

in-touch

Public Administration International



Newsletter

Kabul Calling

*Christopher Jones,
Team Leader,
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Project, Afghanistan*

With the exception of a military junta, Afghanistan has been governed by every conceivable system of government over the past century, including a monarchy, republic, capitalism, theocracy, dictatorship, socialism and a pro-communist state. Years of conflict have left the Afghan government with a deeply fragmented administration, poor policy management capacity, outdated administrative and financial management systems, a serious disconnect between provinces and the centre, and enduring capacity constraints. Needless to say, there are no easy solutions to these problems.

In partnership with Adam Smith International, PAI has recently won a three-year World Bank project to assist the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission with the implementation of a new pay and



Donald McGregor (Project Director) and Chris relax in the British Embassy, Kabul after another challenging day



Daily life in Kabul

grading system throughout the civil service. The system is part of an on-going international effort to reform the Afghan government at every level and provide improved services to the people of the country.

Civil servants in Afghanistan are not well-paid, receiving on average \$60 per month. They live in poor-quality housing and, statistically, they are more likely to be the victims of terrorism than foreign soldiers. Visit Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, and you will see evidence everywhere of a society struggling to cope with the problems it faces: armed guards, blast protection walls, soldiers in armoured cars, street beggars, unmade roads and open sewers. But there is such a thing as normal life in the city. There are shops and restaurants, schools, cinemas, parks, buses, taxis, mobile phones and televisions. In fact, there is ample evidence that ordinary Afghans, including civil servants, want nothing more for themselves and their families than to live in peace, prosperity and security.

PAI is very pleased to be part of a government reform programme which is working towards these aims. A small team of consultants will work with their counterparts in Ministries and Agencies to develop the basics of good government administration: job descriptions, a job evaluation process, and new grades and pay scales. It will not be an easy process. As in any civil service, there is resistance to change. The implementation process itself will be long and complex.

A start has already been made. A new Law and regulations have been passed by Parliament. There is money in the budget to pay for the new salaries. The problems of Afghanistan will not disappear overnight and it would be wrong to pretend that the reform programme does not face severe political, economic and security challenges. But there is a fundamental desire amongst the people of the country to improve things and this fact, probably more than anything else, gives reason to hope that the next century in Afghanistan will not be like the last one.

“Open for Business: the role of government in attracting inward investment” study programme (7 – 11 April 2008) – a participant’s assessment

Carol Bickram, Economist, Ministry of Trade and Industry, Trinidad and Tobago



It was indeed a memorable, maybe even historic week in London between 7 – 11 April 2008. It snowed and the Olympic torch passed

through the streets of London amid protests on its way to Beijing, China for the 29th Games of the Olympiad.

For a group of five, three from the Cayman Islands, one from Trinidad and the other from Tanzania, it was a week of learning. All were from the public sector in their respective countries and our purpose, as indicated by the title of our study programme, was to sharpen our knowledge on “The Role of Government in Attracting Inward Investment”. We shared our country experiences with investment and learnt about the success

of investment promotion agencies in attracting investors.

We were exposed to a mix of lecture sessions and site visits to some of the top investment promotion agencies in London. The lectures provided information on investment, its positive and negative impact; best practices in attracting foreign direct investment (FDI) as a tool in development; recent trends in investment including the shift to South-South investment and focus on environmental impact and, more recently, social outcomes.

The comparative study on ‘Outward Direct Investment’ (ODI) in selected countries was particularly interesting as it highlighted the point that almost 85% of the FDI was from developed to developed countries and less than 2% to least developed countries. The fact that most FDI from developed countries

is channelled into high-end research and innovative projects, while most FDI in least developed countries goes to low value added sectors, is an important lesson to participants from our parts of the globe.

The site visits to UK Trade and Investment (UKTI), the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA), the Surrey Research Park and London’s foremost FDI promotion agency, ‘Think London’ helped participants to make the connection between the theory and operational arms of investment promotion at the national and regional levels with London as the centre.

The synergistic and pro-active approaches of staff at all levels were evident at each of the agencies visited. Indeed this was also a reflection of the planning and execution of the programme which was well organised to meet the needs of the participants. And the theatre trip was a tremendous success in bringing participants together.

Bringing Ukraine closer to Europe

Kevin Prigmore, Team Leader, EUCOP Project

The European Union Coordination Project (EUCOP) implemented by the British Council in consortium with Public Administration International and CPM (Latvia), worked in Ukraine from October 2006 until April 2008 to support the Ukrainian Government in developing a better coordination mechanism for European integration. On 24 April 2008, the EUCOP team, headed by PAI Team Leader Kevin Prigmore, reported on the project achievements at the round table meeting in Kiev dedicated to European Integration (EI) coordination mechanisms in Ukraine.

The Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine for European and International Integration, Hryhoriy Nemyria, made a presentation explaining that “The work conducted by the EUCOP project is unprecedented. It provides our Government with a comprehensive toolkit for creation of the Agency”.



