Afghanistan: Qaisar-Bala Murghab Road Project

Project Name: Qaisar-Bala Murghab Road Project

Project Number: 37075-022

Country: Afghanistan

Project Status: Active

Project Type / Modality of Assistance: Grant

Source of Funding / Amount: Grant 0012-AFG: Qaisar-Bala Murghab Road Project

Strategic Agendas:
- Inclusive economic growth

Drivers of Change:
- Knowledge solutions

Sector / Subsector:
- Transport - Road transport (non-urban)

Description:
The objective of the Project is to assist the Government to promote economic and social development and reduce poverty by rehabilitating the primary road network damaged during three decades of conflict and neglect. The Project will support:
1. Rehabilitation of the Qaisar-Bala Murghab section (90 km) of Herat-Andkhoy road (ii) construction supervision and monitoring;
2. Incremental project management such as engagement of external auditors to audit project accounts and the payment of additional salary of MPW staff assigned to the Program Management Office (PMO) and the consultant team.

Project Rationale and Linkage to Country/Regional Strategy:
Much of Afghanistan’s road infrastructure has been destroyed or damaged in more than two decades of conflict. Damaged roads became bottlenecks to the movement of people and goods. Restricted movement has aggravated the division and disintegration of the country, as travel time and vehicle operating cost on roads significantly increased. The result is a virtual loss of efficient means of transport connecting Kabul to regional centers, and regional centers to remote villages. The Qaisar-Bala Murghab road forms part of the Herat-Andkhoy road, which is the last unpaved section of the national ring road. The project area is one of the least developed areas that the ring road traverses. Due to its remoteness and extreme weather in winter and summer, the project area continues to be in need of continued humanitarian aid and assistance in basic social services. Improvement to the road will facilitate provision of such services. The Project is part of coordinated international assistance to improve the road connecting Herat to Andkhoy, which will become a major north-south link across the central mountains, and significantly improve the stability and reliability of the transport system in Afghanistan. The improved road will also change transport in the subregion. Together with international links to the Central Asian Republics, Iran, and Pakistan that are currently being improved, the road will form a major road transport corridor from Central Asia to the warm water ports in the south. Indeed, the road forms part of the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) Corridors 3 and 6. The resulting outcome will reduce transport costs, and contribute to economic growth and poverty reduction in the subregion.

Impact:
Economic and social development and poverty reduction in the project area.

Project Outcome

Description of Outcome: An efficient, safe, reliable road network developed in western Afghanistan.

Progress Toward Outcome:
The implementation of the strategy and action plan to repackage and re-procure the works and resolve issues on implementation delays are ongoing. The civil work contracts for section 1 and 2 have been signed on 16 September 2017. Contractors were mobilized in December 2017. Currently, the works contracts in both sections are ongoing satisfactorily. The achievements will be assessed upon completion of the project.

Implementation Progress

Description of Project Outputs:
1. Improvement of a primary road section from Qaisar to Murghab
2. Strengthened capacity in MPW for road sector management

Status of Implementation Progress (Outputs, Activities, and Issues): The works on sections 1 and 2 are ongoing and physical progress is 16% and 11.5% on sections 1 and 2, respectively. The project encountered problems and delays. However, with additional inputs from individual experts, the performance of project management, procurement, safeguards, and overall program leadership improved. ADB is continuously supporting capacity building of MPW.

Geographical Location:

Safeguard Categories

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<th>Category Description</th>
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<td>Involuntary Resettlement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indigenous Peoples</td>
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Summary of Environmental and Social Aspects: B, C
Environmental Aspects

The Project is category B according to ADB's Environmental Assessment Guidelines (2003). The initial environmental examination (IEE) was prepared as part of the feasibility study for the Herat-Andkhoy road project. The IEE report was approved by MPW on 11 August 2004. The IEE found that most of the environmental impacts associated with the Project would occur only during the construction period. Therefore, the impacts are temporary and almost all the mitigating measures will be incorporated in the contract document. The contractor will be bound by the agreement to strictly implement the proposed mitigating measures through an Environmental Management Plan (EMP). The IEE states that no further environmental assessment study is required because the environmental impacts are temporary and insignificant. MPW will be responsible for monitoring the contractor's implementation of the EMP. Bi-annual reports based on MPW's monitoring are being produced and submitted to ADB and other relevant Government agencies, as required.

