

## Securing Professionalism through Merit Based Recruitment

### 1. Introduction:

The Management Capacity Program (MCP) being implemented by the Capacity Development Secretariat (CDS) of the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission (IARCSC) is funded by the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF). The MCP essentially supports the interim buy-in of critical management capacity of line ministries to complement donor provided technical advisory assistance. The purpose is to improve the utilization and cost effectiveness of donor resources and generate faster and better development results on the ground. This is necessarily an interim solution to address the multiple capacity challenges facing Afghanistan; competing demands from UN agencies and bilateral donors who continue to implement projects outside the government systems; and the ongoing distortions in the remuneration levels for skilled manpower.

MCP adopts an open and transparent recruitment process that provides fair and equal opportunity to all eligible and qualified applicants without any prejudice towards race, color, religion, age, disability, political affiliation, ethnicity, or gender. Recruitment processes for an MCP position are based on qualification, work related experience, and skill and abilities to perform the required tasks and duties of the position.

### 2. Recruitment Process under MCP



**Figure 2.**CDS' HR during an interview with a candidate

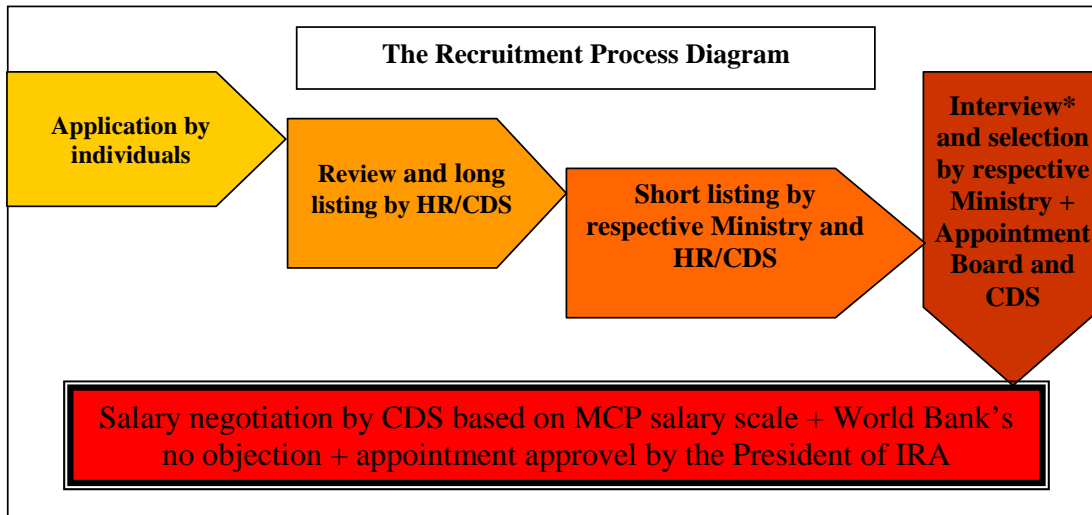
performance appraisal of the MCP appointees. The MCP recruitments are conducted by the HR department in close coordination with other departments of CDS and the user bodies / ministries at each stage of the recruitment process. The diagram below presents the recruitment process of MCP.



**Figure.1:** MCP Appointees in a gathering

The CDS's Programme Support Department undertakes the programming and outreach including public relations, advertising, networking and recruiting potential candidates, identifying the needs of government ministries and other user bodies, and supports them as necessary in preparing requests to which the CDS can respond.

The Human Resources Department of the CDS is responsible for the Human Resource functions of MCP. This involves being the lead department of CDS for the recruitment process along with contract management and