Hryhoriy Nemyria, Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine, and Kevin Prigmore, Team Leader of EUCOP, at a roundtable meeting in April 2008

The EUCOP project worked with the Office of the Vice Prime Minister, Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, with key ministries and other relevant institutions involved in the EI work providing policy advice, specialised consultations on development and implementation of several national strategic plans in the field of EI, recommendations on necessary institutional changes, and training on specialist topics. An important activity of the project has been to advise the government on technical issues relating to the negotiations of the 'enhanced' agreement with the European Union.

Studies and reports produced by the project on the existing coordination

system and international experience of EI policy coordination generated a lot of interest and discussion in the Government and provided a better understanding of the need to create a centralised coordination body in

“The work conducted by the EUCOP project is unprecedented.”

Ukraine. Study visits organised by the project to three countries (Poland, Estonia and Croatia) gave Ukrainian civil servants the opportunity to see

examples of development of EI central policy coordination mechanisms in other countries and to establish cooperation with their foreign counterparts at Departments for EU issues. Support was also provided in the development of donor coordination and project implementation, the role of NGOs in policy-making and improving in-service training.

We were pleased to learn that in July 2008 the Government of Ukraine passed a decision to set up the Coordination Bureau for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration which will contribute to more effective cooperation between Ukraine and the EU.

Managing elections – a global challenge revisited

Tim Bittiger, PAI Director of Studies



Front Row (Sitting – left to right) Tim Bittiger (PAI Programme Director), Lavdie Zeqiraj (Kosovo), Mwanabaraka Maalim Ahmed (Tanzania), Lorna Simon (Antigua & Barbuda), Angela Taylor (Barbados), Bo Chum Sin (Cambodia) and Claire Cameron (PAI Director) Back Row (Standing – left to right) Slava Gromlyuk (PAI Business Development Manager), Gezim Vata (Kosovo), Bujar Basha (Kosovo), Hamad Ayoub (Tanzania), Tiro Goaletsa Gabriel Seeletso (Botswana), Edward Gatt (Malta), Mamadou Haidara (Mali), Carson Raggie (St Lucia), Kenneth R Scott (Bermuda), Lister Dudley Lewis (Turks & Caicos Islands) and Daoud Ali Najafi (Afghanistan)

Why is trust good but control better for organising truly free elections? Are we ready for voting by telephone? And how can we overcome political fatigue and get voters back to the polls? These were only some of the questions which fifteen high-ranking election administrators from Asia, Africa, Europe and the Caribbean debated during PAI's five-day study programme 'Managing elections: techniques and perspectives'. The programme, held in London from

8 to 12 September 2008, provided an ideal platform for the exchange of views between senior officials directly responsible for delivering elections in their countries. The meetings with counterparts working in the UK's electoral system enabled them to compare notes and review the challenges they all share. The experts who contributed to the programme discussed election systems and processes around the world, assessing

the pros and cons of various approaches to registering voters, financing election campaigns, planning strategically for elections, and communicating well with voters and other interest groups. Until now, there have been few opportunities for election administrators to improve their professional skills in this way. The PAI programme is designed to fill this particular gap. Work on planning PAI's September 2009 elections study programme is now well under way.

Introducing the PAI team

Focus on Clare Walters, Programme Manager

Clare has been managing international study programmes for over thirty years, starting her career with the Royal Institute of Public Administration in 1976, followed by a short spell as a Seminar Manager with the British Council. For over ten years, Clare was also part-time manager for the international journal 'Public Administration and Development', which started out as the UK Overseas Development Administration's 'Journal of Overseas Development'.

Since 1999 she has worked with Public Administration International. She gets enormous pleasure from meeting and working with international participants and thrives on all the hard work of making sure everything runs smoothly. Clare is married with two daughters who have 'flown the nest', one of them literally as she has recently qualified as an airline pilot! Clare and her husband, Alan, are looking forward to enjoying holidays around the world – starting with Hong Kong, Australia, New Zealand and California in December this year.



Mark Golding and Roy Cunningham

It is with great sadness that we record the death of two close associates of PAI, Mark Golding and Roy Cunningham.

Mark Golding, who died suddenly in Kosovo on 14 September 2008, had worked extensively for PAI in Kosovo – where he had been the Team Leader on a public administration reform project; and in Bulgaria – where he led our work on a human resource management information system. Mark had also worked as a Resident Team Leader on a major EC project in Poland; and, when he died, was leading

a large team on an important counter-narcotics project in Afghanistan. Mark was a gentle, kind and immensely conscientious man whose unflinching courtesy and good humour was an example to us all.

Roy Cunningham died in the UK on 4 August 2008 after a very short illness. Although most of his work was in the UK and followed on from his career in the UK senior civil service, Roy had an important role in three PAI projects. He designed and ran civil service assessment centres in both Slovakia

and Bulgaria; and was due to advise on the introduction of a senior civil service in Ethiopia (where he had already worked earlier this year). Roy too was thoughtful, kind and always good-humoured; and he combined with this a deep knowledge and understanding of his work.

Both Mark and Roy will be greatly missed, as work colleagues and as friends, by all of us at PAI; and our thoughts have been with their families and their many friends.