

**Annex 10:
Potential Partner Summaries**

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1. Internews

Internews was one of the first independent media organisations to be established in Afghanistan following the fall of the Taleban, mainly through USAID funding. Internews established a network of 'independent' radio stations and supported them through paying for the broadcast of a national news program 'Salam Watandar', which is now broadcast by satellite to 37 stations in total. They have a strong record in establishing radio stations (a total of 28 with 12 more planned to be built or overhauled by the middle of 2009) and producing content, with Salam Watandar the key programme 'vehicle' for information. In response to demand they plan to produce more regionally specific programming.

Internews have a training organisation called Nai, now an Afghan NGO. They have also given Equal Access a grant to deliver training in radio drama for peacebuilding in journalism faculties in Herat, Kabul and Mazar. Internews also gives core support to Pajhwok News Agency (see below), and has facilitated a media law working group and an industry code of ethics process.

Partnership assessment:

Internews are an important player in Afghan media development. They have expertise, experience and resources. Would probably want to be lead partner in any consortium.

2. Equal Access

Equal Access was established in Afghanistan in 2002. An American media development NGO with a specialism in radio, their core product is a national satellite radio distribution mechanism. Equal Access are able to send programs to a national audience. They also distribute through the Internews radio network.

Equal Access are currently active in southern Afghanistan (Uruzgan, Farah, Helmand and Kandahar) through radio programmes, video (disseminating VCDs) and mobile theatre.

Partnership Assessment:

Equal Access provide quality production capacity and increasingly video. They produce content to contract, as well as developing proposals and programmes. They would be a possible production partner.

3. IWPR

IWPR (based in London) provides support and training to journalists in conflict and post conflict zones and has programmes in twenty countries including Afghanistan where it has worked since 2002. Among its accomplishments was the establishment of the Pajhwok News Agency and the Centre for International Journalism in Kabul. Since 2006 IWPR has been working in Helmand Province where it established a network of professional journalists and a media support centre with internet access.

Partnership Assessment

IWPR is experienced in working in difficult situations and has developed training materials in "conflict sensitive" journalism and programming. It has worked with considerable success in Lashkargarh and is respected amongst local journalists. IWPR has been a valued partner in this Feasibility Study, and would have a great deal to offer in terms of journalism and programming training in southern Afghanistan.

4. Sayara

Sayara is an independent, French-owned commercial production company, with a focus on message based development communications. They have inhouse production capacities - particularly print - but also subcontract to local companies. Distribution is mainly through existing channels - either providing products to Ministries for distribution or through Internews, Aman or Nawar Radio.

They have experience in providing interpersonal communication services - for example mobile cinema and theatre and linked community discussion (as part of election education) and state they can deliver these services in most of the southern Provinces, where they are currently delivering a range of Anti-Narcotics communications.

Sayara provide a high-quality product and a service that meets clients needs. As a commercial company they have no specific agenda or vision beyond that of their clients.

Partnership assessment:

Sayara offer a useful service and one that is of a high quality. They have experience in a wide range of media and interpersonal communication services. They could be contracted to deliver specific programmes but would not be able to offer or commit to 'ownership' over a stabilisation agenda beyond contractual limits.

5. Killid

Killid has been a major media player in Afghanistan for some years, and is involved in print distribution, radio broadcasting in several locations including Kandahar, and TV broadcasting. Its goal is to reach out, to inform and help people understand development and to fight for democracy through encouraging debate. They have a Crimes of War project based in Kandahar. It does a lot of training and mentoring of staff. The operation is helped through the success of Killid Weekly, its distribution arm. It aims to become a public broadcaster on radio, TV and online. It represents the voice of moderation "extremism is the weapon of the weak. It takes a lot of courage to remain moderate".

Partnership Assessment

Killid is a respected organisation led by a man of considerable vision. They have experience in print, radio and TV. They are progressive, moderate and espouse public service broadcasting principles. They are present in the south, and are keen to expand. They have considerable production capacity and are committed to improve the quality of their programming. They could be involved in radio and TV production as well as transmission.

6. Pazhwok News Agency

Pazhwok News Agency is a print news agency that was established by the Institute for War and Peace Reporting, and has been independent since 2004. Pazhwok have a total of 24 freelance journalists and 64 full time staff - and 137 subscribers (TV / Radio station, Embassies, INGO's). Currently have bureaux in southern Afghan provinces of Kandahar and Ghazni (and 6 other provinces) with a proposal to USAID for eight more (including Paktia, Paktika, Zabul, Uruzgan and Helmand).

