

Afghanistan Telecommunications Advisory Team (TAT) Report For the Week of 18 - 25 May 2012



US Ambassador Rick Olson (behind lectern), the US Embassy's Coordinating Director for Development and Economic Affairs, speaks to an audience of over 100 guests he hosted at an event on 23 May 2012 to launch a US\$5M fund for projects supporting Afghan women's economic empowerment.

Photo courtesy of US Embassy Kabul

The ISAF Telecommunications Advisory Team is sponsored by the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA) and the Civilian Expeditionary Workforce (CEW).

Executive Summary

This week we made substantial progress in our fostering ICT capacity development and ICT for education efforts: We held discussions with the University of Colorado at Boulder and Colorado Technical University to regarding ICT curricula and curriculum development practices and potential opportunities to partner with the ICTI for collaborative certificate programs. We met with the US National Defense University's iCollege, which offered information and support regarding CIO development and ICT curricula review. We also met with the World Bank regarding its CIO and ICT training plans to synchronize its initiatives with the TAT/NDU efforts. We are in the process of finalizing travel plans to Afghanistan for Dr. Traci Swanson, the NDU lead for the ICT Capacity Building through Education and CIO/ICT Professional Development Strategy and Roadmap studies.

Sustainability of the ICT Sector

Expand and Protect ICT Infrastructure

The USFOR-A contract for the installation of fiber in the southwest region and from MaydenShar to Ghazni should be awarded this week with work to commence immediately thereafter.

Advance Wireless Service

Etisalat signed a Letter of Intent to purchase some of the assets of the former ECSS program. Afghan Telecom and MTN each signed Letters of Understanding with Medweb for trials of its solar cellular infrastructure.

ICT as an Enabler of Stability

ICT for Socio-Economic Development

The Afghan Academy of Sciences signed a contract with Afghan Citadel Software to begin the installation of computers and connectivity for its researchers.

Descriptions of and Updates to Initiatives by Line of Effort:

Sustainability of the ICT Sector

Expand and Protect ICT Infrastructure

1. Expand Fiber Infrastructure (Mike Nichols / Ted Ryon)

a. MCIT National Optical Fiber Cable (Ring Road) Project (Ted Ryon)

Overview: The Optical Fiber Cable (OFC) is a nationwide fiber backbone installation project intended to connect virtually all of the principal cities of Afghanistan along the national ring road. The national ring road is approximately 2,220 kilometers (km) and the total fiber ring, including spurs, is 3,294 km. Completed segments currently have capacity up to STM-64.

Updates:

Southeast (SE) Segment: No update

Southwest (SW) Segment: On 17 June 2012, Ted Ryon met with Rob Hurd, Senior C4 Advisor to USFOR-A J6, where Mr. Hurd introduced Mr. Nevery Berry, who will fill in for Rob until the first week of July 2012. Mr. Hurd informed TAT that the contract for the installation of fiber in the southwest region and from MaydenShar to Ghazni should be awarded during the week of 21 May 2012 with work commencing immediately thereafter. He also informed TAT there is a change in the fiber architecture. The change eliminates the original planed fiber spur from Farah to Zaranj, which will be replaced by a fiber run from Delaram to Zaranj.

Northwest (NW) Segment: No update

b. Turkmenistan Fiber Route (Ted Ryon)

Overview: The Turkmenistan fiber route will allow Afghanistan to connect its national fiber infrastructure in northern Afghanistan (at Aqina) to northwest Afghanistan (at Turghundi) via TurkmenTelecom fiber in Turkmenistan. This bypass route will allow for STM-16 fiber connectivity to the Herat region in Afghanistan until the National Ring Road fiber is completed in those areas.

Update: No update

c. World Bank Central and Northeast (NE) Spurs (Ted Ryon)

Overview: As part of its \$50 million Afghanistan ICT Sector Development Project, the World Bank is funding the installation of 1,000 kilometers of fiber across central Afghanistan to connect

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additional provinces to, and provide redundancy for, the OFC as Phase 1 of a two-phase project. Phase 1 is anticipated to take two years to install at a cost of \$27M and be complete sometime in 2014.

