



Islamic Republic of Afghanistan  
جمهوری اسلامی افغانستان  
Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development  
وزارت احیاء و انکشاف دهات  
National Solidarity Programme  
برنامه همبستگی ملی



**Nation-Building from the Ground Up:  
MRRD/NSP Disbursements for Village-Level Governance and Socio-Economic  
Development in Rural Afghanistan Top USD 800 Million**

**Kabul, 5 February, 2011:** The National Solidarity Programme (NSP) of the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), the government's flagship program for reconstruction and development of Afghanistan's villages, celebrated a major milestone in early February when NSP block grants provided to rural communities since the program's inception in 2003 surpassed the 800 million dollar mark.

Through program efforts, nearly 70% of the country's villages have mobilized; and more than 26,000 have democratically elected local councils to represent themselves. These Community Development Councils (CDCs) have prioritized needs; and, to date, have planned, managed, and monitored over 55,000 subprojects made possible by NSP block grants supporting CDC initiatives in transportation, water supply and sanitation, irrigation, power supply, education, livelihoods, and other sectors. In this process, NSP has led the nation's reach to rural communities and laid the foundations for inclusive local governance in more than 361 districts across all 34 provinces of Afghanistan.

NSP's community-driven development paradigm partners national government and villages, and, assisted by 28 facilitating non-governmental and other organizations, harnesses both the strength, leadership, and sweat equity contributed by empowered communities, and the commitment and generosity of Afghanistan's international donors.

While recognizing the substantial contributions of donors and NSP's effectiveness in delivering them at grassroots levels across the country, MRRD officials were quick to note that communities themselves are NSP's third largest donor. NSP requires CDCs to contribute a minimum of 10% of block grant value in order to participate in the program. Communities, in fact, have often given much more as their share of subproject costs. To date, in addition to the USD 800 million NSP has disbursed, the program's CDCs themselves have contributed more than USD 113 million.

In relation to the importance of the CDCs and the program's disbursement milestone, H.E, Jarullah Mansoori, the MRRD Minister said:

*"We are happy to see that activities undertaken by the Community Development Councils further enhance the service delivery function of the government in response to the immense needs of villagers for improving rural livelihoods. The Ministry is proud of its contribution, and NSP will remain the centerpiece of the MRRD portfolio."*

With the momentum of NSP I and II accomplishments, the program has recently begun a third phase. Over the next four years, MRRD expects to carry NSP and its block grants to every village still to be reached, establishing nearly 16,000 new CDCs and attaining the landmark of complete national coverage.

NSP III will also deliver a second round of block grants to almost 12,000 existing CDCs that have successfully utilized first round block grants. Most importantly, the program will continue to develop the abilities of CDCs to operate as the people's representatives at the village level and the capacities enabling them to assume the mandate of the Village Councils foreseen in the Constitution.

Said Mohammad Tariq Ismati, the MRRD/NSP Executive Director:

*“The greatest achievements that the NSP has made so far are the ensuring of a local governance mechanism and the empowering of people to make collective decisions on their own lives and livelihoods. The CDCs, indeed, represent government in the rural communities and play a vital role in the formation of community level governance which corresponds with the vision of the Government of Afghanistan and the international community.”*

For more information, please contact:

Ahmad Jamshed Ahmadi  
Head, Public Communication Department (PCD)  
National Solidarity Programme (NSP)  
Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD)  
Islamic Republic of Afghanistan  
Email: a.ahmadjamshed@nspafghanistan.org  
Mobile: +93(0) 799 572 14