



SUCCESS STORY

Improved Transparency and Access to Information Achieved in Afghan Municipalities

Integrated Financial Management System (IFMS) tools assisted the Deputy Ministry of Municipalities (DMM) and SHAHAR's partner municipalities to gain citizens' trust by managing their complaints and providing municipal staff with improved access to information.



On August 14-15, SHAHAR's IFMS team conducted the IFMS Complaint Management System and Legal and Policy modules' workshop for DMM staff in Kabul.

Moh. Naseer Hamidi, DMM's Director General of Urban Governance, said: *"Access to information is a key element in ensuring good governance in the Deputy Ministry of Municipalities (DMM), and in the municipalities. With the technical assistance and support of SHAHAR, DMM is now fully equipped with two essential modules that will mainly help us record, track, process and report Citizens Complaints, as well as having access through an online platform to important information. I hereby, officially announce the use of two modules, and encourage the DMM staff to use the opportunity and learn how to use the system, and understand the benefits of it. DMM is very serious on the implementation and rollout of the systems, and monitor each and every individual and make sure both modules are used in future."*

Complaint management is one of the major problems in Afghan municipalities. Sometimes, citizens' complaints are not properly registered, tracked, and addressed by municipal authorities. Often, citizens' complaints on municipal service delivery are ignored by municipal officials, which has resulted in a lack of public trust and confidence in municipal officials among citizens. Similarly, lack of a standard online system and mechanism was a serious challenge for the Deputy Ministry of Municipalities (DMM) to track municipalities' performance in regards to managing citizens' complaints.

In August 2018, USAID's Strong Hubs for Afghan Hope and Resilience (SHAHAR) program implemented the Complaints Management System and Legal and Policy modules. Both modules were installed and configured in the Integrated Financial Management System (IFMS) National Hub in DMM, as well as SHAHAR's 14 Citizen Service Centers located at current or former partner municipalities. Through the Complaints Management System, citizens' complaints are recorded and processed, and monitored and tracked for resolution. This system will help DMM have oversight and awareness of general issues being faced at municipalities across the country and allow them to monitor their resolution and make sure the complaints are addressed. It also generates computerized reports to municipal authorities and DMM.

The Legal and Policy module is mainly a document management system that allows the municipalities and DMM to have online access to legal documents and other important information. In addition, SHAHAR's Kabul IFMS Team delivered trainings and workshops for DMM officials, Mazar-e-Sharif and Hirat municipal staff on both modules, and provided materials such as user manuals, and complaints management guidelines for further implementation.

Now, the municipalities are able to properly and regularly manage citizens' complaints in a professional manner within a short period of time. Also, municipal administrations and DMM have access to the management reports to monitor performance and progress. Ms. Marjan Ghoryani, Hirat Deputy Mayor, stated: *"We will gain trust when citizens realize and see that their complaints are recorded and processed through a computerized system and that will lead the municipalities to achieve the goals, and it's a step toward transparency within DMM and provincial municipalities."*

Telling Our Story

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