Update: COL Bhat, head of the World Bank Project Management Office for the MCIT, indicated to TAT that it expects to have approval of the tender documents from World Bank HQ and be able to issue tenders for the Central and Northeast spurs within the next seven to ten days.

d. Kabul Metro Fiber (Ted Ryon)

Overview: TAT is assisting in the coordination of the installation of broadband fiber connectivity within the Kabul metro area and to GIROA ministries. The effort is already underway in Kabul and is expected to expand to outlying provinces and districts in the future. TAT is facilitating communication between and among the MCIT, Afghan Telecom (AfTel), USFOR-A, other involved parties, and the ministries.

Update: No update

2. Facilitate Government and Commercial Satellite Use (Ted Ryon)

Overview: TAT is working with MCIT and ATRA to develop their current and future satellite communication (SATCOM) requirements and to facilitate GIROA's use of SATCOM. TAT is also assisting the MCIT and ATRA to develop and release an international competitive tender for the commercial lease of Afghanistan's allotted orbital satellite slot at 50E.

Update: No update

3. Advance Wireless Service

a. 3G Mobile Service Licensing (Oliver Dziggel)

Overview: In an effort to capitalize on Afghanistan's 18 million mobile phone subscribers in order to increase the penetration of broadband Internet access, ATRA concluded an international competitive tender for a 3G license in December 2011 and subsequently offered the four Afghan incumbent mobile operators 3G licenses at the reserve tender price of \$25 million each. ATRA issued the first 3G license on 18 March 2012. TAT assisted ATRA throughout the tender and license process and will continue to assist ATRA in administering and enforcing the 3G licenses.

Update: No update

b. Afghan Telecom (AfTel) GSM/3G Cellular Service Offering (Neil Sleevi)

Overview: Because of the advent of 3G services in Afghanistan, state-owned AfTel is exploring its options to provide GSM/3G cellular services, either through an upgrade of its existing CDMA network or by procuring a GSM network (or a combination of both). MCIT Minister Sangin is interested in AfTel's entering the GSM GSM/3G market to be able to provide commercial cellular service and emergency calling capability in key areas. TAT assisted AfTel in preparing a business case to compare its options, which was presented to the AfTel Board of Directors for a decision. TAT is also advising AfTel regarding the development of an international tender document. The

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AfTel Board of Directors is considering AfTel's pursuit of GSM/3G. TAT is advising AfTel leadership as AfTel prepares a case for (1) GSM/3G market entry, and (2) market entry in a joint venture with an external partner.

Update: No update

c. **Broadband Wireless Access (BWA) Tender and Licensing (Oliver Dziggel)**

Overview: To further increase the availability of broadband Internet access, on 4 October 2011 MCIT Minister Sangin announced a decision to launch an international competitive tender for broadband wireless access (BWA). ATRA has already issued a number of BWA licenses on a temporary basis. TAT is advising ATRA in the development of the BWA tender.

Update: No update

d. **24/7 Commercial Cellular Service Restoration and Reporting (Oliver Dziggel)**

Overview: Commercial mobile service providers have, historically and to date, given in to orders by insurgents to cease service or suffer consequences. Pursuant to the Afghan National Security Council's Telecommunication Security Strategy approved by President Karzai in July 2011, mobile operators are required to provide service 24 hours per day, seven days per week (24/7). Per the Strategic Security Joint Implementation Plan, mobile operators are required to provide notification of threats, attacks, and damaged or destroyed ("burnt") equipment. TAT is facilitating 24/7 cellular service restoration by the mobile operators and the obligatory reporting.

