terms of mainstreaming gender into the programme, for instance in analysis, results framework as well as to promote women to taking part in decision-making, planning and training?

19. Are the chosen technical standards appropriate and efficient in relation to traffic volumes, intended impact and sustainability? Would higher/lower standards have given better results? Which?

Conflict sensitivity and gender

Throughout the evaluation and in the report, special attention shall be given to how gender and conflict sensitivity perspectives have been integrated in planning, implementation and reporting.

Based on the findings, the evaluation team shall formulate conclusions and present “lessons learned” and recommendations in respect to the following:

(i) How shall a possible new roads programme be designed to best contribute to poor men and women’s access to markets and social services (taking contextual differences into account)?

(ii) How can Sida as a donor support roads programme in the best way and what are the considerations Sida should take when planning the support?

Conclusions, Recommendations and Lessons Learned

The evaluation shall conclude on RAIP’s efficiency and effectiveness in design and implementation, participatory approach, relevance and results of the different components, not least the Rural Infrastructure Support Fund (RISF) and Gender components, including recommendations on how gender and conflict sensitivity perspectives could be strengthened. The evaluation shall also conclude on RAIP’s alignment with national priorities and on options for implementation modalities for the future, especially in regard to funding NRAP through ARTF. The evaluation shall also conclude on UNOPS as an implementing partner.

Approach and Methodology

The evaluations shall be carried out during the third quarter of 2014. An Inception report elaborating on method and approach and specifying work plan and time-schedule shall be forwarded to Sida no later than 15 August

The evaluation shall conform to OECD/DAC's quality standards.

Reporting and Communication

- Inception report shall be submitted to Sida latest 15 August 2014
- A workshop with relevant stakeholders shall be held before finalising draft evaluation report
- A draft evaluation report shall be submitted to Sida latest 1 November 2014
- A presentation of the draft Evaluation report shall be made at Sida upon submission of draft report
- Following Sidas comments which will be given within 2 weeks, a Final Evaluation Report shall be submitted to Sida latest 1 December 2014

Resources

Total time input is expected not to exceed 20 person weeks of which the Inception phase shall not exceed 5 person weeks

Evaluation Team Qualification

The team shall consist of a team of evaluation experts and include competence in road management and previous relevant experience of Afghanistan. The team shall include both men and women. The evaluators shall be independent of the evaluated programme.

References

- 1) RAIP I Project document
- 2) RAIP I Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)
- 3) RAIP I Project final completion report
- 4) RAIP II Project document
- 5) RAIP II MOA and 08 Agreement Amendments
- 6) RAIP II Project final completion Report (draft) 30 April 2014
- 7) RAIP III Project document
- 8) RAIP III MOA
- 9) Road connectivity network development plan (developed by RAIP) for Samangan, Sari Pul, Jawzjan and Balkh.
- 10) Socio-economic survey report for Samangan and Sari Pul, 18 December 2010
- 11) Socio-economic survey report for Jawzjan and Balkh, 04 February 2012

Annex 2 – Inception Report

Executive Summary

The Rural Access Improvement Programme (RAIP) has been implemented over three phases since 2007 and will finish at the end of 2015. It has been funded with a budget of 421 million SEK since the start. Covering Sar-e-pul and Samangan provinces in the first phase it expanded to include Balkh and Jowzjan in the next two phases. The United Nations Office of Project Services (UNOPS) has been directly contracted by Sida to implement the programme in all three phases. The core of the three phases has been an infrastructure works programme, primarily of rural roads and bridges. The overall objective of the programme across its three phases has been to contribute to poverty reduction and support economic development of the region. The programme has aimed to build close cooperation and engage with various partners at multiple levels and develop skills and competencies to design, build and maintain these rural roads. It has also aimed to provide employment and economic opportunities for men and women, particularly in phases II and III. Phase III has seen a shift more into the development of road management and maintenance systems and training activities at various levels.

This evaluation has three purposes. The first is to provide an assessment of the lessons learnt from RAIP I-III. The second is to provide Sida with recommendations on the focus of the programme, the nature of cooperation with the stakeholders engaged in it, the role of UNOPS as an implementing partner and the overall effectiveness of the programme. There is also a third prospective element to be drawn from the evaluation which will consider the different ways such a programme might be implemented and supported in the future. The overall analysis of the results will be undertaken within the frame of the five DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.

This inception report for the evaluation draws attention to key dimensions of the context within which the programme has been implemented, noting the geographical variability, the complex political landscape and the specific position of women in Afghanistan. It also notes that RAIP has not been implemented in a development vacuum. The terms of reference are discussed and assessed and recommendations made with respect to the scope of the evaluation, the relevance and evaluability of the core evaluation questions and an approach and methods for undertaking the review proposed.

The theory of change underpinning the RAIP programme is one of road investments contributing to improved access to public goods (health and education facilities) and supporting economic growth. This is critically discussed in the light of the context

within which the programme has been implemented. Note is made of the limitations of the baseline studies that have been undertaken within the RAIP programme. Particular attention is paid to the capacity development issues in relation to the long term sustainability of the RAIP investments.

Detailed recommendations have been made with respect to the focus of the evaluation questions a framework developed identifying the methods that will be used and data to be collected in relation to answering these questions during the evaluation process.

Assessment of Scope of the Evaluation

BACKGROUND

The Rural Access Improvement Programme (RAIP) was initiated in late 2007 and has been implemented in three phases (I, II, and III). It is now in the second year of implementation of the third phase that will end on December 31st 2015. RAIP has been designed to support the expansion of a rural roads network in Northern Afghanistan and the implementation has been contracted to the United Nations Office of Project Services (UNOPS) in all three phases. Linked to Sweden support's political support to the NATO security forces and the placement of a Provincial Reconstruction Team⁵⁰ (later named the Transition Support Team, TST) in Mazaar-e-Sharif (hereafter Mazaar) in Balkh Province, the support by Sida to RAIP can be seen as an example of Sweden's commitment to the economic development of Afghanistan, and the Northern provinces in particular. The TST mission closed down during June 2014.

RAIP has evolved through its three phases (see table 1) that have overlapped. In Phase I it was confined to Samangan and Sar-e-Pul provinces and was designed for two years but not completed until December 2010. RAIP II was initiated in early 2010 and ran until the end of December 2013 and was originally designed to cover the same two provinces. However after the programme was agreed, the design was subject to a number of amendments. These, inter alia expanded the geographical coverage of the programme from two to four provinces, adding Balkh and Jowzjan to the original two, and adding a new programme component – an infrastructure support programme (RISF) for small scale public works for villages close to the road construction in all provinces. The third phase started before RAIP II was finalised and is currently under implementation and due for completion at the end of 2015.

Table 1. Three phases of RAIP

⁵⁰ Provincial Reconstruction Teams are small teams of military and civilian personnel working in Afghanistan's provinces to provide security for aid work and humanitarian assistance or reconstruction activities.

	RAIP I	RAIP II	RAIP III
Project Period	Dec. 2007 – Dec. 2010	Feb.2010 – Dec. 2013	April 2013 – Dec. 2015
Budget (M. SEK)⁵¹	44,000,000	177,945,427	199,000,000
Budget (USD)	6,818,002	26,551,975	30,000,000

The core of the three phases of RAIP has been an infrastructure works programme, primarily of rural roads and bridges. A consistent goal or overall objective of the programme across its three phases has been to contribute to poverty reduction and support economic development of the region. The programme has aimed to build close cooperation and engage with various partners at multiple levels and develop skills and competencies to design, build and maintain these rural roads. Further it has sought, through the road works programme, to build significant employment and economic opportunities for men and women, particularly in phases II and III. A summary of outputs delivered during phases I and II of RAIP and plans for phase III are presented in Table 2. Phase III has seen a shift more into the development of road management and maintenance systems and training activities at various levels.

Table 2: Main Phase I and II RAIP outputs and plans for RAIP III (Source: UNOPs 2013, Atlas for RAIP)

Activity	RAIP I and II	RAIP III	
		Secondary Road	Tertiary Road
Road Construction/ Rehabilitation	431 km	79	78
Bridge Construction	26		
Periodic Road Maintenance	65 km	160	
Routine Road Maintenance	492 km	1059	236
Snow clearing	119 km		
RISF Projects	96	Various**	
Person days employment	50975 (RAIP I), 10% women 349549 (RAIP II*) 25% women	584000 paid labour days, establish 20 women's groups providing 72000 days of paid employment	

* to September 31st 2013.

** including 50 km village roads, 10 water supply schemes, 30 water well and hand pumps, 5 water supply facilities for schools and clinics, 20 buildings for social purposes, 5 irrigation works, 20 drainage works, 5 protective walls to guard social structures, 5 repair schools and 27 other projects.

⁵¹ The contractual agreement between Sida and UNOPS is based on the Swedish Krona (SEK); UNOPS operates in US\$ and with currency fluctuations (the SEK has appreciated over the project period) the dollar budget has risen in all three phases.

The programme purpose of RAIP has expanded over the three phases from a focus on access to public goods and employment to include market access and development of road construction and maintenance capacity. The documentation suggests that RAIP III may have moved more towards community driven demands with its RISF and tertiary road components, thus more closely engaging with access improvement and overall poverty alleviation goals. This may also be the result of having already addressed the main connectivity challenges on the secondary road network during the earlier phases.

The RAIP programme has been carried out within a specific geographical and social context in a politically unstable environment and a brief discussion of this context is needed to situate the programme.

i. The context

Context needs to be considered with respect to its geographical, political and gendered dimensions. With respect to the geography, the programme in its second and third phases has been engaged with two distinct agro-ecological terrains. The provinces of Sar-e-pul and Samangan to which the programme was confined in its first phase are essentially mountainous provinces characterised by ribbons of settlement and irrigated agriculture around semi-permanent and seasonal water sources. There is a significant hinterland of rainfed settlement and transhumant livestock practices. These are primarily subsistence and food insecure economies with significant out-migration for employment and income. Accordingly levels of poverty are significantly higher in these areas than in the plains⁵².

In contrast the provinces of Jowzjan and Balkh into which the programme expanded during phase II and III, are plain economies dominated by a major irrigation scheme sourced from the Balkh River, a system that dates back more than a thousand years. Providing intensive irrigation facilities to at least four districts in Balkh, the Balkh River also connects through to neighbouring Jawzjan. In contrast to Sar-e-Pul and Samangan these provinces are in agricultural surplus and well connected to markets. Poverty levels are significantly lower than in the mountainous provinces. There is however spatial variation in poverty levels with households downstream tending to be poorer than those upstream. These contrasts in agroecology have significance in relation to the pre-existing conditions prior to RAIP implementation, the economic potential of the provinces and the likely impacts that rural roads will generate.

⁵² [Name protected] and World Bank (2012) Poverty and Food Security in Afghanistan. Analysis based on the National Risk Vulnerability Assessment of 2007-8, Kabul: Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and World Bank.

Linked to the difference in geographical context there are also significant political differences. Balkh has historically been a core regional centre of power in Afghanistan,⁵³ while the provinces of Samangan and Sar-e-pul have been on the periphery. Over the last decade the rise to power of Governor Atta in Balkh has consolidated Balkh's position but also been a source of tension between Balkh and Jowzjan where a second key political player, General Dostum, has been based.⁵⁴ Further the transition of former powerful commanders into formal positions has not brought a different (or more formalised) political order. The establishment of formal structures has failed to displace the informal networks of patronage and relationships that so often determine access to economic opportunities and services, creating what has been termed a 'government of relationships'.⁵⁵ The relationship between the *de facto* and the *de jure* state is highly ambiguous with both cooperative and conflictual elements.⁵⁶ Evidence from the RAIP documentation of challenges of implementation in Samangan evidence this point⁵⁷ but also indicates that in resource scarce provinces such as Sar-e-pul and Samangan road building programmes are more likely to be seen as a potential source of rent seeking than in the richer provinces of the plains.

This suggests that the evaluation will need to explore the extent to which the RAIP programme has understood, engaged with and managed the ways powerful political players at multiple levels can seek to bend public good delivery to their own strategic ends. Looking closely at the spatial patterns of rural access construction particularly within provinces and between and within districts will be an element of the evaluation.

The governance of the economic market place is equally problematic. The available evidence suggests that informal markets in Afghanistan display a complex array of features. They are subject to a high degree of informal regulation, determined by social identity, gender and geography. This regulation sets the terms and conditions of access and the distribution of returns. Market access therefore has to be understood with respect to its social regulatory dimensions as well as its physical accessibility.

⁵³ Thomas Barfield, 2011: Afghanistan, Princeton University Press

⁵⁴ Antonio Giustozzi (2012) The Resilient Oligopoly: A Political Economy of Northern Afghanistan 2001 and Onwards. Kabul, Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit

⁵⁵ Nixon, H. (2008) Subnational State-Building in Afghanistan. Kabul: [Name protected], p. 26.

⁵⁶ Roitman, J. (2005) *Fiscal Disobedience: An Anthropology of Economic Regulation in Central Africa*. Princeton: Princeton UP, p. 18-9.

⁵⁷ UNOPS 2011 Annual Report: Annex 1

ii. Gender

The relative inequality of Afghan women is well documented. Afghanistan has some of the worst indicators globally for the situation of women and their rights. They are disadvantaged in terms of life expectancy, educational achievements and standard of living and there are significant gaps in terms of access to health and education, access to and control over resources, economic opportunities and political participation.

As the National Risk and Vulnerability assessment of 2011-12⁵⁸ illustrates, women are distinctly disadvantaged in relation to engagement in the labour market, particularly so in rural areas. Various studies⁵⁹ make clear how patriarchal gender structures within the household can act as strong barriers to market engagement. Pathways to skill acquisition and terms of labour market participation, even in urban areas, are socially regulated and deeply gendered.⁶⁰ Even where women find opportunities to work outside the home strong reasons exist to retain affiliation with the household that may limit a desire for autonomy. Within a market place that is governed by personal relationships, women face major challenges accessing for example informal credit. In sum, the barriers to women's engagement are complex and variable and the effects of activities within RAIP designed to bring about greater employment of women and the effects of income on women's economic empowerment will need to be critically considered. Consideration will also be given to the role women can play within the road sector both professionally as well as in terms of employment in road maintenance works and what effects comparable programmes e.g. Food for Work, might have achieved.

iii. The Implementation Context

As the RAIP quarterly and annual reports show, the programme has been implemented in an environment of risk and uncertainty. Some of those dimensions relate to political uncertainty and insecurity which at times have brought implementation to a stop. Others relate to events such as flash floods. A dimension, which appears not to have been commented in the RAIP documentation is that of economic insecurity. For example, the significant rise in food prices during 2008 due to a poor harvest and a

⁵⁸[Name protected](2014) National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment 2011-12 Afghanistan Living Condition Survey. Kabul, CSO.

⁵⁹ [Name protected].. [Name protected] and [Name protected](2011) Afghan Values or Women's Rights? Gendered Narratives about Continuity and Change in Urban Afghanistan. IDS Working Paper 387

⁶⁰ Adam Pain and Richard Mallet, "Gender, youth and urban labour market participation: evidence from the tailoring sector in Kabul, Afghanistan" SLRC, ODI/ [Name protected](July 2014) p. VI.

tightening of regional food supplies⁶¹ may have made employment for food security particularly significant.