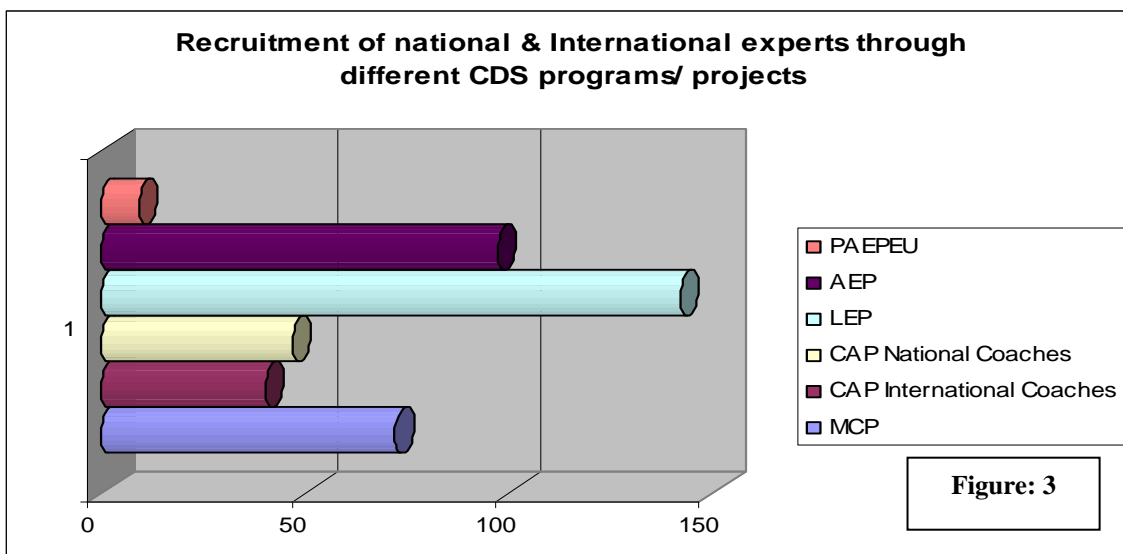


*\*In most cases the CDS invites technical experts from civil society, international agencies or other government agencies as observers to attend the interview sessions in order to advise on technical matters as well as ensure transparency of the process.*

For the candidates who are appointed under the CDS programs; their contracts, orientation and in-service-training records, action plans, time sheets, leave requests, periodic and final reports, performance appraisals, and other correspondence (both written and telephonic) relating to their engagement and/or the discharge of their service are managed and recorded.

### 3. Outputs of MCP services

Under different programs of CDS, national and international experts are recruited for the government sector. Figure 3 provides a record of national and international experts recruited for the government agencies under various programs of CDS. The Placement of Afghan Expatriate Professionals from European Countries (PAEPEU) recruited 9 professional Afghan expatriates. The Afghan Expatriate Program (AEP) recruited 97 experts, the Lateral Entry Program (LEP) placed 142 experts and the Capacity for Afghan Public Service (CAP) project recruited 40 international and 47 national coaches. The MCP<sup>1</sup>



is the latest program of CDS and aims to recruit about 240 to 300 Afghan professionals from internal and external markets to serve the Government of Afghanistan.

<sup>1</sup> This analysis is based on the latest data (August 2009) received from the MCP. The data and figures are frequently updated as the program evolves forward by recruiting more appointees.

**These programs support one common purpose of Capacity Development and change process in the government agencies for better service delivery.**

The MCP has recruited around 80 professional Afghan experts for about 20 Ministries / government agencies so far. MCP's services support the implementation of the government reform agenda and capacity enhancement of the government machinery to provide better and efficient services for Afghanistan. MCP experts are to be the change agents in their respective ministries / agencies.

Due to decades of war and brain drain, having qualified and educated experts in critical leadership and managerial positions of the government has been a challenge for the Government of Afghanistan. The MCP's response to this challenge has been to recruit and retain professionalism and make sure that the recruited experts are experienced, skilled and well educated to discharge the functions of assigned positions.