Update: No update

e. **Cellular Enabled Security and Stability (Neil Sleevi)**

Overview: ISAF has shifted its focus from managing several separate cellular projects to a more integrated approach that supports the Afghan Office of the National Security Council (ONSC) Security Strategy. This change in direction is intended to significantly improve cellular service (and, therefore, cellular-enabled security) and to deliver more lasting security, governance, and development benefits in the future. The ISAF Cellular Enabled Security and Stability (CESS) Working Group's focus is on supporting and coaching GIRoA stakeholders on the implementation of the ONSC Security Strategy for Telecommunications Networks.

Update: On 23 May 2012, Etisalat signed a Letter of Intent to purchase some of the assets of the former ECCS program. Afghan Telecom and MTN each signed Letters of Understanding with Medweb for trials of its solar cellular infrastructure.

4. **Plan and Mentor Network Operations (Ted Ryon)**

Overview: TAT is working with the MCIT to assist in the development of a national Network Operations Center (NOC) at which MCIT personnel will monitor the governmental network (DAS-Net). The plan is to locate the NOC at the MCIT near the Afghanistan National Data Center (ANDC).

Update: No update

5. Plan and Mentor Cybersecurity (Brad Howard)

Overview: The MCIT asked TAT to assist in the development of a Cybersecurity Portfolio to aid in its stand-up of the Information Security Directorate (ISD), which officially opened 21 March 2012. The ISD will be responsible for the cyber security of GIRoA's ICT infrastructure. The MCIT identified the following top four areas for TAT to help: cyber law and policy; capacity building; developing a charter, mission, and road map for the ISD; and developing public awareness programs.

Update: On 17 May 2012, Lew Shadle held a cybersecurity report white-boarding session with the Deloitte cyber team to develop a briefing deck for MCIT Minister Sangin to distill the contents of the comprehensive Cybersecurity Maturity Assessment report into a set of initial steps and focused targets for COL Bierden and Brad Howard to use to brief the Minister. On 22 May 2012, TAT, TAT Reachback, and the Deloitte cyber team discussed and refined the brief and also discussed the draft Cybersecurity Maturity Assessment report, which is currently under final review.

Strengthen ICT Institutions

1. Advise the Afghan Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (Oliver Dziggel)

a. Weekly Meeting with MCIT Minister Sangin (COL Bierden/Oliver Dziggel)

Overview: COL Bierden is the Senior Telecom Advisor to the MCIT and Oliver Dziggel is embedded at the MCIT. They routinely meet with and advise Minister Sangin and his senior staff on a variety of issues.

Update: There was no meeting with Minister Sangin this week as he was out of town.

2. Strengthen Afghan Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (ATRA) (Oliver Dziggel)

a. Weekly Meeting with ATRA (COL Bierden / Oliver Dziggel / CW2 Amentt)

Overview: TAT holds regular weekly meetings with ATRA Chairman Shergul and ATRA Board Members to discuss current initiatives.

Update: There was no meeting with ATRA this week.

b. Spectrum Management (CW2 Amentt)

Overview: TAT is working with ATRA, CJ6, DSO, NTIA, FCC, World Bank and other agencies regarding several areas: (1) Spectrum assignment procedures, interference cases, and ATRA's engineering processes for frequency assignment; and (2) ATRA capacity building and policy development in the spectrum arena.

Update: ATRA Engineer Sailab came to ISAF on 20 May 2012 to meet with the ISAF Spectrum Management Board (SMB) to discuss the way forward with the shared band of frequency allocations. Both parties agreed that the current state of the band is sloppy and must be cleaned

up. They both agreed to validate their own data and to meet again to see if they could make permanent military or civilian assignments to reduce the shared spectrum allocation table and improve data accuracy. Once they agree upon a plan, ATRA and the ISAF SMB will need to update the 2009 Memorandum of Agreement (MoA).

3. Mentor Afghan Telecom Corporation

Overview: Afghan Telecom Corporation (AfTel) is a state-owned operator under the MCIT that provides voice, data, Internet access, and fiber to Afghan citizens, businesses, GIRoA, and other service providers and ISPs. AfTel manages the nation fiber optic backbone as well as the Kabul City Metro Fiber network. TAT provides technical and business/commercial mentoring to AfTel.