Involuntary Resettlement

Overall, the Project's land acquisition and resettlement impacts are not significant. Most of the improvement works will be carried out within the existing rights-of-way and so agricultural land acquisition will be minimal (0.08 ha). Acquisition of only small amounts of privately owned commercial (0.06 ha) and residential (0.02 ha) land will be required. In total, 130 households (650 affected people) will suffer resettlement impacts as a result of the Project. Four households will be affected by agricultural land acquisition and will lose 1% of their productive assets. None of the 2 residential and 121 commercial structures owned by the titleholders will be displaced and none will require any relocation. Three commercial squatter households whose structures will be totally affected will be relocated or pushed back to the adjacent available government land. The residential structures will lose a very small portion of their homestead land and earthen boundary walls. The commercial structures will lose a very small portion of their commercial land and permanent or temporary extensions or shades of their shops. Land take and impact on commercial areas in towns could be further minimized or completely avoided during detailed engineering design if the design stipulation of 0.5 m verge on each side of the road is compromised in the built-up areas of Gormach and Chiligasi. The affected households will receive cash for land and assets at replacement prices. Compensation will be provided for loss of income for temporary disruption caused during construction, shifting assistance and additional assistance to vulnerable groups. No indigenous people will be affected by the Project. The estimated cost for land acquisition and resettlement is approximately AF2,800,000 ($60,000). A short resettlement plan (Supplementary Appendix C) will be translated into Dari and disclosed to the affected persons. The plan will also be publicly available at MPW, ADB's Afghanistan Resident Mission, and on the ADB web site. The original LARP is being updated as the detailed engineering design work continues.

Indigenous Peoples

No indigenous people will be affected by the Project.

Stakeholder Communication, Participation, and Consultation

During Project Design

The project has identified and consulted with the key primary and secondary project stakeholders in the prominent towns and the project influence area. During the course of social analysis, consultations and meetings with the various project communities including farmers, small shop owners, traders, and local nongovernment organizations were organized to ascertain their response to construction of the road, their needs and demands from the project. Apart from the public meetings, focus group discussions were organized with the young, old, men and women of different occupations and population groups to ensure a comprehensive perspective on the project as well as its impacts. All those consulted unanimously welcomed the benefits that improved access and/or road conditions would provide. (In 2010, the project was repackaged with 0081-AFG Bala Murghab - Lamen (143 km), and supplied with additional financing from G024-AFG).

During Project Implementation

The local communities will be engaged through a dedicated community development component.

Business Opportunities

Consulting Services

A consultant team has been hired to help MPW implement the Project. They will (i) oversee overall project management; (ii) assist with the procurement of civil works; (iii) supervise construction and installation of equipment, including reviewing detailed designs prepared by contractors; (iv) certify completed works by force account as well as by contractors; (v) provide on-the-job trainings for MPW staff assigned to the consultant team; implementing and supervising the training component of the project; and (vi) undertake benefit monitoring and evaluation. International consultants associated with domestic ones have been engaged through quality- and cost-based selection method in accordance with ADB’s Guidelines on the Use of Consultants.

Procurement

Procurement of goods, services, and civil works financed under the ADB loan are carried out in accordance with ADB’s Guidelines for Procurement. Civil works contracts are procured through (i) international competitive bidding (ICB) and (ii) single-stage two-envelope procedure with no separate pre-qualification, which has been used in the three preceding ADB-financed road projects in Afghanistan and has proven to be effective in reducing time required for procurement was used. Equipment will be procured by ICB for contracts with an estimated value of more than $1,000,000, international shopping for contracts estimated at $100,000-1,000,000, and direct purchase arrangement for contracts valued at less than $100,000. All international procurement will be undertaken by the Government Procurement Unit operating under ARDS.

Responsible ADB Officer
Thiruchelvam, Moskiah

Responsible ADB Department
Central and West Asia Department

Responsible ADB Division
Transport and Communications Division, CWRD

Executing Agencies
Ministry of Public Works
Dr. Wali Mohammad Rasooli
Fist Macrorayan, Kabul Afghanistan

Timetable

Concept Clearance
- 21 Mar 2005 to 02 Apr 2005

Fact Finding
- 28 Apr 2005

MRM
- 12 Jul 2005

Approval
- 03 Dec 2009

Last Review Mission
- 27 Sep 2018

PDS Creation Date
- 16 Mar 2006

PDS Update
- 31 Dec 2008

Grant 0012-AFG

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Project Page
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