RAIP has also not been implemented in a development vacuum. Not only have there been a range of national programmes (such as for example the National Solidarity Programme) and donor projects in general, but there have also been other road building programmes within the provinces and districts where RAIP has been operational. Account therefore has also to be taken of the effects of these other development investments on the outcomes and impacts seen to have been achieved by RAIP. Note also needs to be made of assumptions about linkages between development interventions and the promotion of security ('the hearts and minds agenda'). While it may not have been the determining factor, nevertheless the linkage between village level development activities, community confidence and security improvement is explicitly made in the agreement that established RISF within RAIP⁶² and may have been a consideration behind the initial design of RAIP. In addition it is noted that road building activities under RAIP also had a security dimension in the prioritisation of certain road building activities to insecure districts within Balkh.⁶³ These linkages between development and security building will need some consideration in the evaluation.

THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

There are three purposes to the evaluation. The first is to provide an assessment of the lessons learnt from RAIP I-III as a basis for the design of new Sida-financed interventions. The second is to provide Sida with recommendations on the focus of the programme, the nature of cooperation with the stakeholders engaged in it, the role of UNOPS as an implementing partner and the overall effectiveness of the programme. There is also a third prospective element to be drawn from the evaluation which will consider the different ways such a programme might be implemented and supported in the future. This will take account of Sida's planned support for the future in the area of economic intergration and private sector development consistent with Sida's new strategy (2014-2019) for Afghanistan.

The overall analysis of the results will be undertaken within the frame of the five DAC⁶⁴ evaluation criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustaina-

⁶¹ [Name protected] and World Bank (2012) Poverty and Food Security in Afghanistan. Analysis based on the National Risk Vulnerability Assessment of 2007-8, Kabul: Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and World Bank.

⁶² Sida (2009) RAIP II Agreement. Amendment 4: RAIP II Infrastructure Support Fund, February 2nd 2011

⁶³ Sida (2009) RAIP II Agreement. Amendment 2: 'Due to security problem the rehabilitation of 7.0 km in Chintal District becomes important', December 1st 2010.

⁶⁴ Development Assistance Committee (DAC)

bility. Specific questions in relation to the results and their achievement are discussed in section 2.

The analysis of relevance will investigate the extent to which the objectives of RAIP have been consistent with the needs and priorities of the target groups (provincial and district government and line departments, rural households etc.) and of government policy within the roads sector. This will include consideration of the prioritisation processes in terms of where to implement the road construction. Particular attention will be paid to the extent to which synergies have or have not been achieved with respect to the drivers of socio-economic development and poverty reduction within the four provinces in which RAIP has been implemented. This links to a broader question, discussed in Section 2, as to whether roads at this juncture are necessarily the solution to the perceived needs or problems of development. Relevance will also be determined in relation to the official policies of Sweden for development cooperation in Afghanistan.

With respect to efficiency a careful analysis of the details of the road building and other construction activities (e.g. bridges, small scale infrastructure under RISF) will be required. This will assess not only actual costs in relation to outputs but also explore design and technical standards in relation to purpose and actual use of the infrastructure. This in part will be based on comparative analysis of other road building programmes within Afghanistan as well as elsewhere. Part of the analysis of efficiency will also consider the modalities of implementation through UNOPS and the tradeoffs made between other alternatives.

Regarding the effectiveness criteria the evaluation team will assess to what level the RAIP has achieved the intended results/outputs. It will also strive to determine the extent to which any shorter and long-term intended outcomes have been achieved, or any positive or negative unintended effects (impact) have occurred.

On impact the evaluation will be particularly interested in the outcome level (project purpose) contribution that the RAIP project has made with respect to improving access to social services and public goods, employment and economic development. The latter two dimensions are understood to be of particular interest to Sida. It is noted though that there has been an expansion in project purpose across the three phases which will influence the extent to which impact in all areas might be expected.

Finally the evaluation will explore the extent to which the results of RAIP are likely to be sustainable in terms of the extent to which sustainability has been designed and incorporated into the implementation, the chances of maintenance of key infrastructure investments and the organisational and institutional capacities to ensure sustainability. Key risks and uncertainties affecting sustainability will be considered.

There will be consideration of the extent to which relevant provincial authorities, private sector contractors and communities have developed road construction and maintenance capacities. The emphasis therefore will be on the ownership of the infra-

structure and whether the maintenance capacities are within those institutions with commitments and incentives to maintain the roads.

ASSESSMENT OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

With respect to the overall purpose of the evaluation a number of observations are made. The ToR in themselves are coherent and comprehensive. However account has to be taken of the context, as discussed in the background, within which RAIP has been implemented and the implications of this for some of the assumptions that appear to underpin the programme. The evaluation could be seen as a simple technical assessment of a road building programme and effects, and in many ways the reporting on the project is consistent with that perspective. Thus access is simply a question of improving the physical feasibility of mobility, for example and getting to the actual market place will in itself deliver economic benefits to the individual. But this depends on what the actual (or latent) demands for transport existed prior to road building and whether these were understood.

Thus the evaluation sees the requirement of the ToR that contextual factors should be taken into consideration and that the interplay between these factors and the road works programme be examined as essential. The evaluation will link this analysis of contextual factors to the request that the evaluation should pay special attention to how gender and conflict sensitivity perspectives have been integrated in planning, implementation and reporting.

A key dimension of context is the fact that the RAIP programme has provided an injection of over US\$60 million into the four northern provinces through the programme. Given the more informal, relationship-based reality of how Afghan government institutions function and how these informal networks and social links regulate access to state and non-state resources and power, a project of this size is bound to have become a key resource over which there has been contention and struggle at multiple levels. The programme reporting has quite a bit to say about some of the struggles that it has faced at multiple levels in the face of power affecting where roads should be located or who should have the contract. The evaluation will need to explore this, paying attention to the ways in which RAIP investments have been spatially deployed and what that might or might not tell us about the ways in which the programme has managed to stay above the complex power laden environment in which it is operating.

A further dimension of the context that has to be considered, not least given its resurgence in cultivation over the last few years, is the effect of the return of the opium economy on the health of the rural economy and the generation of off-farm employment which was a significant source of income to migrating labour from Samangan and Sar-e-pul in 2003 to 2006. Whether or not this is regarded as an illegal or informal economy is a debatable point but this factor alone may outweigh any other impacts that a road works programme has contributed towards economic development. It could also be observed that the spread of this high value/ low volume product also challenges assumptions about the role of roads in economic development.

The issues of gender need critical consideration. As the comments made in section 1.1 make clear, most women live in a social and economic context where there are strong reasons to retain their affiliation within the household and trade their independence for dependent security. The risks, as for many men, of seeking autonomy and the freedom to act are too great. Thus the evaluation will explore for example what aspects of women's economic activities and empowerment were expected to benefit from the road and whether this was realised or not. The analysis of gender will take account of both the specific constraints under which women live, while recognising the more normative position on gender rights.

RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

With respect to the scope of the evaluation, it is agreed that the core focus lies on the overall effects of the RAIP project in Northern Afghanistan but it will draw on other studies of infrastructure works projects both within and outside Afghanistan for comparative purposes. The evaluation will not only consider the investment costs but maintenance costs as well.

As mentioned, the evaluation shall explicitly assess all the five DAC criteria in its considerations. The time period for the evaluation to cover is for all three phases of RAIP although it is noted that RAIP III is currently under implementation and has a further 18 months to run.

The evaluation however will also need to gather specific information on other road works activities (and other public good investments) by other agencies within the four provinces during the RAIP implementation period in order to locate and evaluate the RAIP specific effects that have been achieved.

Relevance and Evaluability of Evaluation Questions

The focus of the RAIP evaluation is on the results, both positive and negative that is has achieved and the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of those results. The discussion here draws on the log frames that have been developed for the three phase of RAIP.

UNDERSTANDING AND ASSESSING THE RESULTS OF RAIP

The three higher levels of the log frame hierarchy (overall objectives or goals, project purpose or outcomes and outputs) for the three phases of RAIP are summarised in Annex 1, Table 1. For the purposes of discussion here we focus (Table 3 below) on the overall objectives or goals and the programme purpose. In terms of structure there is comparability across the three phases although RAIP III also includes bridging objectives (which are absent in the log frames of RAIP I and II). These bridging objectives provide intermediary measures of progress in terms of programme outputs leading to programme purpose.

Table 3: Comparison of overall objectives and programme purpose of the three phases of RAIP

	RAIP I	RAIP II	RAIP III
Overall Objective	To contribute to the Government's overall objective of Equitable Growth through Poverty Reduction	To contribute to reduction of poverty in rural areas, bridge regional disparities and support the GoA's efforts towards equitable growth.	To contribute to the reduction of poverty in rural areas; bridge disparities between urban and rural areas and support the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan's efforts towards equitable growth
Programme Purpose	A: To support enhanced livelihoods by providing sustainable access infrastructure and targeted employment in critical times of the year	A: Increase and sustain the access of people living within the project area to social services and market centres in larger regional towns,	A: To increase and sustain accessibility to social services and market centres in the project area
		B: Develop road construction and maintenance capacity in the provinces and	B: To develop road construction and maintenance capacity
		C: Create employment opportunities	C: To create employment opportunities

iv. Infrastructure investment, access to basic services and growth: the RAIP programme theory of change

The essential theory of change underpinning the RAIP programme is one of road investments contributing to improved access to public goods (health and education facilities) and supporting economic growth. The country evidence points to improvements in access to basic services over the last decade with measurable programme made in access to basic health and education⁶⁵, although delivery has been uneven across the country. There have been measurable increases in quality of health provision, but there are major concerns over education quality even though many schools have been built. However there is a core assumption in the RAIP design that rural roads effectively support mobility and social service accessibility. But much depends

⁶⁵ Adam Pain (2012) Livelihoods, basic services and social protection in Afghanistan. Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium, Overseas Development Institute, London. Working Paper 3

on the ability of the poor to pay for public and private transport so roads may not be a sufficient condition for enhancing mobility.⁶⁶ The evaluation will need to assess the relative benefits of more roads versus more schools and health facilities (within walking distance); for health this will need to take account of referrals and access to ambulances as well.

On the links between roads and economic development research generally evidences a positive relation between the two. However it is often extremely difficult to isolate the precise effects on growth and development of any given project and the time dimensions over which this happens. There are two major ways in which infrastructure and roads in particular can promote growth. First they can generate a rise in incomes if reduced transaction costs promote market activity. Second improved access and communication can lead to increases in productivity. However there is always an issue of where the causality lies and whether new or improved roads boost growth, whether growth itself drives demand for improved connectivity or whether it is some combination of these factors.

In the case of Afghanistan and in the remote regions of Sar-e-pul and Samangan in particular, it maybe more likely that improved roads could be seen as being a necessary but not sufficient condition for rural economic growth and development and may contribute more to improve access to basic services. However there is more to generating growth than building roads, even if one works in the more normative frameworks about the economic foundations of the growth process. Such frameworks⁶⁷ generally see security of property rights, well-functioning competitive markets under stable macroeconomic conditions and adequate and appropriate investment in public and semi-public goods as the necessary conditions. This takes no account of the political constraints to growth and the ways in which predation is an obstacle to freedom from appropriation, rent-seeking practices confound competitive markets and patronage spending undermine adequate investment in public and semi-public goods.⁶⁸ There is unfortunately fairly abundant evidence that these political constraints to growth are significant in the Northern provinces⁶⁹ thus challenging the broader theory of change implicit in the programme, a point that will be explored in more detail in the evaluation.

⁶⁶ See Bryceson, D.F., Bradbury, A. and Bradbury, T Roads to Poverty Reduction? Exploring Rural Roads' Impact on Mobility in Africa and Asia. *Development Policy Review*, 2008, 26 (4): 459-482

⁶⁷ See for example DFID (2007) 'Growth and Infrastructure Policy Paper'. London: UK Department for International Development (mimeo)

⁶⁸ Williams, G., Duncan, A, Landell-Mills, P and Unsworth, S (2011) Politics and Growth. *Development Policy Review*, 2011, 29 (S1): S29-S55

⁶⁹ See Pain, A. 2011: Opium Poppy Strikes Back: The 2011 Return of Opium in Balkh and Badakhshan Provinces, Kabul, [Name protected];, Fishstein, P (2013) Balkh's Economy in Transition. Kabul, [Name protected].

v. *Outputs to Outcomes and Goals*

At the goal level the three phases are comparable although have important differences. The shift in RAIP II from simply poverty reduction to reducing poverty in rural areas and bridging (presumably reducing) regional disparities is a significant refinement. However it is unclear what exactly is meant by regional: is it comparing the north with the south of the country or is it more a comparison of different agro-ecological regions – for example between the hills and the plains. There is certainly evidence to be drawn from the National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment⁷⁰ which points to significant differences in poverty levels between urban and rural population (to which the goals of RAIP Phase III respond) with higher levels of poverty in rural areas. Further there are also differences between plain, middle altitude and mountains with higher altitude populations experiencing higher levels of poverty. Thus the evaluation will take an agro-ecological perspective and draw on the NRVA data and other sources to explore evidence of poverty changes in the project area.

However the effects of the expansion of RAIP from mountains to plain provinces and the effects that this might have had on shifting the balance of provincial investments (and therefore potential impacts) will also need consideration and this means a disaggregation of likely outcomes at a provincial and even district level will be sought. It is likely that the grounds for the expansion of programme coverage may have been more political or strategic but an account of the effects of this will need to be given.

At the project purpose level the proposed outcomes across RAIP II and III are comparable while that for RAIP I is more of a composite outcome combining a certain level of precision (but with unclear indicators: what exactly is an enhanced livelihood and how would it be measured?) with clear specification (targeted employment in critical times of the year). The employment criteria in Phases II and III are simply about measurable employment opportunities and are less specific in terms of timing. The project documentation does appear however to hold considerable data on employment generation.

In general the reporting, both in the progress and annual reports on RAIP I and II, although it improves in the middle of RAIP II, is primarily about activities in relation to the road and infrastructure construction. It is often not clearly linked to the log frame structure and has little to say at the project purpose level.

However the issue of assessing increased and sustained access to social services and market areas which addresses a key rationale of the project is going to face consider-

⁷⁰ The [Name protected] and World Bank, 2012 Poverty and Food Security in Afghanistan. Analysis based on the National Risk Vulnerability Assessment of 2007-8, Kabul: Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and World Bank

able challenges. Baseline line studies were undertaken for RAIP in all four provinces⁷¹ and followed the household survey protocol developed for the evaluation of Afghanistan's National Emergency Rural Roads Project⁷² (NERAP). However there are three major problems with the RAIP baselines. First the village samples appear to have been selected entirely independently of where RAIP was planning to construct roads and therefore do not appear provide a systematic basis for comparison of villages which have been targeted by RAIP and those which have not. Second the analysis of the data in the reports is very rudimentary and descriptive – at best a summary portrait – and offers little basis for robust assessments of change. Third no consideration of indicators (e.g. mobility) to be assessed in relation to examining the impact of the road has been incorporated into the baseline. The assessment of road impacts is not easy as the NERAP proposal makes clear but the RAIP baseline appears not to provide any basis for doing this. This will raise challenges for assessing outcome level effects and purposively selected contrasting case study villages may be the best that the evaluation will be able to achieve. This will need discussion with the RAIP UN-OPS team.