Update: Karen Black introduced Medweb to Afghan Telecom COO Ahmad Saeed and CTO Ahmad Javed on 16 May 2012 where they discussed using Medweb's solar cellular infrastructure to extend mobile service to rural areas. AfTel and Medweb have since signed a Letter of Understanding and are discussing plans to install a test system between Kabul and Jalalabad. Karen Black met with AfTel CIO Jabir Sarfaraz and Billing Manager Atmer Manocher several times throughout the week to review and finalize the RFP for the billing system.

4. Mentor Associations (Karen Black)

Overview: TAT monitors, participates in or mentors several ICT associations, including the National Internet Service Providers Association of Afghanistan (NISPA), the National ICT Alliance of Afghanistan (NICTAA), and the Afghan Telecommunications Operators Social Association (ATOSA). The associations are consortiums of private sector ICT companies, and sometimes include government entities or academia, that collaborate to constructively address issues of common concern and advance development of the ICT sector.

Update: Sean McGowan, AFCEA Manager of International Member & Chapter Programs, has arranged for AFCEA to offer free memberships to people in Afghanistan who are not AFCEA members, as well as free "second" memberships to people who are already members but wish to maintain their affiliations with their "home" chapters. TAT plans to meet with LCDR Vanderlip on 26 June 2012 to synchronize AFCEA efforts to date and to coordinate remaining work for the expected 10 July 2012 re-launch of AFCEA's Afghanistan National Chapter.

Foster ICT Capacity Development

1. Facilitate CIO Culture (Neil Sleevi)

Overview: This TAT program is aimed at helping GIRoA to establish a CIO framework within the ministries by providing advice on recruiting, motivating, and retaining CIOs; devising career development program guidelines for CIOs; and reinforcing GIRoA's strategic IT plan development and associated metrics. TAT will support and help to synchronize the CIO education and training efforts of other organizations and will monitor GIRoA's planned efforts with World Bank and USAID as GIRoA develops its new CIO department.

a. CIO Training and Education (Neil Sleevi)

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Overview: To promote ICT institutional CIO capacity development, TAT is working with GIRoA, the World Bank, USAID, NATO, and other government and non-governmental organizations and donors to assess, synchronize, and support others' efforts in the area of CIO training and education. TAT has enlisted the US National Defense University (NDU) to provide expertise in addressing CIO culture development. NDU's effort will include two studies: ICT Capacity Building through Education (Study #1) and a CIO/ICT Professional Development Strategy and Roadmap (Study #2).

Update: On 22 May 2012, Larry Wentz met with Dr. Mary McCully, Dean of Faculty and Academic Programs at the NDU iCollege, to follow up on previous discussions regarding the iCollege helping with the ICT Capacity Development and CIO Roadmap studies NDU is conducting for TAT. Dr. McCully loaned the study team some documentation on the CIO training program conducted for Iraq CIOs, which might provide useful information for CIO Roadmap development for Afghanistan.

a. Government CIO (GCIO) Support (Neil Sleevei)

Overview: An Afghan Government CIO Council or Form (GCIO) has been recommended as a way to facilitate and coordinate e-government development and implementation across GIRoA ministries and agencies. TAT will support the GCIO effort as it develops into a formal organization.

Update: Neil Sleevei is supporting data collection for GCIO effort (Study #2) and has a teleconference scheduled for 29 May 2012 with a UN-sponsored GCIO training effort.