Partnership Assessment:

Pazhwok is the leading Afghan news agency and currently offer print services. Possibilities would include increasing their capacity - for example into radio - or developing a new (radio?) agency to increase competition and drive up quality.

7. Wakht News Agency

Wakht News Agency focuses on development and reconstruction rather than conflict. It has been established for two years and can call on 40 reporters from all but three of the country's provinces. Wakht has a website in local languages and English and plans to charge subscriptions. It is led by a committed and energetic Director, previously with IWPR, who has plans to increase advertising revenue and the impact of his web based activities.

Partnership Assessment

Wakht could be an entry point for a web-based initiative. The organisation also has experience of training journalism with eight full-time trainers experienced in working in difficult areas on short courses.

8. Radio Azadi

Radio Azadi is broadcast from Kabul with content produced in Kabul (6 programs) and Prague (4 programs). It is funded by the US Congress but operates with a significant degree of freedom. Radio Azadi has correspondents in Herat, Kandahar, Zabul, Helmand and most of the other provinces.

Radio Azadi has a schedule of hourly news, with two two-hour (one hour Dari and one hour Pashto) news programmes, with the morning show getting up to 6 million listeners (25% of their audience). They also have a number of short drama programs (4 mins) as well two interactive two-hour current affairs cultural programs per week.

Partnership Assessment:

Radio Azadi have a strong reach into southern Afghanistan and a credible and trusted source, on a par with BBC (though our field research suggests the BBC remains more trusted). Possibility of (co?)-producing programmes, but getting agreement from Washington / Prague would be complex, though not impossible.

9. Radio Television Afghanistan

RTA is the national broadcaster. There is a new management team who are interested in increasing the quality and type of programming. This includes a number of new participatory programmes - such as the 'Voice of the People' programme in which people call in their concerns which are passed onto the relevant civil servant - and on the sixth day the most pressing concern is presented to the relevant Minister.

Transmission is limited as equipment is old and often unserviceable. India pays for satellite broadcast costs.

Partnership assessment:

RTA are an important player as they are the 'voice' of the GoA. There is the potential for 'participatory programming' and the provision of an hour or so of airtime. While there are audience credibility issues, RTA could be a useful and strategic component for GoA outreach - for example as part of the IDLG Social Outreach Program - to bring the GoA message to the people. One problem is that reception in the non FM areas of southern Afghanistan appears to be poor on short and medium wave, and people in Kandahar and Lashkargar seem to listen more to the local state radio opt-out services than Radio Afghanistan, Kabul.

10. Saba

SABA is linked to the NGO Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (CHA) and was set up with assistance from Novib. SABA has radio and TV production and broadcast capacity and has existing broadcast capacity in southern Afghanistan.

Currently they have two channels - Nawar (24hrs) in Dari and Pashto, and a Pashto station (12hrs), which claims to reach audiences in Tirin Kot, Dera Aud, Char Chino, Khas Uruzgan, Chora, Lashka Ghar, Gareshk, as well as a broader satellite footprint into Russia, Central Asia, Pakistan, Iran.

They have the capacity - and some experience in - mobile broadcasts, and aren't afraid to conduct politically sensitive debate, having already broadcast debate where Talibs criticised government involvement in the narcotics trade.

Partnership opportunities:

SABA could be a useful dissemination partner as well as providing certain production capacity. They are open to a mentor / capacity building role, which would build Afghan capacity as well as provide the necessary quality programming. SABA are politically neutral and would support a 'stabilisation' agenda, however it would be important to retain editorial and quality control oversight.

11. Pan Afghan Cross Border Radio Production and Training (PACT)

PACT produces innovative peace-oriented radio broadcasts in the FATA areas, shortly to be extended to Baluchistan. Taking as a reference point a moderate interpretation of Islam that finds favour with many in Pakistan, the programmes deal with audience driven issues with an emphasis on putting forward practical solutions. Underpinning PACT programmes is the notion that people on both sides of the Durand line share a common language and common traditions, and can help solve each others' problems at a time when moderate Islam is being hijacked by jihadi influences.

- *Participatory programming such as "Da Pulay Poray", with people themselves identifying issues they want discussed and, where possible, resolved according to their own traditions and customs.*
- *Another PACT programme "Din-o-Dunya", "people look at the way religion is being practised in the world today and suggests.....how the principles of religion should more aptly be put into practice". Ordinary people and religious scholars take part in the programme and topics covered include issue of Islamic practice.*

PACT programmes are broadcast by local radio stations in Nangarhar province in Afghanistan as well as by Radio Khyber.

Partnership assessment:

PACT has expertise in production and broadcasting to the Pashtun communities that could be drawn on in any program design. There is also the potential for 'joined-up' programming that could link communities on both sides of the Durand Line.