On issues of gender it is striking that these are not specifically identified at the outcome level but are restricted to just outputs (but this may be realistic). The log frame for RAIP III does however contain two bridging outcomes that are gender specific and relate to the contributions to capacity building (B1: contribute to the professional capacity building through training of technical university students, professionals, foremen and woman administrators) and women's empowerment (C2: to empower selected females and increase their sense of self-worth by providing short term income generating activities). The reporting in RAIP I and II on gender is very limited and where present it is strong on claims but weak on evidence. Thus an interest of the evaluation will be to explore how well the nuanced and context specific dimensions of gendered exclusion from the public sphere have been understood in the existing programme and how such an understanding can contribute to setting realistic gender specific objectives in a future programme.

vi. Capacity Development

There is an emphasis on the building of capacities in the programme documents, particularly within the third phase and the use of participatory processes to do this. From an evaluative stance, a clear distinction needs to be made between building capacity

⁷¹[Name protected] (2009) Socioeconomic Report (Final Draft) Sari pul and Samangan. Volume 1 & II. UN-OPS; UNOPS (2012) Socio-Economic Baseline Survey: Jawzjan and Balkh Provinces. RAIP II

⁷² Sequeira, S., Grimmer, J and Beath, J. (2008) A Prospective Evaluation of Afghanistan's National Emergency Rural Roads Project. NERAP / World Bank

of individuals through skill training, and building organisational (structures, systems, procedures and resources) and institutional capacities (incentive structures, leadership, commitment and values).

UNOPS has been used as an “alternative” implementing agency during all three phases of the RAIP. The justification for this arrangement appears to have been that the urgent demand for improving access into rural areas warranted the use of an organisation established within UNOPS with the requisite technical, financial and managerial capacity to quickly mobilise the necessary resources to build roads and thereby improve access in the rural areas. But unless systematically addressed, such arrangements divert the focus of capacity development in the sector from where such support is required, i.e. the agencies in charge of the road network.

Institutional capacity was identified as a risk during the appraisal of RAIP II. However the assessment only related to the organisation within UNOPS to execute the services as described in the project document. Although UNOPS has operated within the road sector of Afghanistan for a long time the management unit established for the RAIP remains a temporary organisation, which will vanish when the programme is completed – unless a follow-up phase is approved.

The programme documentation suggests that most of RAIP’s programmatic attention has been placed on individual skills and to some degree on organisational capacities. However in assessing sustainability of these capacity building activities, the evaluation will specifically pay more attention to the institutional dimensions. The capacity constraints in the provincial government offices are certainly recognised by the donor and UNOPS, and activities relating to skills development among various cadres of staff implemented. Training and skills development in the sector will be assessed against training needs of individuals involved road works in the project area as well as within the relevant agencies at central level. Assessments will be made on the basis of actual numbers of staff involved in rural road works and also in terms of various subjects in which there are observed deficiencies. The LFA indicates the number and categories of trainees. It is noted that the majority consists of university students, local contractors, shura foremen and women administrators. But the only training provided to government technical agencies consists of training the 4 [Name protected] directors and an introduction to the RMMS.

For RAIP, where much of the road construction and maintenance has been contracted out to private actors a distinction between supporting capacities to manage road construction and capacities for managing maintenance is needed. The latter are likely to be more decentralised than the former. But there appears to have been less attention given to training of [Name protected] staff in the efforts to reach the objective to develop road construction and maintenance capacity. One would assume that the staff in government agencies such as the [Name protected] constitutes a considerable portion of the personnel involved in rural road works. It would be logical to offer training to such staff as part of the capacity building efforts in the sector, assuming the agencies have the requisite

staff. Organisational development for the management of contracting procedures and to ensure mechanisms are in place to avoid corruption is also needed.

The capacity constraints within the government, which has led to UNOPS taking charge of project implementation, will sooner or later need to be addressed by the government as well as the donors, as well as the resource mobilisation needs. Building and maintaining roads through UNOPS is a temporary measure and an exit strategy is needed. The evaluation will address these issues of organisational development and institutional structures with the key actors in the road sector and also explore what efforts have been made to establish more sustainable implementation arrangements. A central question for the evaluation team is to assess the contribution of the RAIP in such aspects and whether more can be done – in particular in the project area.

RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING EVALUATION QUESTIONS

As proposed in the terms of reference for the evaluation and agreed in the implementation proposal the five OECD/DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability provide the analytical framework for the evaluation. The ToR identified 19 questions grouped by the DAC criteria and these are presented below and discussed, in some cases with an elaboration beneath the question as a comment; where it is felt they need development and modification this is proposed (and shown in italics within the original question or separately). Additional questions have also been added. For ease of reference the original numbering of the question is given in parentheses in front of the question.

(a) Relevance

The three questions related to relevance are clear. However two additional questions have been added. Q2 to address the complementarity of the programme and Q4 to look particularly at the Road Connectivity Development Plans and the ways in which relevance was addressed in design and practice. However a rephrasing of Q5 is proposed to make clear that the focus should be on the extent to which the road programme has in its design included consideration and if so how, of the ways in which synergies might be achieved.

1. (Q9) To what extent have the interventions conformed to the needs and priorities of target groups and the policies of the Government of Afghanistan?
2. *To what extent have the interventions been complementary to other actions by development banks, donors and the government including the rehabilitation and maintenance responsibilities of the secondary road network by the PDPW?*

Comment: We see the complementary of RAIP with other programmes as a key issue of relevance

3. (Q10) To what extent have the programmes been in line with the policies of the Swedish government, and especially on the objectives stated in the current strategy for Swedish development Cooperation in Afghanistan?

4. *To what extent were issues of relevance included in the Road Connectivity Development Plans and to what extent was the prioritisation of the RDCP followed?*

Comment: These plans assess the work required on the existing secondary road network and make recommendations in terms of where priority rehabilitation works are needed. Although the original ToR for the RCNDPs seems to have included tertiary roads, the plans contain no detailed information on this part of the network. It remains unclear how the selections for the tertiary roads were made.

5. (Q11) How has the roads programme interacted with other factors to achieve socio-economic development and poverty reduction?

Proposed Revision: To what extent has the roads programme taken account of and sought to build synergies with other drivers of socio-economic development and poverty reduction?

Comment: This seeks to distinguish the original planning under the RDCPs identified in Q3 from the implementation of the programme over the longer period and the extent to which the planning took accounts of further developments and other investments.

(b) Effectiveness

Three questions were also proposed with respect to the assessment of effectiveness by the RAIP project. On Q6, while the question is clear, there will be challenges of attribution and account will have to be taken not only of the limits of the baseline discussed above but also of other infrastructure interventions in the provinces. A level of provincial disaggregation may be necessary. Consideration will also be given to the experience of other donors in implementing through NRAP and the response linked to the answer to Q9 (under efficiency) below.

However the evaluation would also draw on the analysis in relation to Q4 above since relevance and decisions on where road works should be prioritised and where works actually took place may have added to or detracted from effectiveness. In each province a road connectivity network development plan (RDNDP) was developed which included a system of prioritization. While it is not entirely clear from the documentation the extent to which this prioritization was followed the choice of roads works and which locations to serve is likely to have had a bearing on the effectiveness of the project.

6. (Q1) To what extent have the objectives of the roads programme been met, focusing (original emphasis) on intended outcome and impact,

Comment: We see this essentially as a stocktaking of what has been done so far and the extent to which services and outputs have been rendered in an effective manner.

This would also include an assessment of whether the programme will be able to reach the planned outputs within the given timeframe.

7. (Q2) What factors, internal and external to the programmes, have influenced the fulfilment of objectives (positively or negatively)?

Comment: These are seen to include the evolving political and security landscape, Sweden's response to it as well as experiences of programme implementation and UNOPS response to this.

8. (Q3) How has the choice of implementing a specific programme instead of contributing e.g. to the National Rural Access Programme (NRAP) contributed (positively or negatively) to effectiveness?

Comment: This is understood to address the trade-off between direct contracting of implementation for the programme in the target provinces and having the programme implemented indirectly under the management of NRAP in the target provinces. This will require a comparison of the implementation arrangements in the two programmes and the ability of each to deliver on time in the two projects. In terms of comparisons of costs and quality of works and technical assistance, there is obviously an overlap here with the criteria on efficiency.

(c) Efficiency

Five questions were proposed under the assessment of efficiency. However one question (Q18 in the original ToR) relates to the mainstreaming of gender and this has been re-positioned to Q12 below as more of an impact related question.

It is proposed that Q9 in relation to costs is developed to be more precise as a measure of efficiency. The other three questions are unmodified.

9. (Q15) What have been the costs of the results achieved?

Proposed Revision: Q8. What have been the unit costs of the results achieved, how have these varied and why and to what extent are they comparable with infrastructure costs elsewhere in Afghanistan.

Comment: There will probably need to be a level of disaggregation of costs to take account of variations in terrain between districts and provinces and cost comparison sought from elsewhere.

10. (Q16) Are there noticeable differences between the Sida supported road programme and the road programmes implemented by the Government of Afghanistan with support from other donors, if so which and what are the reasons for these?

Comment: This will address the quality of work, appropriateness of standards and how this compares to similar works carried out by other programmes. This links to Q19.

11. (Q17) What have been the pros and cons with the chosen modality of implementation through UNOPS?

Comment: The conclusions to this question as likely to be drawn from findings with respect to the others questions.

12. (Q19) Are the chosen technical standards appropriate and efficient in relation to traffic volumes, intended impact and sustainability? Would higher/lower standards have given better results? Which?

(d) Impact

Five questions were originally proposed with respect to the evaluation of impact to which has been added, a further one repositioned from the efficiency assessment. The addition (Q12) has been slightly edited and added to. Q14 has been slightly edited while Q16 has been added to in order to problematize whether or not there have been synergies and to question whether or not they have added to or detracted from the impact. The assumption that there have been synergies needs to be questioned.

13. (Q18) What measures has the programme taken in terms of mainstreaming gender into the programme, for instance in the analysis, the design of the results framework as well as in the promotion of women to taking part in decision-making, planning and training *and what results have been achieved?*

Comment: A number of specific sub-questions will be used to explore this question as detailed below:

- a. To what extent does RAIP present results at outcome level (and impact if possible) as compared to those anticipated in the programme documents, applications and reports to Sida?*
- b. How has RAIP implemented the rights perspective based on the four principles participation, non-discrimination, transparency and accountability?*
- b. How has RAIP implementation reflected the gender perspective?*

14. (Q5) To what extent has the programme contributed to the *promotion of* issues on women's economic empowerment and employment?

15. (Q4) To what extent has the programme contributed to socio-economic development and poverty reduction and more specifically to access to markets and social services for men and women respectively?

Comment: Specific gendered data on direct employment by the project will be collected from project documentation and examined with respect to its amount, variability by location and seasonality.

16. (Q6) Have there been any positive or negative, intended or unintended effects beyond those reflected in the explicit objectives of the interventions?

Comment: There are various levels at which this question will be considered. One aspect will concern the spatial distribution of interventions, the synergies (or otherwise) with other interventions and the consequences of this. A second aspect will be a consideration of the ways in which the project interventions have avoided, been drawn into or been captured by existing informal power relations and structures. A third might relate to effects of public good delivery affecting perceptions of local government. A fourth will consider environmental impacts e.g. changes in occurrence of landslides.

17. (Q7) To which extent have *there been* synergies with other Swedish interventions in the project area and have they contributed to or detracted from the impact?

Comment: It is understood that this relates both to other Swedish funded activities such as the UNDP Afghanistan Sub-national governance programme (ASGP) as well as the Swedish military presence in the region and activities undertaken by for example the Swedish Afghanistan Committee. However attention will also be paid to synergies with other non-Swedish interventions as well.

18. (Q8) Has the broad scope of the programme contributed positively or negatively to the impact?

Comment: Scope is understood to comprise both the geographical extent of the project (and the fact that it expanded from two to four provinces after RAIP II start) and the spread of interventions from roads to support under RISF. There are also questions of whether the expansion of the programme area led to a reduction of funding per province. Scope also refers to the fact that the programme has been involved in (i) construction and maintenance works, (ii) secondary and tertiary roads and (iii) capacity development efforts.

(e) Sustainability

The three questions on sustainability are agreed with but have been rephrased to be more specific. Sustainability will be examined specifically in relation to the infrastructural investments (roads, bridges etc.) as well as in terms of outcome level results. This question is also linked to the village infrastructure component, the future usage of the RMMS, and the future availability of trained staff for similar activities. RAIP ends in 2015 and the evaluation will need to establish the rate of progress taking place in terms of the operationalization of the envisaged road maintenance fund being supported by the World Bank. Consideration will also be given as to whether the RAIP is now to a sufficient extent involving the provincial authorities in current maintenance works, thereby enabling them to take over this responsibility at the end of RAIP without any disruptions.

19. (Q12) What is the likelihood that *the roads and other infrastructure built by the programme will continue to be maintained?*
20. (Q13) What measures has the programme taken to ensure *that the government and communities will continue to maintain the infrastructure and are these measures sufficient?*

21. (Q14) *The main risks of sustainability are related to future maintenance. Do the government and communities have the technical, financial and institutional means to maintain the infrastructure? If not (which is likely to be the case) how can this be achieved?*

Comment: This will include both risks due to extreme climate events (which in part is a design and maintenance issue of infrastructure) as well as political, institutional and financial capacity issues.

Proposed Approach and Methodology

METHODS AND APPROACH

As discussed in the previous section the results from the RAIP programme will be examined in relation to the programme log frame. Given the evolution of the log frame over the three phases of the programme the structure of the Phase III log frame will be drawn on. Drawing from the proposed evaluation questions identified in part 2, table 4 briefly summarises for each results levels, the data that will be sought to address these questions, the potential sources of data and the methods that will be used to gather it.

The Team Leader has already undertaken preliminary interviews in Stockholm with relevant programme staff and additional interviews will be undertaken in late August with the previous Sida desk officer for the programme and the former head of Sida programme in Mazaar.

The fieldwork in Afghanistan will be implemented from September 17th. Preliminary interviews will take place in Kabul during the first two days and then the team will travel to Mazaar on Friday 19th. Field work will take place in the northern provinces between Saturday 20th to Thursday 25th of September 30th with debriefings in Mazaar/ Kabul on September 30 – October 2nd when the team will depart.

In Kabul interviews will be held with key stakeholders including the following:

- [Name protected]
- [Name protected]
- National Rural Access Programme National Coordinator ([Name protected])
- [Name protected]
- National Rural Access Programme, Programme Manager ([Name protected])
- World Bank, Transport Specialist, ([Name protected])
- UNOPS-ARAP, Team Leader, [Name protected]
- UNOPS-KAC Elizabeth De Bendetti, Chief of Party
- Embassy of Sweden, Kabul [?]

In Mazaar the evaluation will be hosted by the UNOPS office and a programme of field visits and interviews will be organized.

In view of the limits of the baseline data for RAIP, it is proposed that contrasting locations (these should be seen as case studies) for field visits for each province be selected according to the following matrix in order to investigate potential access, employment and poverty outcomes. The non-control and control sites must be in the same district and have similar socio-economic characteristics (population, economic activities) and non-transport infrastructure interventions (schools, clinics etc.). Other factors such as the data of RAIP road construction and other investments in infrastructure will also need to be taken account of. The point needs to be made though that the final selection of field sites will be heavily dependent on security consideration which will determine where it will be safe to go. As well as meeting with the [Name protected] ([Name protected]) at village level, discussions will be held with [Name protected] ([Name protected]).

	Control without RAIP road	Non-control with RAIP roads
Remote Location		
Well Connected Location		

It will be necessary to see the full variation in type of infrastructure and types of work with which the project has been involved in. It will also be useful to see works completed in all three phases of RAIP as well as see works completed in the major landscape contrasts in the 4 provinces.