2. Promote a Professional Workforce (Neil Sleevei)

Overview: TAT supports and participates in many efforts to develop a professional, sustainable ICT workforce. TAT will continue assisting the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) and others with the revitalization of older, and the installation of new, Cisco Academies throughout Afghanistan. TAT will promote, advise, and assist with revamping ICT curricula at Afghan schools and universities, including the MCIT's Information and Communication Technology Institute (ICTI).

a. Cisco Academies (CW2 Amentt)

Overview: TAT is working with MCIT, Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE), and World Bank to revitalize and/or establish Cisco Academies in Afghanistan. There are currently eight Cisco Academies hosted at public universities, and one at the Ministry of Woman's Affairs. Additionally, TAT is investigating funding for a Cisco Academy at the Professional Development Institute (PDI) of the American University of Afghanistan (AUAF).

Update: No update

b. ICT Education Assessment (Neil Sleeve / Larry Wentz)

Overview: To address a widely-acknowledged gap between ICT education and industry needs, TAT has initiated an effort to recommend specific, actionable, and credible changes to the Afghan ICT education system's ability to develop the skill sets needed by government and industry at the vocational, undergraduate, and graduate levels. Key to this effort is to identify mechanisms for ICT curriculum reform at the Ministries of Education (MoE), Higher Education (MoHE), Communications and Information Technology (MCIT), and Labor (MoL). This effort will also include specific recommendations for facilitating a CIO culture as per section 1.a. above.

Update: No update

c. Information and Communications Technology Institute (ICTI) (Neil Sleeve)

Overview: TAT began advising the MCIT's ICTI regarding revamping its curriculum in early January 2012 and will continue to advise and assist them throughout the next year to have a redesigned curriculum in time for the entering Solar Year (SY) 1392 class (March 2013). Working with its iCollege, the NDU's proposed curricula and syllabus changes for the ICTI, TAT expects to provide the recommendations to the MCIT and ICTI by mid-late August 2012.

Update: Neil Sleeve travelled to the University of Colorado at Boulder to collect data regarding its curricula and curriculum development practices, and to discuss opportunities to partner with the ICTI for collaborative certificate programs. CU Boulder has visited both Kabul Polytechnic University and Kabul University in the past few years and has an ongoing relationship with Washington State University and USAID to support some focused efforts in Afghanistan. CU Boulder will determine whether its current funding line is available for potential work with ICTI. Additionally, Neil discussed similar topics with Colorado Technical University (CTU) this week and has a planned a follow-up teleconference with CTU in mid-June.

In a meeting with Larry Wentz on 22 May 2012 (see section 1.a. CIO Training and Education section above), Dr. Mary McCully offered the NDU iCollege to review curricula for the ICTI and other Afghan universities and provide input on criteria and approaches for conducting annual curriculum reviews and course updates. Dr. McCully also provided a paper on requirements of affiliation and standards for accreditation used by universities in the US, which might be of use in advising the MoHE on accreditation approaches and factors for Afghan universities.

ICT as an Enabler of Stability

ICT to Support Legitimate Governance

1. DAS-Net (Formerly GIRoANet) (Ted Ryon)

Overview: MCIT has initiated an effort to build a single, robust, interconnected, secure communications network, known as DAS-Net, to allow GIRoA ministries and other governmental organizations to share services and applications, and extend Governance to outlying Districts and Provinces. DAS-Net will take

advantage of services provided by the Afghan National Data Center (ANDC), the National Internet Exchange of Afghanistan (NIXA), and a National Network Operations Center (NNOC).

a. Afghan National Security Forces Network (ANSFnet) (Ted Ryon)

Overview: The ANSFnet will provide the Ministries of Defense and Interior (MoD and MoI, respectively) the Presidential Information Coordination Center (PICC), and NDS with communications capabilities using IT networks (strategic), radio networks (tactical), and public infrastructure (cellular).

Update: No update

2. e-Afghanistan National Priority Program (NPP) (Karen Black)

Overview: e-Afghanistan is one of 22 National Priority Programs for Afghanistan. It is part of the Private Development Sector cluster of programs and is coordinated under Pillar Three – Economic and Social Development – of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS). e-Afghanistan is comprised of seven components with the goal “to create a modern and efficient Information and Telecommunications sector and e-government to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency and transparency of the public sector, provide for social services, develop a vibrant private sector, and create a connected and productive society.”