13. Albany Associates

Albany Associates is a UK based consultancy which has no current base in Afghanistan, though its Director, Simon Haselock, has worked here in the past, and one of its associates, James Fergusson, is a specialist author on Afghan affairs. Albany is interested in working in Afghanistan. It specialises in conflict/ post conflict information work, in the Balkans, Iraq and currently Sudan where it provides specialist support to the African Union Public Information Department.

Partnership Assessment

AA has a track record of getting work done in difficult situations, and employs able people. They are not producers of video or radio but they are specialists in strategic communications and have experience working with government and the military. Could be a possible lead partner of a consortium.

13. Panos Institute

The Panos Institute consists of eight regional institutes with 19 years of experience in media analysis and development communications. As well as implementing programmes, they lead and are part of a number of Communication for Development consortiums (including DfID funded ones). They do not work in Afghanistan currently, although one of their staff, Emrys Schoemaker, has played a leading role on secondment to MSS in producing this feasibility study. They have a long standing programme in Pakistan that includes a peacebuilding component, and are already developing cross- border activities.

Panos has a Programme Partnership Agreement with DfID which supports the global network. As experts in the field of media and communications Panos leads a DfID organised consortium of partners under the Information and Communications for Development Framework Agreement.

Relevant types of support include:

- Support to developing country media, to play a stronger role as a forum for public debate and channel for the voices of civil society especially the poor and marginalised.
- Support to CSOs: communication and media strategy advice and training; support for grass-roots level communication and media initiatives, including oral testimony projects and community radio production.;
- Advocacy and policy development for the role of communication and media in development: direct advocacy, and strengthening advocacy capacity of others.

Partnership Assessment

Panos have played a supportive role in this Feasibility Study, providing expertise and human resource. They have significant experience in communication for development, health communications and communications for social change (CfSC). They have experience in designing, implementing and evaluating complex, multi-dimensional communication initiatives, and in DRC Panos Paris deliver a peacebuilding communications initiative. They could offer commitment to a 'stabilisation agenda', provide the necessary management function and, with no background in Afghanistan, could play a neutral, convening lead role in the Communication and Stabilisation Consortium.

14. Media Support Partnership Afghanistan (MSPA)

MSPA is an Afghan NGO and the local affiliate of Media Support Solutions and has been operational in Afghanistan since 2002. MSPA is managed by a team of experienced Afghans, two of them former BBC staff. In total there is a staff of thirty Afghan professional radio and video staff, plus an evaluation team involved in long-term projects ranging from distance education to health promotion, production of a weekly programme aimed at young Afghans, and multi-media outreach campaigns. It has been mentoring the work of the Ministry of Education's broadcasting department (ERTV) in producing radio and video programmes on teacher training. MSPA's goal is to use the media, especially radio and TV, to promote development, civil society and peace. MSPA's affiliate organisation, Media Support Solutions, is responsible for the CfS Feasibility Study and is a DfID Information and Communications for Development Framework Agreement holder.

15. BBC Dari/ Pashto Service/ BBC World Service Trust

The BBC enjoys a high reputation in Afghanistan because of its professional news and current affairs coverage of the conflict over the past 30 years. It has also won a strong following because of its educational programming, particularly the radio soap opera, New Home New Life, which is now run by the BBC World Service Trust. Both the BBC Dari/ Pashto Service have offices in Kabul (one for journalism, the other for educational broadcasting and features) and a network of "stringers" around the country. They have the ability to produce high quality radio programmes, and with input from London, could produce TV as well. Their staff are probably the best trained media professionals in Afghanistan.

Partnership Assessment

A partnership involving programme production must be a strong possibility. Access of CfS material on the powerful BBC transmitters (to be strengthened by a new AM transmitter in Kandahar) would be a definite asset. However, the BBC guards its editorial independence and is not likely to promote a "stabilisation" agenda, apart from in New Home New Life. The BBC WS Trust must also be seen as a potential consortium leader, though participatory communication is not their strength. They also tend to work alone, so leading a consortium may be a new experience for the BBC WS Trust.

16. Radio Free Afghanistan

Next to the BBC, the most respected and professional broadcaster in Afghanistan, with the strongest broadcasting signal overall. An office in Kabul and a network of stringers around the country. Able clearly to both produce and transmit radio programmes to a high standard.

Partnership Assessment

This would be the first such partnership RFA has undertaken. It is a very news oriented organisation, and has not a good track record in consistently taking non-news programming. Their funding is from US Congress, and it is not known whether they would be willing to accept funding from other sources.