The main purpose of infrastructure site visits will be to:

- (i) obtain a basic impression of development potential in the villages served by the improved/maintained roads and access challenges in the rural areas,
- (ii) make field observations of the commonly applied design standards and quality of work, prevalent engineering challenges, common solutions to geographical conditions, quality of drainage, pavements, surface finish, retaining walls, common maintenance challenges, etc.
- (iii) assess performance of roads with the chosen construction standards,
- (iv) observe type and amount of traffic,
- (v) assess quality of workmanship and competence of contractors
- (vi) compare with works carried out by other organisations and donors
- (vii) assess performance of maintenance
- (viii) assess quality of work supervision
- (ix) obtain a sample impression of quality and type of village infrastructure

During the field trip, it would also be useful to visit the provincial works departments to interview the technical staff in relation to:

- (i) their involvement in RAIP activities
- (ii) involvement in other road works activities
- (iii) extent of works managed by their offices
- (iv) how they manage road works
- (v) what resources they actually possess
- (vi) general capacity constraints
- (vii) capacity to maintain their respective road networks

- (viii) how they envisage to take over current maintenance provided by the RAIP
- (ix) any support measures which could improve the capacity to take over this maintenance

vii. Gender Dimensions

The evaluation will draw on a rights-based approach (RBA) to gender equality. It will be guided and implemented through a critical, learning and participatory approach. Discussions with the various stakeholders will explore how well the nuanced and context specific dimensions of gendered exclusion from the public sphere have been understood in the programme design and implementation and how such an understanding can contribute to setting realistic gender specific objectives in a future programme.

The data collection will be initiated with a desk review of relevant project specific documents and country reports related to gender and development. The desk review will be followed by interviews in the four provinces – specifically with the following stakeholders:

1. Women and girls; trained (*aggregate production, bread baking, gabion weaving and protective clothing*) beneficiaries from all 4 provinces (widowed, separated, married and single)
2. Family members and relatives
3. Local formal and traditional duty-bearers, such as village [Name protected], group leaders
4. Provincial staff and management, GMP groups, Community Development Officers and trainers
5. Donors and civil society organisations (CSO)
6. [Name protected] and/or [Name protected]

Data will be retrieved through field visits with different stakeholders to form a narrative reports when assessing *impact* as well as *relevance*.

A set of interview guides for the different stakeholder groups⁷³ will be developed. These guides will be adjusted to each interview situation, using different methods to extract as much information as possible given the level of literacy, age, relation to/involvement in RAIP, etc. Consultations with girls and women in most cases will be held by the Dari speaking evaluator. Special methods will be used in the interviews with illiterate women and those who have few years in school e.g. raising ques-

tions with help of images or asking the respondent to draw. These interviews will focus on fewer questions giving the respondent more time to develop their thoughts.

A schedule for the implementation of the evaluation is attached as Annex 1.

Questions	Data	Sources	Methods
Relevance			
To what extent have the interventions conformed to the needs and priorities of target groups and the policies of the Government of Afghanistan?	Information on priorities & targets	Policy & programme documents; Key Informants at all levels Villages	Review & analysis Interviews
To what extent have the programmes been in line with the policies of the Swedish government, and especially on the objectives stated in the current strategy for Swedish development Cooperation in Afghanistan?	Information on Swedish policy objectives and & programme	General Swedish policies; Strategy for Swedish Development Cooperation in Afghanistan	Document Review Key informant interviews
<i>To what extent were issues of relevance included in the Road Connectivity Development Plans and to what extent was the prioritisation of the RCNDP followed</i>	Methods and data used for RCNDP compared with actual implementation	RCNDPs UNOPS staff	Document Review Informant Interviews
<i>To what extent has the road programme taken account of and sought to build synergies with other drivers of socio-economic development and poverty reduction</i>	Data on other provincial investments, economic and poverty analysis	Documents e.g. NRVA, reports & studies; UNOPS staff	Document Review Informant Interviews
Effectiveness			
To what extent have the objectives of the roads programme been met, <i>focusing</i> on intended outcome and impact,	Availability & access to public goods & markets, employment & road construction & maintenance capacities	Primary Field-work Project documents Informant interviews	ET Field Interview Review Interviews
What factors, internal and external to the programmes, have influenced the fulfilment of objectives (positively or negatively)?	Assessment of objective achievements and reasons for achievement & non-achievement	Results from other evaluation questions UNOPS staff	Interviews & Documentation Interviews
How has the choice of implementing a specific programme instead of contributing e.g. to the National Rural Access Programme (NRAP) contributed (positively or negatively) to effectiveness?	Data on NRAP modalities & achievements Data on RAIP modalities & achievements	Documentation Interviews with NRAP, UNOPS, Ministry & Provinces	Review Interviews
Efficiency			
<i>What have been the unit costs of the results achieved, how have these varied and</i>	Progress reports from RAIP and comparable projects within country	Documentation Interviews with NRAP, UNOPS,	Review Interviews

<i>why and to what extent are they comparable with infrastructure costs elsewhere in Afghanistan.</i>	Comparison with cost data from other countries	Ministry & Provinces	
Are there noticeable differences between the Sida supported road programme and the road programmes implemented by the Government of Afghanistan with support from other donors, if so which and what are the reasons for these?	Technical standards, training material, programme documents and summary descriptions	Interviews with technical staff from RAIP and other programmes	Verification of standards through visits to roads built by various programmes. Interviews with field staff
What have been the pros and cons with the chosen modality of implementation through UNOPS?	Data on costs, effectiveness, alternatives	Documentation Key Informants	Review Interviews
Are the chosen technical standards appropriate and efficient in relation to traffic volumes, intended impact and sustainability? Would higher/lower standards have given better results? Which?	Technical and operation manuals	Interviews with technical staff from RAIP and other programmes	Visits to roads built by various programmes. Interviews with field staff
Impact			
What measures has the programme taken in terms of mainstreaming gender into the programme, for instance in the analysis, the design of the results framework as well as in the promotion of women to taking part in decision-making, planning and training <i>and what results have been achieved?</i>	Design, implementation and results in relation to gender mainstreaming Screening process for village infrastructure	Documents Key informants Primary Field-work	Review Interviews Field Work
To what extent has the programme contributed to the <i>promotion of issues on women's economic empowerment and employment?</i>	Understanding of empowerment and activities related to implementation and promotion	Primary Field-work Key informants UNOPS staff Documentation	Field interview Interviews Interviews Review
To what extent has the programme contributed to socio-economic development and poverty reduction and more specifically to access to markets and social services for men and women respectively?	Poverty changes, household incomes, household mobility, public good availability and use, market linked activities	Primary Field-work Key Informants Project Documents Secondary sources e.g. NRVA, other papers	Field Work Interview Review Review
Have there been any positive or negative, intended or unintended effects beyond those reflected in the explicit objectives of the interventions?	Spatial distribution of interventions in relation to other non-RAIP investments, power structures etc	Primary Field-work Key informants UNOPS staff Documentation	Field interviews Interviews Interviews Review
To which extent have <i>there been synergies with other Swedish interventions in the project area and have they</i>	Other Swedish interventions, location and results	Primary Field-work Key informants UNOPS staff	Field interviews Interviews Interviews Review

contributed to <i>or detracted</i> from the impact?		Documentation	
Has the broad scope of the programme contributed positively or negatively to the impact?	Assessments from the other impact questions Programme budgets	Fieldwork UNOPS Staff Documentation	Field interviews Interviews Review
Sustainability			
What is the likelihood that the results of the programme will be sustainable?	Existing maintenance activities, budgets, planning and capacities	Fieldwork UNOPS staff Key Informants Documentation	Field interviews Interviews Interviews Review
What measures has the programme taken to ensure sustainability?	Work plans, training programmes	SIDA and UNOPS, [Name protected], [Name protected] and	Field interviews Interviews Review
What are main risks to sustainability observed, taking the technical, financial and institutional dimensions into account, and how can they be dealt with?	Government maintenance policies and strategies Budget projections	Fieldwork UNOPS staff [Name protected], [Name protected] Key Informants Documentation	Field interviews Interviews Review

UTILISATION

A key element that will underpin the approach to the utilization of the results of this evaluation will be the examination of how the theory of change underpinning the programme actually fits with the evidence found in the evaluation. This will inform both the structure of the report and the debriefings to stimulate critical reflection about paths and processes to achieving relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability in any future programme.

The primary constituencies with an interest in the findings from this evaluation are Sida and UNOPS although other organizations in Afghanistan (Government, donors) etc. will also have an interest. A debriefing on the initial findings from the evaluation will be made both directly to UNOPS in Mazaar and in Kabul and to the Swedish Embassy in Kabul. A full debriefing on the findings and recommendations will be made to Sida in Stockholm in the autumn.

Recommendations

Specific lessons will be drawn from the evaluation not only in relation to the specific DAC criteria but also in terms of the Rural Infrastructure Support Fund (RISF) and the Gender components. Recommendations will be made on where and how gender perspectives and support and conflict analysis can be strengthened.

Drawing on the evaluation findings, assessment will be made of the modalities of intervention, the role and effectiveness of UNOPS as an implementing partner and the possible effects of this on the degree to which RAIP has been aligned with national

priorities. Based on this the options for future implementation modalities will be considered.

In addition taking the lessons of RAIP as a whole and the more general question of if and how investments in rural infrastructure can contribute to economic development, core design issues for new interventions, including the monitoring and evaluation components, will be identified.

Inception Report Annex 1 – Workplan RAIP

	2014																										
	Total	AP	RE	NP	NP	Aug				Sept				Oct				Nov				Dec					
						32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50			
Inception phase																											
Start up																											
Planning and methodology		1	1	5	1 x																						
Drafting inception report		4	1		1 x																						
Submission of inception report						15/8																					
Comments /no-objection on the inception report by Sida & UNOPS																											
Data collection and review																											
Field work in Afghanistan		15	15	13	10						x	x	x														
2 stakeholder /emerging findings workshop in Afghanistan (incl. Travel)		1	1	1	1							x	x														
Analysis and drafting																											
Data analysis		2	2	2	2									x	x	x											
Drafting of report		6	4		4										x	x	x										
Submission of draft evaluation report																		27/10									
Comments on draft report by Sida & UNOPS																			10/11								
Presentation of draft report for Sida		1																									
Finalize report		2																									
Submission of final report																									2/12		
Total days	96,0	32,0	24,0	21,0	19,0																						

Initials: AP = Adam Pain, BJ = Björn Johannessen, [Name protected], [Name protected] The work plan will be finalised during the inception phase

Deliverables and Milestones:

Inception report	15 August 2014
Comments provided by Sida and UNOPS	27 August 2014
Draft report	27 October 2014
Comments provided by Sida and UNOPS	10 November 2014

Annex 3a - Interviews with Sida staff

Interviews with Sida staff in Stockholm

Date	Name	Position
June 2 2014 pm	Bengt Ekman	Afghanistan Unit, Sida
	Store Hjelm	Oversight Consultant
August 28 th 2014 pm	Goran Larson	Former Desk Officer, Afghanistan Unit, Sida
	Store Hjelm	Oversight Consultant

Annex 3b – Afghanistan itinerary

Itinerary, Meetings and RAIP Site visits in Afghanistan December 7th – 21st 2014
(F after a name indicates Female)

	Itinerary, Meetings and RAIP Site Visits	Organization
Dec 07	Kabul	
13.00	Mikko Lainejoki, Director and Representative UNOPS, Afghanistan	UNOPS, Kabul
	[Name protected]. Former Project Manager (RAIP I, II and III)	UNOPS, Mazar
	[Name protected]. Project Manager, RAIP III	UNOPS, Mazar
	Akiko Kobayakawa (F), Project Development & Partnership Manager	UNOPS, Kabul
14.00	Elizabeth De Benedetti (F), Chief of Party, Keep Afghans Connected (KAC)	UNOPS, Kabul
	[Name protected], Team Leader – NERAP	UNOPS, Kabul
15.30	Annika Siwertz (F), Counselor, Development Cooperation D&G	Swedish Embassy
	[Name protected] , National Program Officer	Swedish Embassy
Dec 08	Kabul	
10.30	[Name protected]	[Name protected], Kabul
11.30	[Name protected]	[Name protected] Kabul
13.30	[Name protected] Head of Program, NRAP	[Name protected], Kabul
15.00	[Name protected]	[Name protected], Kabul
16.30	[Name protected]	[Name protected], Kabul
Dec 09	Kabul	
10.00	[Name protected] Senior Transport Specialist	World Bank
12.00	UNOPS RAIP Team	UNOPS
17.00	Fly to Mazaar	
Dec 10	Balkh Province	
09.00	Meeting with Balkh Provincial Department Heads	
	[Name protected]	MeEco
	[Name protected]	
	[Name protected]	[Name protected]
	[Name protected]	UNOPS, Mazar
	[Name protected]	[Name protected], Mazar
13.30	Meeting with ARAP [Name protected] and [Name protected]	
	[Name protected]	[Name protected]
	[Name protected]	UNOPS, Mazar

	[Name protected]	UNOPS, Mazar
	[Name protected]	[Name protected], Dehdadi
14.30	[Name protected]	
	[Name protected]	UNOPS, Mazar
	[Name protected]	UNOPS, Mazar
Dec 11	Balkh Province	
08.00	Visit to [Name protected] and meeting with community	
	[Name protected]	SCA, Mazar
	[Name protected]	Informant
08.30	Visit to Bodana Qala Rod	
	[Name protected]	Informant
	[Name protected]	
12.00	Visit to Water Rervoir, Clininc Emergency room, bridge and canal, Aqoprok	
13.00	Meeting with [Name protected]	
	[Name protected]	[Name protected]
	[Name protected]	[Name protected]
14.00	Visit Aqoprok – Zari Road	
	[Name protected]	Informant
	[Name protected]	Informant
Dec 12	Mazar	
	Meeting with UNOPS RAIP team	
Dec 13	Jawzjan Province	
08.30	Visit Khaniqa Sealed and Gravel Road	
	[Name protected]	[Name protected]
	[Name protected]	[Name protected]
	[Name protected]	[Name protected]
	[Name protected]	[Name protected]
11.00	Visit Chilmard Village: Womens' Projects (F)	
12.00	Tertiary Road, Salmazaan	
	[Name protected] Salmazan village, Suburb of Shiberghan	Informant
14.00	Visit Provincial [Name protected] Office	
15.00	[Name protected]	
	[Name protected]	Informant
Dec 14	Sari-Pul Province	
09.00	[Name protected]	
	[Name protected]	[Name protected]
	[Name protected]	[Name protected]
	[Name protected]	[Name protected]
	[Name protected]	[Name protected]

	[Name protected]	PGO
10.00	Visit Saripul – Sozma Qala Road	
	[Name protected]	Informant
	[Name protected]	Informant
14.00	Visit to Womens Projects (F)	
Dec 15	Sari-Pul Sayed District	
09.00	Visit Sari-pul Sayyad Road /Bridge	
10.00	Visit Sayyad-Mirzawalang Road, Olqani village	
	[Name protected]	Village
12.00	[Name protected]	
	[Name protected]	DGO
14.00	Visit women's livestock project (F)	
Dec 16	Samangan	
09.00	[Name protected]	
	[Name protected]	PGO
	[Name protected]	PGO
	[Name protected]	PGO
10.00	Travel Aybak – Sarbagh/Ruyi Road	
	[Name protected]	Informant
11.00	[Name protected]	
Dec 17	Mazaar	
	Team Debriefing / Drafting Debriefing Note	
	Meeting UNOPS RAIP Team	
Dec 18	Mazaar	
08.00	Finalise Debriefing Note	
13.30	Debriefing [Name protected] and UNOPS Staff	
Dec 19	Kabul	
07.00	Fly to Kabul	
Dec 20	Kabul	
09.00	[Name protected]	
11.00	Evaluation Team Review and Discussion	
Dec 21	Kabul	
	Team Departs	

Annex 4 - Documentation consulted

RAIP Documentation

General

UNOPS (2012) Evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming Projects during RAIP 1 and RAIP II. RAIP II, UNOPS, Mazaar. (with annex)

UNOPD (2009) Quality Assurance Plan, RAIP, Sari pul & Samangan Provinces
[Name protected] (2008) Socioeconomic Report (Final Draft) Sari pul and Samangan. Vol-ume II. UNOPS.