Update: No update

3. EGOV.AF (Karen Black)

Overview: EGOV.AF is a subset of the broader e-Afghanistan NPP and the MCIT’s brand name for its plan to implement various electronic and mobile (e- and m-, respectively) government initiatives within Afghanistan. The MCIT will stand up an e-Government Resource Center (EGRC) as a new Directorate to oversee and manage e-government programs. The MCIT has specifically asked TAT to advocate and coordinate its EGOV.AF efforts.

Update: No update

ICT to Support Cross-sector Economic Development and Growth

1. ICT for Health (Karen Black)

Overview: TAT has consulted and begun working with CJ-MED, USAID, the World Bank, and the MoPH to pursue Internet connectivity to hospitals, clinics, and other health infrastructure, facilitating the release and use of Telecommunications Development Funds (TDF) for health-related projects, establishing a nationwide health hotline, and helping to draft an ICT strategy for the Afghan Ministry of Public Health.

a. Internet Connectivity for Health Infrastructure (Mike Nichols / Karen Black)

Update: No update

b. MoPH ICT Strategy, IT Support Group, and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (Karen Black)

Overview: The MoPH is drafting an ICT Strategy to guide its implementation of network and computing capabilities. The MoPH IT Support Group was established to collaborate and address IT issues for the MoPH. Minister Sangin plans to establish a Working Group to draft an MOU between the MCIT and MoPH to facilitate ICT4Health initiatives. TAT is advising and assisting with these three related efforts.

Update: No update

c. Telecommunications Development Funds (TDF) for Health-Related Projects (Karen Black / Oliver Dziggel)

Update: Medweb sent a Letter of Understanding to the MoPH outlining the projects they agreed to move forward with last week, through a combination of the MoPH's development budget, donor funding, and the TDF, and is awaiting the MoPH's signature. World Bank TDF consultant Tony Loda indicated to Karen Black that the first step in starting the TDF for health grant process is for the MoPH to send a letter to MCIT Minister Sangin requesting cooperation, which Karen and Medweb are facilitating. Mr. Loda met with MCIT ICT Director General Aimal Marjan on 22 May 2012, where Mr. Marjan indicated that all health (and education) projects that want TDF grants will be vetted through his office, after which he will forward the official requests for TDF grants to ATRA. Karen and Tony are scheduled to meet early next week to discuss further.

2. ICT for Education (Neil Sleevi)

a. Afghanistan Research and Education Network (AfREN) and Kabul Research and Education Network (KREN) (CW2 Amentt)

Overview: The NATO SILK-Afghanistan project for Internet connectivity at Afghan universities is evolving into the Afghanistan Research and Education Network (AfREN), the first phase of which is the Kabul University Research and Education Network (KREN). It is anticipated that AfREN will eventually join one or both of the regional networks, the Central Asian Research and Education Network (CAREN) and the Trans-European Information Network (TEIN). TAT is supporting the Afghan Ministry of Higher Education's (MoHE) efforts to apply for Telecommunications Development Funds for AfREN/KREN.

Update: According to Dr. Kaffenberger, NATO Programme Manager, HEDWG has been replaced by AfREN.

3. ICT for Agriculture (Karen Black)

Overview: TAT's strategic efforts in agriculture will involve supporting other organizations, including but not limited to, the Afghan Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL), the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), and ISAF's Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) to employ ICT to proliferate and disseminate agriculture-related information such as weather conditions, market prices, trade flows, news, and trends.

Update: Karen Black has reached out to and is waiting to hear back from MAIL representatives Mr. Anant Singh, Advisor, Monitoring and Evaluation Capacity Building and Change Management Program, and Mr. Noor M. Seddiq, Deputy Chief of Party, Grants Management Unit, Senior Financial Sector Advisor, whom Neil Sleevi met with last week.