[Name protected]. (2009) Socioeconomic Report (Final Draft) Sari pul and Samangan. Vol-ume 1. UNOPS.

UNOPS (2012) Socio-Economic Baseline Survey: Jawzjan and Balkh Provinces. RAIP II

Road Connectivity Network Development Plan (RCNDP)

UNOPS (2009) Road Connectivity Network Development Plan (Final Draft) Saripul Province

UNOPS (2009) Road Connectivity Network Development Plan (Final Draft) Samangan Province

UNOPS (2011) Road Connectivity Network Development Plan (Final Draft) Balkh Province

UNOPS (2011) Road Connectivity Network Development Plan (Final Draft) Jowzjan Province

Road Maintenance

UNOPS (2010) Rural Road Maintenance System Conceptual Paper. RAIP in Sari Pul and Samangan. Draft 3

UNOPS (2013) Routine Maintenance Model for Secondary and Tertiary Roads. RAIP III.

RAIP I

RAIP 1 Preparation:

[Name protected] (2007) Agreement on RAIP I Implementation by UNOPS funded directly by GOS/Sida

Sida (2007_10_11) Assessment Memo. Rural Access Improvement Project in Sari Pul and Samangan, Afghanistan

Sida (2007_10) Agreement GOS and UNOPS – RAIP

Sida (2007_10_23) Decision on Contribution RAIP I

Sida (2007_09_13) Coordination and Harmonization on Parallel Financing of the Development of Rural Accessibility in the Islam Republic of Afghanistan. Draft

UNOPS (2007_09) Sida Rural Access Project: Rehabilitation & Maintenance of Rural Roads, Sari-Pul and Samangan Provinces, Afghanistan. Project Proposal

RAIP I Implementation**2008**

UNOPS (2008_04_22) Rural Access Improvement Project in Sari-pul and Samangan Province, Afghanistan. Progress Report 01

UNOPS (2008_05_13) Rural Access Improvement Project in Saripul and Samangan Province, Afghanistan. Progress Report 02

UNOPS (2008_06_30) Rural Access Improvement Project in Saripul and Samangan Province, Afghanistan. Progress Report 03. First Quarterly Report

UNOPS (2008_10_15) Rural Access Improvement Project in Saripul and Samangan Province, Afghanistan. Second Quarterly Report

2009

UNOPS (2009_01_09) Rural Access Improvement Project in Saripul and Samangan Province, Afghanistan. Third Quarterly Report

UNOPS (2009_04_09) Rural Access Improvement Project in Saripul and Samangan Province, Afghanistan. Fourth Quarterly Report

UNOPS (2010_12_120) Rural Access Improvement Project in Saripul and Samangan Province, Afghanistan. Final Project Completion Report

RAIP I Consultant Reports

Hjelm, S (2009_02) Semi-Annual Review: Rural Access Improvement Project in Samangan and Sari Pul, Afghanistan, 8 – 18 February 2009. Mission Report

Hjelm, S (2009_12) Rural Access Improvement Project in Samangan and Sari Pul, Afghanistan, 30 November – 10 December. Report from Annual Review

Hjelm, S (2010_11) Infrastructure Support Fund. Background Paper and Outline.

RAIP II Special Review

RAIP I Sida UNOPS

Sida (2009_02) Minutes of Review with UNOPS for RAIP, 8-18 February 2009

Sida (2009_10) Minutes of Review with UNOPS for RAIP, 20 Nov – 10 Dec 2009.

Sida (2010_07) Minutes of Review with UNOPS for RAIP, 28 June – 12 July 2010

RAIP IIRAIP II Preparation:

Sida (2009_11_09) Agreement between the Government of Sweden and the United Nations Office (UNOPS) on Support to Phase II of the Rural Access Improvement Project in Sar-e-pul and Samangan Provinces in Afghanistan (with 3 Annexes and 6 amendments

- Annex I Log Frame
- Annex II Budget
- Annex III Reporting
- Amendment 1: Emergency Repairs for Flood Damaged Roads in Sar-e-pul and Samangan Province, June 21st 2010.
- Amendment 2: Reconstruction of Alizay and Arjandar Roads in Chimtal District, Balkh Province, December 1st 2010.
- Amendment 3: Additional works in Sar-e-pul and Samangan Provinces, November 23rd 2010
- Amendment 4: RAIP II Infrastructure Support Fund, February 2nd 2011

- Amendment 5: RAIP II Extension into Jowzjan and Balkh Provinces, June 10th 2011
- Amendment 6: Grant Support Agreement, July 7th 2011

UNOPS (2009_11_08) Project Extension Proposal (Final Draft). Rural Access Improvement Project Sar-e-pul and Samangan Province, Afghanistan.

- Annex 1: Log Frame
- Annex 2: Revised Costs Estimation Details

Sida (2009) Assessment Memo: Support to Phase II of the Rural Access Improvement Project in Sar-e-Pul and Samangan Provinces, Afghanistan (RAIP)

Sida (2009_21_09) Agreement between the Government of Sweden and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) on support to Phase II of the Rural Access Improvement Project in Sar-E-Pul and Samangan Provinces in Afghanistan.

RAIP II Implementation

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Annex 5 – Field informant case studies

Transcripts from field interviews

Case 1

Date Interview Wednesday Dec 10, 2014

Name: [Name protected]

Position: [Name protected] member of Dehdadi District of Balkh

Venue: [Name protected]

‘I’m working as member of the [Name protected] voluntarily for 6 years now. I’m also doing a little businesses as a middleman, collecting grains during the harvest time and selling them in Mazar markets. Over the last 10 years I got involved in NSP programing as [Name protected] member and then was elected to a [Name protected] position. I do appreciate what I have learned and gained new skills from this training but the recent (March 2014) incident really pissed me off and now I’m very regretful that it wasn’t a good move for my credibility and the honest work and public ser-vices that I have carried out for my community. There is a 2 Km well-graveled road from the junction at highway of Mazar to Sholgara toward Dehdadi district center. I was approached by many people of Dehdadi to make a petition and put forward a request to various donors and implementing partners to asphalt this 2 Km. My impression was that I would quickly do this great job for my community but never had thought about the obstacles. The petition was made with close consultation of [Name protected] and [Name protected] members and as per procedures I had submitted them to [Name protected]. They referred it to Provincial Development Committee (PDC) meeting led by [Name protected] and then the [Name protected] asked UNOPS, Mazar to see if they could help us. UNOPS got back and said that there is no budget to support this and I was getting huge pressure from the community. After experiencing lots of up and down, I did manage to meet the [Name protected] couple of months before and asked his assistance. In front of me, he called [Name protected] [Name protected] in Kabul and asked him to do something in regard to find out who can assist us to asphalt his 2 Km. [Name protected] promised to look at to the need but then I realized considering the current political landscape and in absence of new cabinet and committed donors nothing happened to our request but I have heard from many people in Dehdadi and even in Mazar that someone has posted a message at Facebook that I have managed to get an huge amount of money for asphaltting the 2 Km road but this money has gone to my pocket. When I saw this on Facebook, it really disappointed me that being a representative of the community is not an easy job and there are potential and actual threats to your credibility anytime and anywhere when you have little information on what is going on’.

Case 2

Date Interview Thursday Dec 11, 2014

Names [Name protected]

Venue: [Name protected]

‘Ster Kott has 13 villages and there are 1,000 HHs. For us, it was one of the biggest dreams that came true when this road between Mazar to Sholgara has been asphalted. As you know, this asphalt road connects us to Dara-Souf at the upstream and if the work continues then we’ll be connected to Bamiyan at the central highlands.

We think one of the great advantages of this asphalt road is that it paved the way for further connectivity to main cities like Mazar. 5 years before, we used to travel Russian jeeps or Kamaz trucks which was talking us about 2-3 hours from here to Mazar city but now it’s just 40 minutes. The east part of Ster Kott which is located to the other side of the Sholgara rive04

is well irrigated lands and are known for the cultivation of vegetables and every early morning there are number of mini trucks loading a variety of vegetables which are heading to Mazar. In these 13 villages, people with more than 5 jirib lands can produce surplus wheat, sesame, corn and cotton who can afford to well survive throughout the winter but people with less than 5 jiribs are heavily depend to either work for other rich people or migrate for employment to Mazar, Kabul and even Iran. On traveling, everybody can't afford the Corolla cars fares. Previously it was just 20 Afs while now, since most of transportation means are Corolla cars, then poor people cannot afford 60 to 80 Afs per passenger from Sholgara to Mazar unless that person has got someone at home ill very seriously. It's worth mentioning that as soon as the road between Mazar and Sholgara has been asphalted the price for one jirib land rapidly gone up and now those lands near to main road have more than tripled in price compared to 5 years before. For example, 5 years before if one jirib land of irrigated land was sold for 50,000 Afs now it's 150,000 Afs.

A couple of upper level villages which are away from the river basin has been graveled by Save the Children. The inhabitants of these two villages are mostly poor people and some of them are working as daily labor on vegetable farms at villages near to river and some are going to Mazar or Kabul and staying there for 4-6 months and sending remittances to support their families. These two villages are about 2 Km from here and people are still using their donkeys to travel up to this clinic or Sholgara bazaar though they have a well-gravel road now but they can't afford the fares for corolla cars. It's a year now that this clinic has been constructed here but affording the required and appropriate health services remains as a big dream for our people.

[Name protected] observation of Sholgara bazar: *"in October 1995, when I was traveling to Dara Souf we had to stop at Sholgara bazar for lunch and then continued our journey toward Dara Souf. It took another 5 hours to reach to the center of Dara Souf. In Sholgara bazar, there were dozens shops and maintenance workshops. It was always a busy bazaar including some local cafés that were providing space for those travelers that wanted (actually pushed) to stay overnight for taking rest. Now, having a asphalted road enabled the people to reach Mazar rather than stop by at Sholgara bazaar. What I have now seen is fewer shops with less customers and a few ruined mud walls and shops. When I compared this changes with 21 years before, those shopkeepers that they may lost their businesses or even moved to Mazar"*

Case 3

Date: Thursday Dec 11, 2014

Name: [Name protected]

Venue: [Name protected]

[Name protected] who was among 8 other passengers including 2 women in one little corolla car who had left Zari district an hour before and were a few minutes from reaching Aqkoprok, center of Kishindeh district. The car should only carry 5 people including driver but seeing him taking so many passengers means that every passenger can pay a reasonable (affordable) amount to reach Mazar. According to [Name protected], indeed it is a golden era in terms of traveling compare to 10 years back and a super golden era compare to 20 years back. 'We left Zari around 01:15 PM today and have reached here at 02:10 PM and will be in Aqkoprok in 20 minutes' said [Name protected]. 'In my age, I can easily remember the time we had to travel this route in one and a half days in a Russian Kamaz truck and you had to sit above the bags and commodities that the truck had loaded. 20 years back, it wasn't easy at all as it was taking 8 hours from Zari to Aqkoprok and you had to stay overnight either in Aqkoprok or Sholgara center and then next day it was taking another 6-7 hours from Aqkoprok to Mazar city. When I was young (1977) I, myself traveled from Zari to Mazar in 14 hours with Russian truck. Zari was one of the remotest districts with little access to roads either toward Sangcharak in Sar-e-Pul or toward Sholgara at that time but now we have got choices to travel to Sangcharak and pass on Sar-e-Pul and reach Mazar through Sheberghan. But let me tell you another fact that having this road and good connectivity to the next district

doesn't mean that people can afford rental cars and everyone can travel. Look at these people traveling with this car, some are going to see their relatives whom they have not seen for a couple of years, some are taking their patients to Mazar hospitals and I'm going to Mazar to spend few nights with my son who is living there. These little corollas are charging 250 Afs to 300 Afs per passenger and you can imagine if the majority of people from a rain fed district like Zari can afford this high transportation cost?' He added 'If you see a few corollas driving up and won between Zari and Aqkoprok, they are for *real* needs rather than fun.

Case 4

Date: Thursday Dec 11, 2014

Name: [Name protected]

Position: Community people

Venue: A nomad village on the way between Bodana Qala to Cheqnaq

The village contained some old mud houses and several black kuchi tents. There were about 40 HHs. 'We have been settled here about 100 years before', said [Name protected]. 'We appreciate the UNOPS engineers that they are working to gravel this roads although our village is located a bit far from the tarmac road. This graveled road going to connect Bodana Qala to Chim-tal and Alburz. What I have heard from my father that, originally we moved from Chimtal up to here decades before and we are heavily depending on rain fed lands and as well as a few livestock. We used to travel by donkeys for many years now and still using donkeys to bring water from Bodana Qala. Though there is a contractor that dug a semi-deep well a month before but they didn't finish their job yet and it needs to be completed.

Note: due to security reasons, we have been told to leave the village as soon as we can and we couldn't continue the interview. These days, the Alburz plains are well-known areas of having lots of movement by insurgent groups.

Case 5

Date: Thursday Dec 11, 2014

Name: [Name protected] and [Name protected]

Position: [Name protected] and [Name protected], Kishindeh

Venue: [Name protected]

Kishindeh district is one of the biggest provincial district with over 100,000 population and 117 villages. Kishindeh is known as one of the most rain fed area in Balkh province. There are 98.8% rain fed and 1.2% semi-flat lands with little access to irrigation. As you know, this asphalted road between Mazar to Sholgara is going to connect us Dara-Souf at the upstream and if the work continues, then we'll be connected to Bamiyan at the central highlands. I, as [Name protected] confidently can say that these secondary roads are made significant changes in terms of transportation and businesses and particularly the security. I just came from Mazar this morning and had only one and two hour journey which was not possible before. **Case 6**

Date: Thursday Dec 11, 2014

Name: [Name protected] and [Name protected] Routine Maintenance team

Venue: On the way Aqkoprok to Zari District

We are a team of 6 people for maintenance work on the road. This is a daily job for me and other 5 people you can see them around here with 6 USD / day for each labor and about 7 USD for the team leader. I have been informed of this job through a member of [Name protected] of our village which is located just 1 Km to the north west of Aqkoprok. To me, it was one of the dreams that came true when this road between Mazar to Sholgara has been asphalted and followed by graveled road between Sholgara to Kishindeh and now to Zari. As you may know, Kishindeh and its entire villages are quite rain fed lands. As far as I remembering and have heard from my father, living in these valleys was always depends to rain. As per our

definition, a good year heavily depends on the number of rains you have in the spring otherwise less and no rain years are alerting us sometime in May to think about alternatives and seek jobs in Mazar and even Kabul. What I was noticing in last few months (after these roads were graveled), there are many young people were traveling toward Mazar and mostly going to seek daily labor job in Mazar and Kabul.

In the years that can be called prosperity, the middle level land owners (with 10 to 15 jiribs of rain fed lands) have to sell their surplus of wheat, corn, barley and sesame. Before having these imported wheat flour in the country, the wheat from these valleys were sold in Mazar. Still Sholgara and Kishindeh wheat is the best in terms of quality in Mazar markets. But things were changed over the last 10-15 years and even we can see the reverse, in every shop here you can find Pakistani and Kazakistani wheat flour with low price as compared to the local wheat. Today was, *Bazzar Day* in Aqkoprok but it ended up with few people coming from surrounding villages.