4. ICT for Women (Karen Black)

a. Etisalat Gender Program

Overview: Etisalat and the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA), signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), to implement its Gender Program, in conjunction with FAIDA/USAID and the Kabul Women's Garden. The overarching objectives of the program are to provide training, business opportunities, and resources for women. Women will train to be Etisalat agents to sell its mHawala (mobile money) service, handsets, SIM cards, and top-up cards. Women will be able to obtain micro-financing to start their businesses and make loan payments through their phones.

Update: No update

b. The ITU Year of Women and Girls in ICT

Overview: The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Council designated the theme of World Telecommunications and Information Society Day (WTISD), 17 May 2012, as "Women and Girls in ICT." ITU Secretary-General, Dr. Hamadoun Touré stated the ITU will "focus our efforts this year on women and girls, using the power of ICTs to provide new digital opportunities to end discrimination and empower women and girls to achieve their rightful place as equals in the world. This effort with ICTs must begin not only from the cradle, but from antenatal health care, reaching out to the remotest communities through telemedicine and other means — with every mother, every girl and every woman guaranteed her birthright."

Updates: No update

c. Miscellaneous

Overview: TAT is following, coordinating, and facilitating several efforts regarding ICT for women and women in ICT including, but not limited to, ISAF, USAID, and other NGO and international community initiatives.

Update: COL Bierden attended a reception on 23 May 2012 hosted by US Ambassador Richard Olson, the US Embassy's Coordinating Director for Development and Economic Affairs, where the US released [six new RFPs for grants](#) from a US\$5M fund to support Afghan women's economic empowerment. The categories for which the Embassy is soliciting proposals are: Linking Afghan Professionals, Growth for Women-owned Businesses, Developing Women's Career Skills, Advancing Afghan Women's Economic Opportunity, Marketing Afghanistan's Traditional Arts for Economic Development, and Connecting Women and Markets.

5. ICT for Finance (Oliver Dziggel)

a. Mobile Money (mMoney) (Oliver Dziggel)

Overview: The mMoney initiative, led by USAID, is a multi-carrier, cross-sector set of programs and projects intended to facilitate and accelerate the adoption of technologies, processes and regulations to allow the 18 million mobile phone subscribers in Afghanistan to use their devices to receive, store, transfer funds, make payments and purchases, send remittances, and accept cash disbursements.

Update: No update

6. Afghan Academy of Sciences (AAoS) (Karen Black)

Overview: The Afghan Academy of Sciences (AAoS) is an 80-year old internationally recognized GIROA research institution under the Office of the President comprised of members who study various disciplines in the Humanities, Natural Sciences, and Islamic Studies. Karen Black is serving as the NATO Country Co-Director for the Afghan Academy of Sciences. In March 2012, NATO HQ Brussels bestowed the AAoS with a €115,000 Network Infrastructure Grant (NIG) as part of NATO's Science for Peace and Security Programme, which TAT helped to facilitate, to install computers and Internet connectivity for its researchers. The AAoS is establishing a new Technology discipline under its National Sciences division. It is expected that the AAoS will become part of the Afghan Research and Education Network (AfREN).



Update: On 20 May 2012, Afghan Academy of Sciences (AAoS) President Abdulbari Rashed (pictured, left) and Afghan Citadel Software Company (ACSC) CEO Roya Mahboob (on right), signed the contract for ACSC to install computers and connectivity for the AAoS using the NATO Network Infrastructure Grant that TAT facilitated. AAoS Chief of

Administration Mr. Atiquallah Khushiwhal and NATO Country Co-Director for the AAoS and TAT Advisor Karen Black also attended the short but formal ceremony.

Engagement

1. The World Bank (COL Bierden)

Overview: TAT regularly interfaces with the World Bank Program Management Office (PMO) in Afghanistan and holds bi-weekly phone calls with World Bank ICT representatives in Washington, DC.

Update: COL Bierden, Bob Kinn, and Karen Black held a short call with Siddhartha Raja, Senior Policy Specialist, Policy Specialist, ICT Division, of the World Bank on 24 May 2012. Sid updated TAT on his efforts regarding infrastructure sharing for the Salang Tunnel and the ADB road construction in northwest Afghanistan, for which he has engaged the World Bank Transportation Team Lead, USAID, which is conducting a feasibility study regarding the rehabilitation of the Salang Tunnel, and Ajmal Ayan, Director General, MCIT Policy and Planning Directorate. He also clarified that the delay in the one of the mobile consultancies for ATRA is so as not to overload them with too many consultants at once.

2. Telecom Working Group (TWG)

Overview: The Telecom Working Group is a bi-weekly forum that brings together ICT stakeholders across organizations in an effort to provide situational awareness and promote synchronization of ICT-related activities.

Update: There was no TWG meeting this week.

3. Reachback Activities

Larry Wentz attended the Pakistan Afghanistan Federation Forum on 18 May 2012 where guest speaker, new TFBSO Director James Bullion, presented the TFBSO's activities in Afghanistan. In his only reference to ICT, Mr. Bullion mentioned he wanted to duplicate the Herat incubator model elsewhere in Afghanistan. The TFBSO also plans to duplicate efforts such as the International Center for Afghan Women's Economic Development that it recently broke ground for at the American University of Afghanistan. Mr Bullion said a donor has contributed US\$1M for use by the center. Larry met briefly with Mr. Bullion after the presentation and discussed potential TAT-TFBSO collaboration on ICT for socio-economic development, ICT4Women, and IT incubator related initiatives. Larry also mentioned TAT's interest in the ongoing work at NDU in the area of renewable energy and ICT capability packages for rural areas. Mr. Bullion was interested in this as well.

Bob Kinn continued coordination with Ambassador Verveer's office at Main State EEB/CIP regarding planning for MCIT Minister Sangin's visit to the US.

On 16 May 2012, Larry Wentz, Bob Kinn, Lew Shadle, and Keith Sontheimer met with Fred Ruonavar and Will Schmidt where they discussed scheduling for Dr. Traci Swanson, Senior Research Fellow, NDU CTNSP and principal researcher for the TAT NDU studies, and proposed trips by an SME for the ICT Capacity Building through Education effort.

Also on 16 May 2012, Larry Wentz, Bob Kinn, and Lew Shadle met with Siddhartha Raja, Senior Policy Specialist, ICT Division, of the World Bank, to discuss the World Bank's efforts in Afghanistan and to advise him of current planning by TAT, NDU and Deloitte in support of ICT Capacity Building through Education. WB has approximately US\$6.2M allocated in its ICT Sector Development

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Program for CIO and core ICT training and it will be advantageous to synchronize and leverage these efforts with the TAT/NDU efforts. Sid asked Larry for a copy of the NDU-drafted requirement, which he provided.

TAT Transition

Overview: ISAF is working on its organizational structure for the next two years and TAT was not added to the ISAF authorization document after 1 July 2012. TAT is exploring options that will allow the team to continue its mission and receive logistical support (housing and meals) in Kabul. This will be documented in an annex to the TAT Afghanistan ICT Strategy by mid-July 2012.

Update: No update

Long Range Calendar

3 June 2012	Central Asian Foreign Ministers' Conference – Kabul, Afghanistan
8 – 16 June 2012	TAT Director's CONUS visit
17-23 June 2012	Incoming TAT Director COL Frank Huber Afghanistan visit
11 June 2012	Kabul Ministerial Conference – Kabul, Afghanistan
14 June 2012	Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Conference – Kabul, Afghanistan
June 2012	MCIT Minister Sangin potential visit to the US – Washington, DC
5 July 2012	Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan – Tokyo, Japan
20 July-19 August 2012	Ramadan
19-21 August 2012	Eid-ul-Fitr
September 2012	NATO OpenSource Systems for the Public Sector Awareness Workshop – Kabul, Afghanistan