I'm not sure how many days and months this maintenance work will continue, but in case it gets stopped, then I have to seek a daily labor in Mazar or elsewhere to feed my family.

Jawzjan

Case 7

Date: Saturday Dec 13, 2014

Name: [Name protected]

Position: Community elder

Venue: Salmazan village, Sheberghan suburb

Salamzan is a cluster of 6 small villages located at the south east part of Sheberghan city and it is just 5 Km from Sheberghan city. [Name protected] elder brother couldn't talk to us as he wasn't feeling well and walking away and [Name protected] presented himself as a right person to talk about the Salmazan and the road project. [Name protected] younger brother is the head of [Name protected] for the cluster and apparently well aware of what happened to the tertiary road between the asphalted junction of Mazar – Sheberghan highway toward Salmazan. [Name protected] remembers that this tertiary road was graveled in 2005 by NSP project and then in 2008 was re-graveled by IOM and almost a year before the UNOPS project graveled it for the 3rd time. 'In my view, the roads brought good opportunities for the habitants of this cluster to be employed as daily labor on road construction and maintenance. It really reduced the time we're spending traveling from here to Sheberghan which was taking one hour with Tractors and more than an hour with donkeys and camels. Now, it's only 15 minutes with three wheelers. 10 to 15 years back, people from this cluster were traveling once week and now it became as daily trip for many people that they have got a business / shop in Sheberghan city. 10 years back, tractors were charging 50 Afs per person but now these three wheelers are just 15 to 20 Afs which is cheap and can be affordable. Coinciding with road projects, there were number of other infrastructure came to this villages such as new buildings for girls and boys school and a clinic. In my view these facilities and services were waiting to get better road condition and as soon as we had the graveled roads other infrastructures came one by one. We are 3 brothers living in a big house and jointly have got 30 jiribs of irrigated land which water is coming from Sar-e-Pul river. We're cultivating wheat, barely and sesame. Before road construction, I mean about 10 years before one jirib irrigated land in this village about 10,000 Afs but now the price has gone up and it is about 100,000 Afs (10 times). In my family, my younger brother is the one that traveling every day to the city as he has got to see his friends as well as visiting PRRD engineers as he is the [Name protected] chair. **Case 8**

Date: Saturday Dec 13, 2014

Name: [Name protected]

Position: Community people

Venue: Arab Beg village, Khoja DoKuh District

‘Arab beg village is one of the biggest villages on the way from Khuja Dokuh toward Khamab district which bordering with Turkmenistan. It has about 1,500 HHs and about 500 HHs have got only 2-5 jiribs rain fed lands. The agricultural lands in the entire district are known as flood irrigated lands as normally during spring, farmers are getting water out of the flood that is coming from Sar-e-Pul river toward Khuja Dokuh but these days we are getting little water. The district is well-connected to Sheberghan city since our district is located in the right side of the highway between Sheberghan and Andkhoy/Faryab. But about 10 years before since there were limited transportation means, people were traveling to Sheberghan once a week and particularly on *Bazaar Day* which is on Thursdays. But now there are few buses that provides an opportunity for everyone from the district to make a trip anytime during the day. Also, in the past 10 – 15 years we used to travel to Khamab district but that time, traveling to Khamab was known as most painful trips as it was taking about 10 hours. Now, with having this graveled road toward Khamab we can reach there in about 2 hours. But there are hundreds young people of this district in big cities such Mazar and Kabul, they are mostly employed by private companies and Sheberghani traders that have got their businesses in Kabul. These days, we are hearing good news and dozens of these young people are seeking other employment opportunities in those companies that are re-structuring their positions and getting more confidence to expand their businesses which wasn’t in place before’, added [Name protected] (he was basically referring to the connections to Dostum who is from the province and is the first Vice-President in Unity Government).

Sar-e-Pul - Day One

Case 9

Date: Sunday Dec 14, 2014

Name: [Name protected]

Position: Community elder

Venue: Bughawi Afghanistan, On the way to Sozma Qala and Sangcharak

‘There are 3 Bughawis here: Bughawi Afghanistan, Bughawi Hazara and Baghawi Moughul. The asphalted road that connect Sar-e-Pul to Sozma Qala and number of other graveled roads really made a number of positive changes in our lives. We can travel from here to Sar-e-Pul in 15-20 minutes now which was taking at least 3 hours by donkeys about 10 years before and one and half hour by Komaz truck. Now, there are number of little corollas and even buses that are traveling between Sar-e-Pul and Sozma Qala and Sangcharak and its became a very busy road. From the years, even in difficult times including civil war in 1990s, we used to travel to Sar-e-Pul on Bazaar Days which is on Monday and Thursday. That time, mostly we were traveling with donkeys and I’m teasing the young people that sometimes making several trips to Sar-e-Pul by motorbikes each day. We, as residents of Bughawi Afghanistan should describe ourselves as most vulnerable people compare with other two Bughawis because our village and most of the houses are located in upper levels and far from the river and irrigation canals. During the wheat and particularly grapes harvest, almost half of the our active men and laborers from this village are going to work in Bughawi Hazara. It is for years and years now and we found it as good source of income in working for Bughawi Hazara as they are luckier than us and have got huge fertile vineyards. You can do easily a comparison while you are visiting Bughawi Hazara which is 10 minute drive from here.

As a Pashtoon tribe, we are coming with huge experience on having livestock business than farming, but for our own consumption in the winters, we are also cultivating wheat, sesame and barley in these rain fed lands. But cultivation on rain fed lands always been described as gambling as there is no guarantee that you can get something out of it. The only significant changes that road construction brought up there is the price of the land near to asphalt road.

About 10-15 years before the price of one jirib land was 10,000 and now you have to pay for it 50,000 Afs. It's not because of fertility but it is for making houses as the population growing fast and those men from this village gone to Iran are keep sending money for both to support their families during the winter and also buying a piece of land to make an house to live in it. From 120 HHs we have in this village, there is at least one man in Iran and sending remittances.

Case 10

Date: Sunday Dec 14, 2014

Name: [Name protected]

Position: Shopkeeper

Venue: Bughawi Hazara

'Bughawi Hazara is known as vineyards' village in this valley. Last summer we exported about 1,000 mini trucks of grapes to Sariupul, Sheberghan and Mazar. Most of the people that have got 2-3 jiribs of a vineyard have produced enough grapes and sold them in the markets. In the past, it was very painful for vineyard owners that grapes were waiting to be sent to Sar-e-Pul and Mazar but due to a bumpy and jumpy road it was difficult to export the maximum produced fresh grapes to Mazar which always been a main market for Sar-e-Pul's grapes. 10-15 years before and even if we go back to several decades, we were pushed to put the grapes in the sun and get them to be dried and made into raisins. During the summer and grapes harvesting time, we have to bring manpower and additional daily labor from neighboring villages such as Bughawi Afghanistan because our people can't reach to do everything and they need to hire daily workers from other villages. There are about 450 HHs in Bughawi Hazara and in terms of village economy, I should say that we're also cultivating wheat, sesame, peas and barely. We have got both irrigated lands and also rain fed lands. But again, the main source of income for most of Bughawi Hazara is the grapes. As I said earlier, a family with 2-3 jiribs of a vineyard can make a good income that the family well survive throughout the winter. When there was no good roads, we were heavily depend on exporting raisins at the end of the summer and it was hardly being sold 450 Afs / Ser while the fresh grapes were sold in last summer 220 to 250 Afs / Ser which enabling the vineyard owner to make a deal with Sar-e-Pul and Mazar markets and bring other needed foods items such as tea, sugar, clothes and sell them here. Let me recognize that the construction of this tertiary road connected us to main asphalted road and big cities like Mazar.

Sar-e-Pul - Day Two

Case 11

Date: Monday Dec 15, 2014

Name: [Name protected]

Venue: Water mill station, Olqani village, Sayaad District

[Name protected], remembers the time he and other villages were traveling by donkeys from their village up to Sar-e-Pul city. 'There are 400 households in this village. We are Aimaq people and settled here about 100 years before', said [Name protected]. 'About 300 to 400 young people have gone to Iran to work and if you compare our village with Bolonghur village which is close to Sayaad center, we have got very little from most of the assistance that been coming to this valley in last one decade. This is a reality that you can get everything when you are well connected to local authorities or at least have someone within the local government entities. There are number people from Bolonghur village that are working at the center of the Sayaad district and they fully utilized the road construction opportunity and enrolled a lot of their people on road construction from Sayaad center up here and even a bit upper level toward Kohistanat. None of our villagers were asked to work as daily labor on the road construction project. No significant changes are seen in our lives. I can acknowledge the fragmented situation in terms of spending money on infrastructures but wished to see well-

coordinated assistance that response the people's need. Look at the newly constructed and well painted school behind you, this school building was completed last summer but due to lack of teacher we couldn't send our kids there. We appreciate the [Name protected] that they constructed the school building through NSP but what to do with this building now when there is no teacher?

In terms of the village economy, among those 400 HHs, there are about 50 HHs that have got large amount of rain fed lands and the rest are with 5 to 10 jiribs which is nothing as they are all rain fed. In a good year, the families with 3- 5 jiribs rain fed lands can hardly survive till fall and they have to seek daily labor either in Mazar or Kabul and even in Iran. As a neglected village, we are getting little information on development projects. Our village is located on the way between Sayaad to Kohistanat, 10 years before we were either traveling to Kohistanat or Sar-e-Pul city. The travel was happening when a person from this village intended to travel to Kohistanat during the summer and rarely to Sar-e-Pul in the winters because there was no proper road between Sar-e-Pul and our village. And at that time, if we were to travel toward Sar-e-Pul, it was mainly either for medications or buying essential food and non-food items such as rice, tea, sugar matches and even wheat flour during the drought and no enough harvests. Believe me, even we have got these roads now rapid traveling either to Sar-e-Pul city or Kohistanat is not guaranteed. Let me clarify it, still we use enormously our donkeys for traveling to our planting areas at rain fed lands/areas and even to Sar-e-Pul city. Of course, using donkeys may take more time (almost one day to Sar-e-pul) but it is worth it because you don't need to worrying to pay 60 Afs per person to little corollas.

Samangan

Case 12

Date: Tuesday Dec 16, 2014

Name: [Name protected]

Venue: Sohbat village, Ruyi Dou Ab District

'Actually, our village is located at the gate of the Ruyi Dou Ab and since there is no other alternative road then everyone is passing through this village. Ruyi Do Ab has two sections, the first section is Ruyi which our village is located in and the second part or section is Dou Ab. There are altogether 5,000 HHs in both sections and our village has got about 100 HHs with approximately 550 inhabitants. I do not know what other people perspectives are on road construction but in my view, the construction of this road – even it's a graveled road – is looks like a dozen of water drops for an extremely thirsty person. Let me talk about Ruyi as I'm belong to: when a person wanted to take his way to Aybak, the center of Samangan, it was seen as a big risk that person was taking because there was no road at all among these many valleys that you may have seen today. In both ways, either traveling with donkeys or Russian Kamaz trucks or jeeps was a real painful task to do. Let's not go back too far, just 10 years before, when we're traveling with these Russian trucks or jeeps toward Aybak, we had to stay overnight in either Khuram or Sarbagh. It wasn't possible at all to get done the journey within one day. About 15 years before and even earlier years I, myself traveled several times to Aybak, Mazar and Pulikhumri of Baghlan province with Russian trucks which took 7 hours from this village up to Khuram, stayed overnight there and then next day, early morning left Khuram and reached Aybak by noon time. It was becoming more and more difficult when you had to take your family members e.g. wife or kids to Aybak for medication or visiting relatives. I can say we're severely locked down among these valleys particularly in the winters and had no choice except to cope with it.

We appreciate the graveled road between Aybak and here and as well as the connection to Tala wa Barfak District of Baghlan province. But the affording the taxi fare is a new obstacle that we are facing now. 10-15 years before, Russian truck and jeeps were charging only 60 Afs per passenger from here to Aybak but now these mini corollas traveling between here and

Aybak are charging 300- 350 Afs / passenger which is quite expensive and the majority of people can't afford it. Out of 100 HHs in this village, there are only 10 HHs that have got about 30 jiribs rain fed lands and ability to collect to bushes for sale and their own consumption during the winter. 20 HHs with between 10 - 20 jiribs of rain fed who can only survive throughout the winter. But there are 70 HHs with less than 5 jiribs whose men migrate every season to Kabul, Mazar and even Iran to work up there and send money for their families here. What is happening here every year is, if there is a good year and rain fed areas can produce enough then most of the men from vulnerable families are staying during the entire time of harvest which is late May and early June and then leaving the village to seek daily employment either in Mazar, Kabul and even Iran. As far as I remembering we had these seasonal migration for decades now. Also, I shouldn't forget that right now there are a few people from this village at coal mine between Ruyi and Dara Souf areas but working at coal mine is not easy thing that everyone can be interested in.

Since, the [Name protected] [Name protected] and other NGO begun their activities in here from 2004 onwards, there are two clinics constructed one in Ruyi and one in Dou Ab, they are just good buildings but no proper adequate health services are available there to response to our needs that why if you are seeing people are traveling with these little corolla cars they are mostly going for medications.

Another little observation: while talking to [Name protected] in his house, a middle-aged man who apparently was a shepherd in that village, told us that God bless Hamid Karzai who is doing his best to improve the roads in our villages. Thank God, that we have got such a strong king in our country that pays attention to our needs. The blessing and the way the shepherd was expressing these words looked as if there are still people in remotest villages that are not able to easily get information that who is who in the country which can be called the consequences' of being disconnected for ages.

Annex 6 – Case studies

Case Studies of Women's Projects: transcripts from field interviews

Case 1

[Name protected]

Mazar – Balkh,

Meeting 3 women ex-trainees UNOPS Capacity building, December 10th 2014

After the [Name protected] presentation of the capacity building program I met with three of the ex-trainees. Two women, from the same village, had received business entrepreneurship training and had appreciated it. They were running businesses before receiving any formal business training. [Name protected] had a tailoring business; she first improved her tailoring skills then trained some other women and together with these women she made clothes and other housewear that has a market. She brings her products to Mazar and has a contract with a shopkeeper from whom she takes orders and according to that she asks women to produce. She said Save the Children had given her a sewing machine, which she uses when she started her business. She employs 18 other women who work for her, she take orders in city, brings the order and asks women to sew these product. Then she oversee the quality and design and pays women from the payment she gets. When asked if she has problem in coming to the city she said it is not an issue if two women travel together or are accompanied with other women.

The other women was [Name protected] . She does handicraft work and is from Sheerabad Dahdadi district. She also has contracts with a few shops in city where she sells her goods and also has other women working with her on the same basis as [Name protected]. They live in different parts of the village but know each other and cooperate with each especially in marketing. They say our work is not competitive as one does tailoring and other does embroidery and sometimes they have joint orders. For selling to market they sometimes help each other to take goods to shops.

I also met a young women Engineer called [Name protected] from Jawzjan province. She is a civil engineer and has recently completed road engineering. She appreciated the course, which give her practical experience regarding road construction. When asked if she will have any problem working on road she said 'I know I will be doing work outdoor in public as a civil engineer is about working in field and my family knew from day one this will be my work'. She is searching for work and very eager to learn further. She said this year from Jawzjan University 6 women graduated and five of whom also took training with [Name protected] with top marks.

Case 2

Women Bakery Project

Qorbagha/Sholgarah – Balkh, December 11th 2014

The room was filled with young and elderly women. The village has a mix of ethnic groups Pashtun, Tajik and Uzbek and so were the participant in the bakery. The community mobilizer said that we are trying to bring women of different backgrounds. The team leader talked enthusiastically about the project. When asked how she chose to work on baking and not another other skill, the response was that since it has been close to EID most people would go to Mazar city to buy cookies (normally for Eid celebration family will buy and serve their guest with serve tea and cookies). This is the first bakery that bakes these cakes and cookies in the village. When asked how they sell cookies the team leaders said her brother is selling¹⁰²

cookies to shops. The group was not able to give exact information about their loss and profit as at this time any amount was a benefit since UNOPS was taking care of all expenses. Although the group was 22 women only four of them seemed busy in baking. Women were paid a dollar a day and a little more to the team leader from UNOPS office, and they saved money from cookie sales to sustain their work in future. Women were happy at this time, as the project not only provided them with an oven, gas tank and other expenses but also money for their participation in bakery project. The groups has good savings from the sale of cookies. However when this saving is compared to the overall expenses of the group, it will hardly be sufficient for a month of sustaining the program without UNOPS help given the current number of participants. The group member of the project asked for continuation of the project. When asked about the road near their home women didn't know much about it but they were happy that there is now a better connection of their village with the district and Mazar city.

Case 3

Scarf Making project,

Chilmardan Shibarghan, Jawzjan Province, December 13th 2014

About 12 women were working on different looms weaving cotton scarves. I talked to [Name protected], an elderly woman who said she is helping a few of the young women to come the project site which is far away from their home, basically as a chaperone. In the village the company of an older women helps younger women move outside the home. The project was located in women's garden of [Name protected] but the project was distant from the residential area. Therefore the company of older women was even more necessary for younger women to come to this place. When asked women how do you sell your stuff she told me that there are women who work as a sales person, traditionally called "Dalal". I asked if this is a new phenomenon but she said this is a century old tradition that some elderly women go from village to village and sell clothes; women fashion clothes for women customers in villages. These women also take some of our scarves and sell them giving us some profit and also some money for themselves. However the sale is not high enough to sustain their work and keep all the women in work they need for continuation of the project. The team leader and other women were asking for work and said that they like what they are doing but is not remunerative. Once the project is over they will search for work that can benefit them and their family.

Case 4

Bakery Project

Chilmardan- Jawzjan, December 13th 2014

I talked to [Name protected] the team leader who was also the [Name protected] deputy for the area. When asked about roads she confirmed that both the road built by NSP and UNOPS has changed men and women's accessibility to services such as hospital and clinics. They said before when it was night even if someone was dying because there was no transport in village there was no way to take him/her to hospital. 'We were using carts, animal etc with too much difficulty to take ailing person to nearby clinics'. I asked her on women's involvement in the road project in their community. She said that the NSP facilitator ActionAid has supported women's involvement in the roads. Two women from her [Name protected] were involved in looking after the accounts for gravel and other road construction material.

On the bakery project she was happy what women learned and gained from it but the project was clearly a failure. Of the women who originally started the project, there were only one or two were there to meet us. The rest were young women who said they had come few days before. When asked about this, the team leader said because the women are not able to come they send their daughters instead. The bakery was in a women's garden which is distant from the district and provincial centers and there were no other shops around where they could sell their products.

Case 5

Livestock Project

Khoju Dokoh, Jawzjan province, December 13th 2014

I talked to [Name protected] and [Name protected] and other women who gathered to meet me in the livestock project. There were five cows, a separate room with fridge where women kept their products such as yogurt, cheese, milk and cream. Everything was well organized but women were asking for a continuation of the project beyond three months. When asked about profit-making women complained about poverty in the neighborhood and the very low price of milk. Women hoped that keeping the cows in the same place could bring attention and support to their project. The quality of product was good and hygiene was good for village-based farm. Due to security reasons the visit was very short

Case 6**Tailoring Project****Khoju DoKoh, Jawzjan, December 13th 2014**

The project was already closed and there were no products in the room. Some of the women said that we are only coming from last few days to meet you and ask for support to our project. When asked if the tailoring course and project was useful, women were happy with the little income the project had provided for the initial three months of project life. After that they had no customers to work with so they preferred to stay at home. The area had been stricken by flood and poverty was prevailing everywhere. Women wanted to work and had no problem to come to the center which was located in the house of young women who was also educated and going to a teacher education college. I also asked them how are they using the space of coming together, what are the issues in the community that they have time for discussing. Bride price has been a big issue but it seemed that it was never discussed how women can themselves question what has been a problem for their kids and their family. The visit was short because of the need to return during daylight to Mazar. However it was clear that tailoring was not the right project to bring income for the women group in this particular situation.

Case 7**Bag Making Project****Kohna Bazar Village, Saripul, December 14th 2014**

Team Leader [Name protected]

There are 350 families in village. According to [Name protected] the village is less developed. The project initially started as bag making; now the young women opted to knitting. The group leader a young returnee from Iran has been very active. She is also deputy in the [Name protected] facilitated by Save the Children. The [Name protected] in Saripul, where we visited were mixed with men and women and the Kohna Bazar [Name protected] is also mixed. [Name protected] has voted to build the school toilet, while men in Shura voted to install windows and repair the school roof. [Name protected] has been complaining that because of no toilet in the school for girls, for last four year no girls are going to school as the community elders say that 'if there is no toilet we will not allow girls to go to school'.

When visited the group were not making bags, as the market for bag was very limited. She says while we were using good and expensive material for making bags, in the market people chose to buy bags which were made in Pakistan or China, a little bit fancy with poor quality but cheaper. Sari-pul people chose to buy those bags. Now it is winter we have decided to knit dresses and other woollen items which have a better market in winter here. Half our group mates have already left. Among the trainees (10 young women) a few of them have been to literacy classes in the Save the Children office while another 5-6 who have not been to school are not able to read and write. When asked if they were interested to learn they have all been eager to learn more.

When asked the group leader about how they were using the space when they came together for production – were they studying or trying to talk about issues and concerns that they

could raise at the community level? - they found the idea interesting but this didn't happen. Even though all the girls were coming at the same time and during project life, as they were getting 1 dollar that was sort of compulsion on them to come together to at the project site. The group has explored market opportunities for bags but did not have much success. Therefore they were thinking that they would shift to knitting and they might also use the sewing machine for tailoring cloths in future.

Case 8

Handicraft project

Toghni Village, Saripul, December 14th 2014

The team leader [Name protected] was a very resourceful person. She has started her group in gilim making. She had two set of gilim making frames and six women were working in daytime. She with the help of community mobilizer found a business man who ordered from them a Central Asian kind of gilim which has a better market. She was very optimistic that the contract will bring sustainability to her project that can cover the cost of the rented house for which they pay USD/50 per month. She also worked with another group of younger women in her group who were busy doing hand embroidery work. The group was a mixed group of educated and illiterate young middle age women. When the women asked what was main motivation of women to come to center they said 'we can get orders for our work here while at home not many people would know about our business'. However they preferred to take orders and do their work from home where they also can take care of their home chores and their children. The team leader said she had no issue of giving women work to do from home as in this way she can save another room for women who are making gilims as they need to work in group. From further discussion I learned that [Name protected] was under the impression that she should keep women in the center so that she can cater to donor visits while actually she can better run women working from home.

Case 9

Bakery Project

Chabuk Village, Saripul, December 15th 2014

The area was considered dangerous as we passed a Pashtun village to reach an Hazara village which according to the community mobilizer were more receptive to a women's project while the Pashtun were not. There were two team members and [Name protected] the leader of the group has been an inspirational leader for her community. She was head of a mixed [Name protected]. She said she has fought for her place to be head of the [Name protected] even though her brothers were against her and try to trick her in night and take her signature for resignation from the position of head of the [Name protected]. But she was fought back and won the vote of men and female [Name protected] members to be the leader in her community. She was also studying to graduate at a college in Saripul center. She said mobility is difficult here but not impossible. She finds her way to come late in evening after her evening classes in city center. She said that only a few of the women of the bakery project are still working with her. Others left after project closed. We sell bread in the center of the Saripul and also in village as not everyone bakes bread at home in village. It is expensive for baking to find the wood and bake the bread for poor families. When asked about road construction and women's involvement she initially said it is a cultural issue here. Later she commented that when Save the Children (an NSP facilitator) office asked me to recruit a women and two men for road maintenance I have said it was not possible to bring a women in our communities for the first time to an untraditional area of work. If they had asked me recruit two women and a man it would have been possible as women can not work alone by themselves.

Case 10

Livestock Project

Khumdan Rahmatadabd, Saripul, December 15th 2014

The project is still active. I met with 5 of the group of 10 women, of whom had five cows and where making dairy products that they could sell to the market. The money of sale was saved to help the group sustain the project after the project life ended. The women were not seeing much value in working together. As one of the women said 'I am a widow looking after my little kids who came with me to the project'. The two of the women were saying it is good if we can keep the cow in our home rather than coming to this place where we cannot do our home chores and look after our children. The team leader said that they saved money from the dairy product where the price of milk was Afs/40 per liter. However the season was not now good and the milk was almost drying up. So they did not have enough saving to continue with the same benefit as the project give them now without continuing support from UNOPS. UNOPS takes care of the food for the cow and other relevant expenses and the usual dollar daily wage to women. When asked women how they chose the project they said that we had to chose from one of these skills and keeping livestock at home was common and women already had the experience of it. On the response to the question where they thought they could sell their products the women were not sure.

Case 11

Women's Poultry project

Abdul Malik Village, Khuram wa Sarbagh District, Samangan Province

Group leader [Name protected], Assistant [Name protected]

A poultry project started with 12 women. Women were consulted on the choice of income generation project; this group chose to work on poultry raising. For three months the project (UNOPS) paid each group member 1 dollar per day and the group leaders 1.5 dollar. The group also received one week training on how to take care of the chickens. The project bought them 250 chickens and also food for the chicken and they were trained on how to take care of chickens. Now there are 200 chickens and the group had remained active 5 months after the project funding was closed. [Name protected] was saying that after they finished with the free food that they received under the project for feeding chickens, the chickens do not lay as many eggs as they did before. They now have a very few eggs which they sell to close neighbors and sometime for their family use. While raising chickens at home is not a new skills and very common in the village, managing improved breeds of chicken, which would not normally survive hard condition, is more difficult.

[Name protected] the group assistant said that they wanted UNOPS to help them with new and different skill and continue support them. But they did not know what will be good skill but they were sure that chickens was not useful. When they were asked if they really think thought this project was not useful, why had they continued it until now. The team leader was upfront and said that "we want you to continue supporting us."

The group has some small savings of approximately 15000/Afs from sale of eggs and which they raised during project life (three months). They were asked what their idea was of a new project that could really work. The women were said tailoring. I asked whether they knew of other women getting benefit from that and how did they knew this would work better. Then I have learned that UNOPS was not the only organization working in the village. There were different NGOs, who have implemented different projects with women from literacy to income generation. The group leaders were trained as tailor before, and were also currently supervising a kitchen-gardening project. After seeing the poultry farm we went to sit in the home of the supervisor where I had the chance to talk two other women beneficiaries of the project. One of the women was the mother of the team leader who was also a widow and had suffered flood damage which had also affected a third of the houses in valley. [Name protected] and [Name protected] showed as the little garden they had and they were proud to show that they had green vegetables for family use with some fresh raddish and some green herbs.

There were two other elderly women who were literate and now totally busy with village life. The middle age women were illiterate including the group leaders but they were proud that that their daughters and younger women were going to school and interested to go for college to the center of province. The two elder women went to school before war (30 years) when they had a school in village. They were reflecting on old days when the school in village was burnt and they were soon married off by their family.

Case 12

Jam Making Project

Dakhail Zow village, Khurum Sarbagh district, Samangan

Team Leader: [Name protected] also a teacher in local school for girls

There are 22 member in the group, who are learning jam making. The area has good fruits and vegetables that the women are making Jam out of. The father and brother of the team leaders are selling the jam product to the shops in near by Aibak (center of province) bazar. In the market there are not many buyer for the jam as Iranian jams are sold at a cheaper price.

The younger women in the groups are all educated. The older one are illiterate but provide good support to younger women to travel from one end to other end of village. The room is filled with several women with one table in center. The project is located on hilltop; men are also helping bringing water to the top house through donkeys. Bringing water by donkeys is not seen good for women in the village to do, although lower status women usually do this.

The group member like other UNOPS projects are paid 1 dollar per day and the group leader receive a little more then rest. The project will run for another few days but the women already do not know how to run the project after discontinuation of funding. Most of the women didn't knew how to make jam before and enjoyed working together but were not sure of continuation and success of project. When they calculated the expenses verses the benefits, they were clearly at a loss particularly given the large group size. The number of women in project was large therefore they were taking turns to work to involve all the women in the project. So far the women were paid by UNOPS for the raw material costs and even the marketing costs. It seemed like an interesting new skill, but they wanted something, which can occupy them for longer time and bringing longer term work for them.

[Name protected] from UNOPS was trying to connect them to some shops in Mazar and UNOPS project staff were also buying from them from time to time as way to support the project. The community mobilizer had also connected them to DOWA arranged a fare of handicraft and other women products. However these efforts seemed not to be very effective according to the women's account.

Annex 7 – Traffic counts on some roads maintained by RAIP (source UNOPS)

Please see following pages.

ANNEX 7 – TRAFFIC COUNTS ON ROADS MAINTAINED BY RAIP

SN	Road Name/code	Name	Section Length (km)	Type	Class	Traffic count			Annual increase
						Count station/Chainage	YR 2013	YR 2014	
	SAMANAGAN PROVINCE								
1	Aybak-Ruyi Du Ab Secondary	Aybak Centre	10	Gravel	Secondary	Dare Zendan / ch:10+00	273	496	1.82
		Start of Sare Kunda village	8	Gravel	Secondary				
		Pul-e- Ab Laman	19	Gravel					
		Langar Village	21	Gravel	Secondary	Sarbagh Police Post Ch:38+500	99	124	1.25
		Kotal Surkhak	24	Gravel	Secondary				
		Start of Hazarsum	20.7	Gravel	Secondary	Kal Gunbad / Ch 99.00 Km	188	201	1.07
2	Aybak-Beg Mohhamad-Safid Kanda Secondary	Aybak Centre	11	Gravel	Secondary	Aybak Police Post / Ch 3.00	1,147	1,321	1.15
		Akah Khel Village	14	Gravel	Secondary				
		Archa Kotal	21	Gravel					
		Beg Mohammad Quduq	20	Gravel	Secondary	Safid Kanda Village Ch 65.000	253	310	1.23
3	Yakatoot (highway) -Ortabulaq Road	Start of Yakatoot village	23.7	Gravel		Yakatooth / ch:3+000	217	364	1.68
4	Momen Abad -Arab Kabuli	Start point of road	4	Gravel		Momin Abad / ch2+000	196	239	1.22
5	Highway -Kipanak Archa	Highway	7.7	Gravel		Kepanak Archa / 00+500	106	60	0.57
	BALKH PROVINCE								
6	Qalacha (Balkh)-Chahi -Keleft	Qalacha (Balkh)	10.7	Gravel	Secondary	Qalacha(Dawlatabad road)	448	347	0.77
		Dandowkai	9.5	Gravel	Secondary				
		Kala Bazhgan	10	Gravel	Secondary	Chahi Police Post, Ch 30.00	717	905	1.26
7	Kishindih-Zari-Gosfandi	Kishindih	27	Gravel	Secondary	Aqkoprok police post, Ch 0.00	550	593	1.08
		Zari DC	10.5	Gravel	Secondary	Zari police post, Ch 27.00 km	369	560	1.52
		Kandi Attaullah khan (Border)	12	Gravel	Secondary	Gosfandi bazar, Ch 49.5 km	440	443	1.01
8	Dawlatabad-Qurshigak-Shortepa	Dawlatabad	10	Gravel	Secondary	Start Point at Clinic, Ch 0.00	-	2,215	
9	Samarqandyan -Pule Imam Bukri	Samarqandyan Village	10.3	Gravel	Tertiary		179	-	
10	Highway -Bahram Khil	Highway	5	Gravel	Tertiary	Start point, Ch 0.00	104	269	1.82
11	Highway -Baba Dorjee	Highway	1.9	Gravel	Tertiary	Start point, Ch 0.00	274	119	1.82

ANNEX 7 – TRAFFIC COUNTS ON ROADS MAINTAINED BY RAIP

SN	Road Name/code	Name	Section Length (km)	Type	Class	Traffic count			Annual increase
						Count station/Chainage	YR 2013	YR 2014	
12	Alizai Village Road (Chimtal)	Asia-e-Gurg	7	Gravel	Tertiary	-			
13	Zanghora Village Road (Charbolak)	Tana-e-Shorshorak	5.3	Gravel					
14	Pay Mashad Village Road	Dawlatabad	6.1	Gravel	Tertiary	Start point, Ch 0.00	-	434	
15	BodanaQala - Cheqnaq	Esterkoot	5.8	Gravel	Tertiary	Start point, Ch 0.00	-	284	
16	Highway to Ahmad Abad village	Start of Ahmad Abad Village	4.78	Gravel	Tertiary	-			
17	Codgai Village Road (Sholgara)	Secondary Road Junction	1.2	Gravel					
	JWAZJAN PROVINCE								
18	Highway - Khaniqa - Aqcha District Centre	Highway	3.7	Asphalt	Secondary	Start Point 00+000	185	223	1.82
		Governor Office Building	9.28	Gravel	Secondary	Start Point 03+700	212	304	1.82
19	Aqcha -Mingajek	Aqcha	9	Gravel	Secondary	Police post 00+350	556	700	1.82
		Charmgar Kocha	9.6	Gravel	Secondary	police post 09+00		465	1.82
20	Aqcha mingajek district road- Junction of Besh Aregh Turkmenia, Mahajer and Alamlek road	Aqcha - Mangajek	3.5	Gravel	Tertiary	Bish Aregh School 2+800	98	95	1.82
21	Juction-Besh Argh Watania	Junction	3.65	Gravel	Tertiary	Intersection 00+300	-	110	
22	Besh Aregh Mahajer- Besh Aregha Turkmenia	Besh Aregh Turkmenia Start point	4.1	Gravel	Tertiary	2+200	85	76	1.82
23	Nawabad -Heiderabad	Start point of Heiderabad village	5.4	Gravel	Tertiary	Haidar Abad Village 3+150	89	93	1.82
24	Qezel Ayagh to Salteq Kalan village	Qezel Ayagh Clinic	3.9	Gravel	Tertiary	Start Point Clinic 00+000	152	263	1.82
25	Jeza- Khatab- Abbas Tertiary Road	Jiza	10.45	Gravel	Tertiary	Abass Bridge	-	315	
		Khatab	5.5	Gravel	Tertiary	Start Point of Khatab Village	-		
26	Aqcha DC- Khaniqa Road	Aqcha	5.2	Gravel	Tertiary	Qara Boyon Bridge	-	352	
27	Shaki Abad- Qochin Village	shaki Abad	6.4	Gravel	Tertiary	Bazar 2+300	-	601	
28	Arab Qarliq Tertiary Road	Khoju Du Koh DC	3.5	Gravel	Tertiary	Intersection Point, Ch 1.850	-	142	
29	Khwaja Du koh District Centre to Aimaq Village	Khwaj Du koh District Center	5.5	Gravel	Tertiary	Aimaq Masjed, Ch 2.100 Km	575	1,208	1.82

ANNEX 7 – TRAFFIC COUNTS ON ROADS MAINTAINED BY RAIP

SN	Road Name/code	Name	Section Length (km)	Type	Class	Traffic count			Annual increase
						Count station/Chainage	YR 2013	YR 2014	
	SARIPUL PROVINCE								
30	Sar I Pul to Sayyad Mirzawalang road	Khateb abad School	13	Asphalt	Secondary	Engiska Police post, Ch 6.800	200	304	1.82
		Sayad District police post	8.85	Gravel	Secondary	Sayyad Police post, Ch 12.800	197	250	1.82
31	Sari Pul -Tukzar Road (Sari pul- Sangtoda- Returnee Camp)	Gangalsatan Sangcharak fuel station	4	Asphalt	Secondary	Fuel Station, Ch 0.100 Km	1,058	1,198	1.82
		After Asyabad steel bridge	9	Asphalt	Secondary	Police Check, Ch 6.800 Km	593	750	1.82
		Burtin Jerghan Intersection	9	Asphalt	Secondary				
		Shoraba Village	15.2	Asphalt	Secondary	Returnee Camp, Ch 37.000 Km	501	721	1.82
32	Abe Kalan -Balkhab Tajree Road	Abe Kalan Bridge	10.3	Gravel	Secondary	Moshkhanak		147	
		Qurogh-e-Qazi	10.2	Gravel	Secondary			147	
		Hotel Moshkhanak	6.8	Gravel	Secondary	Hotel Chasht Khorak Ch 28.100	361	449	1.82
		Hotel Chasht Khorak	13.91	Gravel	Secondary				
		Balkhab District Center Ch:140+050	14.2	Gravel	Secondary	Tajree Bridge, Ch 55.100 Km	274	309	1.82
33	Brutin (Sari Pul) -Jergan-Kohistanat	Burtin	16	Gravel	Secondary	Bagali, Ch 6.00 Km	142	155	1.82
		Qala Sukhta Bridge	20	Gravel	Secondary				
		End of Alaf safid (towards Jerghan, Kohistanat)	20.2	Gravel					
34	Tukzar - Awqaf	Tokhmana Village	19.4	Gravel	Tertiary				
35	Tukzar - Teber	Tukzar District Road	5.2	Gravel	Tertiary	Start point, Ch 0.00	93	95	1.82
36	Kalqishlaq-Alizay	Kal Qeshlaq	3.765	Gravel	Tertiary	Start point, Ch 0.00		85	
37	Belandghor Khalan- Blandghor Naw	Belandghor Khalan	9.615	Gravel	Tertiary				

Note:

Total and average figures only includes roads where traffic counts were carried out in both years

	Vehicles		Increase
Average total	10,752	13,544	1.26
Average secondary roads	8,763	10,663	1.22
Average tertiary roads	1,989	2,881	1.45

Annex 8 – Costs of road works

Comparable cost of road works

The observations on cost of the road works programme are based on figures observed in the project reports and briefing notes. As mentioned in the main report, the costs appear competitive to similar works in other countries. The table below compares cost of works in RAIP with similar programmes elsewhere.⁷⁴

Country	Type of works	Cost per km \$/km
Cambodia	Gravel road on embankments	20,000
East-Timor	Gravel roads	35,000
Ethiopia	Gravel roads	20,000
Laos	Gravel road all terrain	24,000
Lesotho	Gravel roads	35,000
Liberia	Gravel feeder road	30,000
Indonesia	Rehabilitation of district roads (cold asphalt)	40,000
India	Village roads (3.5m asphalt surface)	60,000
South Africa	District roads (low-cost bitumen surface)	115,000
Kenya	Asphalt roads (highway standard 7m)	230,000
Africa/Asia	Routine maintenance	300-1000

Again, it is important to acknowledge that there are considerable variations in cost of works, depending on site conditions, need for structures and transport distances for common building materials such as gravel, bitumen, stone aggregate and cement.

The costs are also highly dependent on site conditions and the standards to which the roads are built. One major cost factor is the extent to which designers chose to install preventive measures such as river training and retention walls. In mountainous terrain, such work often constitute up to one third of the total construction costs.

⁷⁴ These figures have been collated from various progress reports and programme documentation in the respective countries.

Still, considering all the variables influencing the construction costs, the above table clearly shows that construction costs in RAIP are comparable to works elsewhere. Since the applied road standards in RAIP are comparable the works carried out in the countries mentioned in the above table, it would be fair to conclude that the road works in RAIP is up to general standards applied on rural roads and at reasonable costs.

RAIP costs

Types of Works	Cost per km \$/km
Rehabilitation of gravel roads	15,000 – 45,000
Upgrading to asphalt surfaced roads	75,000
Periodic maintenance (regravel- ling)	15,000

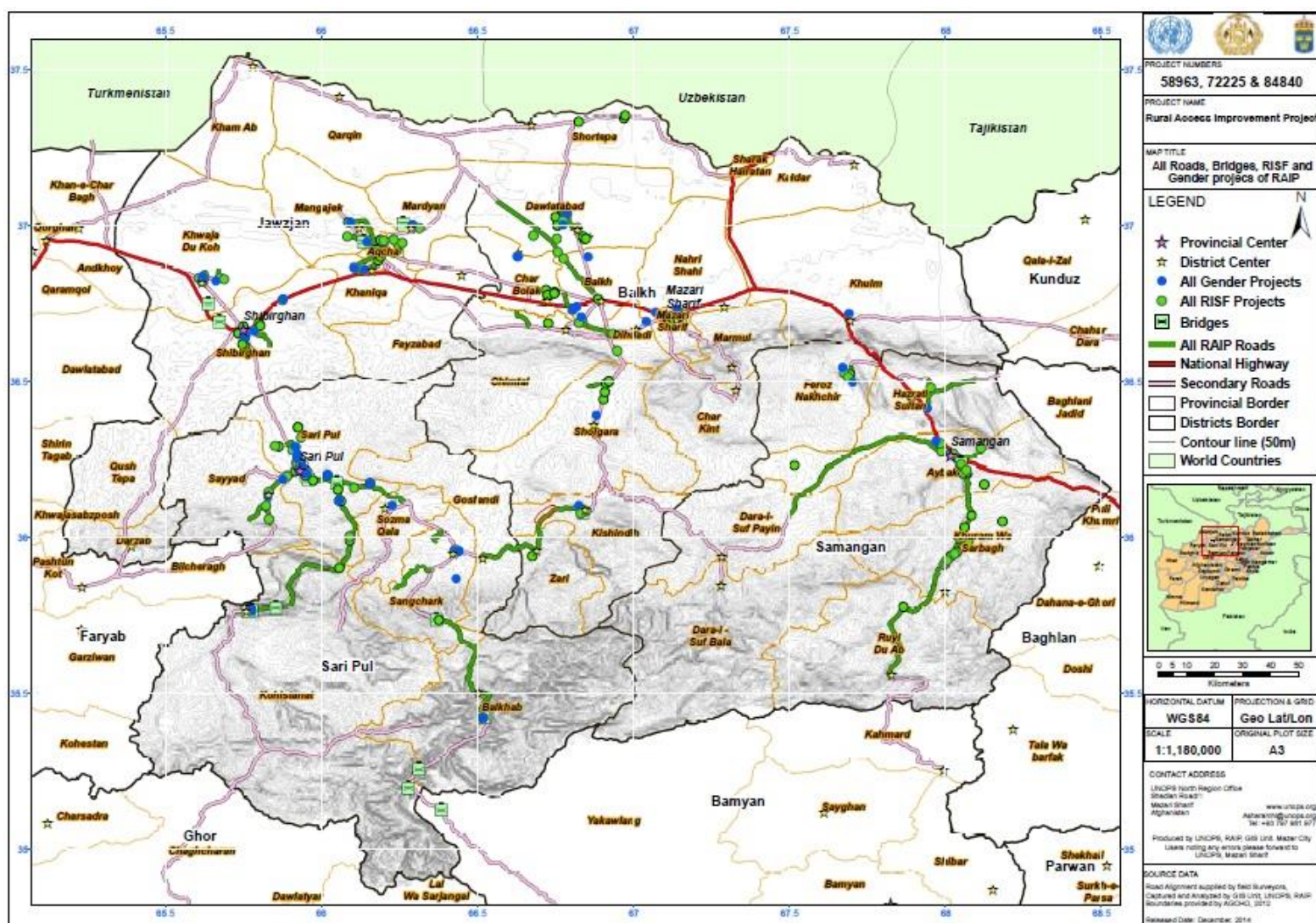
Annex 9 – Afghanistan's major road programmes since 2002

A brief history of Afghanistan's major road programmes since 2002

Since the transition period the Afghan government has attached the highest importance to addressing the vulnerability of the rural poor through integrating it to the market and other economic opportunities in the adjacent districts, provinces and regions. The transitional government included the promotion of livelihoods through job creation as an important element of its overall strategy. The rehabilitation and maintenance of the devastated rural infrastructure -- mainly roads and irrigation canals-- presented an opportunity to implement this strategy. Formulated in 2002, the National Emergency Employment Program (**NEEP**) funded short-term employment through restoration of the dilapidated rural infrastructure. **NEEP** evolved into the National Rural Access Program (**NRAP**) from 2005 until now, with a strong focus on provision of year-round rural access to basic social services. More than 10,000 km of rural roads and related drainage structures have been upgraded or rehabilitated under **NEEP/NRAP** through four projects financed through IDA, ARTF and other funds. The scope of these projects spanned from relatively simple emergency funding with a primary objective of creating employment in rural areas, to more extensive involvement in building institutional capacity in the two ministries responsible for the sector, the [Name protected] for secondary roads and the [Name protected] for tertiary roads; **coordinated by** the [Name protected] . The most recent of these Bank-supported projects, named National Emergency Rural Access Project (**NERAP**), is currently in its fourth year and due to be completed in 2013. In parallel, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) have focused their financing on major highways, to restore the national-level ring highway that links all major cities and main border crossings. Afghanistan Rural Access Programme (**ARAP**, 2012 – 2017) is a \$332 million road project to which the World Bank will contribute \$125 million and the remaining \$207 will be funded by the World Bank administered multi-donor trust fund – ARTF. It will improve and maintain secondary and tertiary rural roads as well as the construct of bridges, and provide for implementation and capacity building activities. It aims to enable rural communities across Afghanistan to benefit from improved access to basic services and facilities through all-weather roads. The project is expected to increase the number of people living within 2 km of all-season roads, reduce travel time to essential services, and enable rural people to access essential services more frequently.

Source: Adapted from World Bank, 2012 ARAP Project Paper.

Annex 10 – Figure 1 map of RAIP interventions





Evaluation of Sida's Support to the Rural Access Improvement Programme (Phase I-III) in Afghanistan

This evaluation of The Rural Access Improvement Programme (RAIP) in Afghanistan has assessed the lessons to be learnt from its implementation with a view to considering how future support might be provided. The evaluation concludes that RAIP has made a significant contribution to the development of rural road infrastructure in its four project provinces in Afghanistan over its seven years of operation. The activities have been highly relevant, implemented with great efficiency and effective in terms of RAIP's more immediate objectives. However with respect to the broader project objectives related to improved access to social services and markets and the creation of employment opportunities the evaluation concludes there has been less impact, in part due to factors outside the project control.

SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY

Address: S-105 25 Stockholm, Sweden. Office: Valhallavägen 199, Stockholm

Telephone: +46 (0)8-698 50 00. Telefax: +46 (0)8-20 88 64

E-mail: info@sida.se. Homepage: <http://www.sida.se>