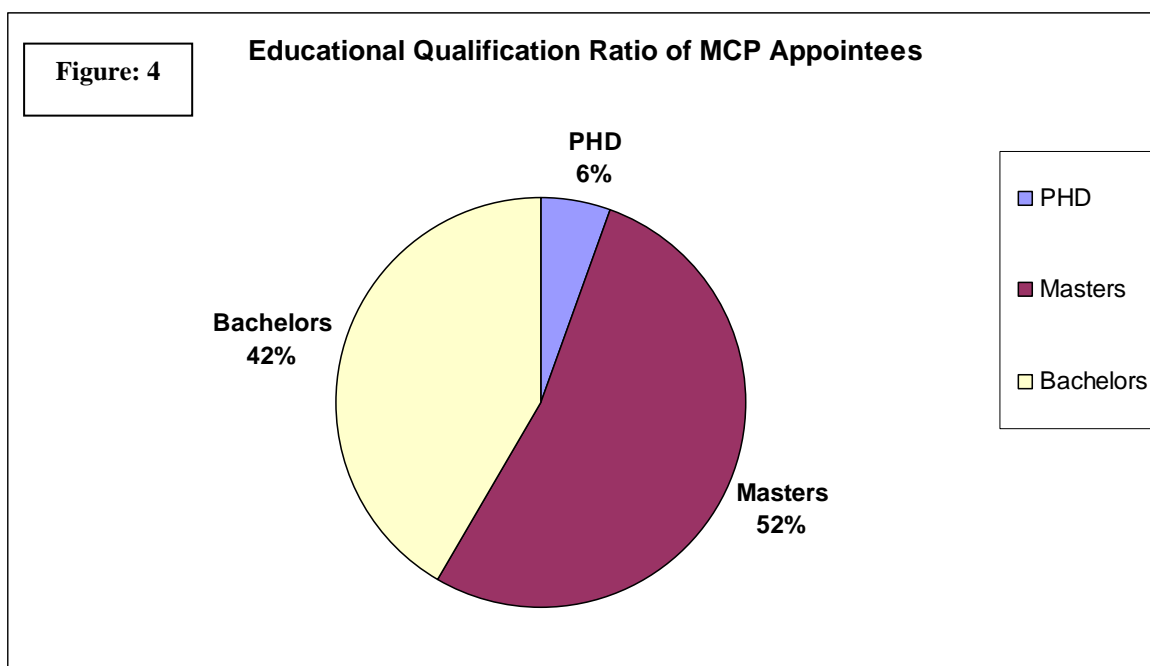


Figure-4 above illustrates the level of educational qualification of MCP appointees. It is seen that 6% of the total MCP appointees are PhD degree holders, 52% have Masters and 42% are Bachelor degree holders. These values show that the MCP appointees are well educated and in most cases possess educational qualification higher than the minimum qualification prescribed for the position. It is worth mentioning that majority of appointees (about 52%) are holding the Masters degree from reputable Universities of the world, though the number of university graduates in Afghanistan is the lowest in the world. The MCP therefore stands out in recruitment of qualified Afghan experts in comparison with any other organization engaged in implementation of such projects and programs in Afghanistan. The MCP has established the credibility of its recruitment process and offers high standards of services to ministries / agencies of Government of Afghanistan.

MCP promotes qualified leaders / managers by recruiting them from open market through a competitive recruitment system based on merit. The selection process and recruitment procedures are fully transparent. No preference is given for appointment from any specific organization based on favoritism, race, ethnicity, etc. The recruitment process is based on best international Human Resource Practices. The MCP has received applications from different people working in different organizations.

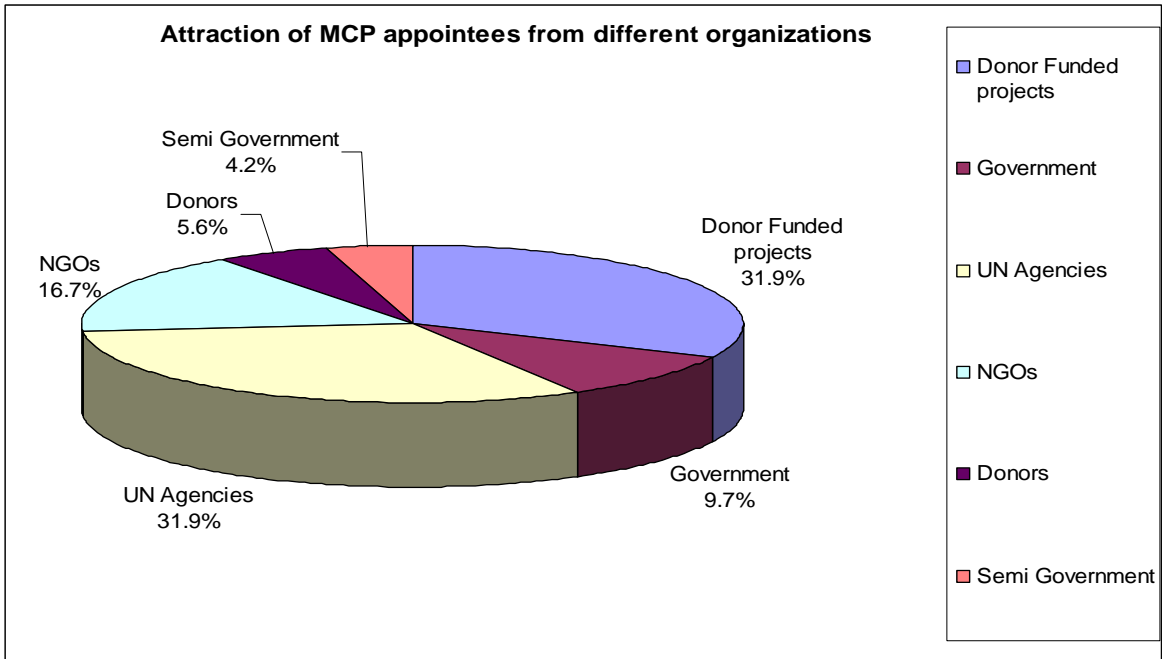
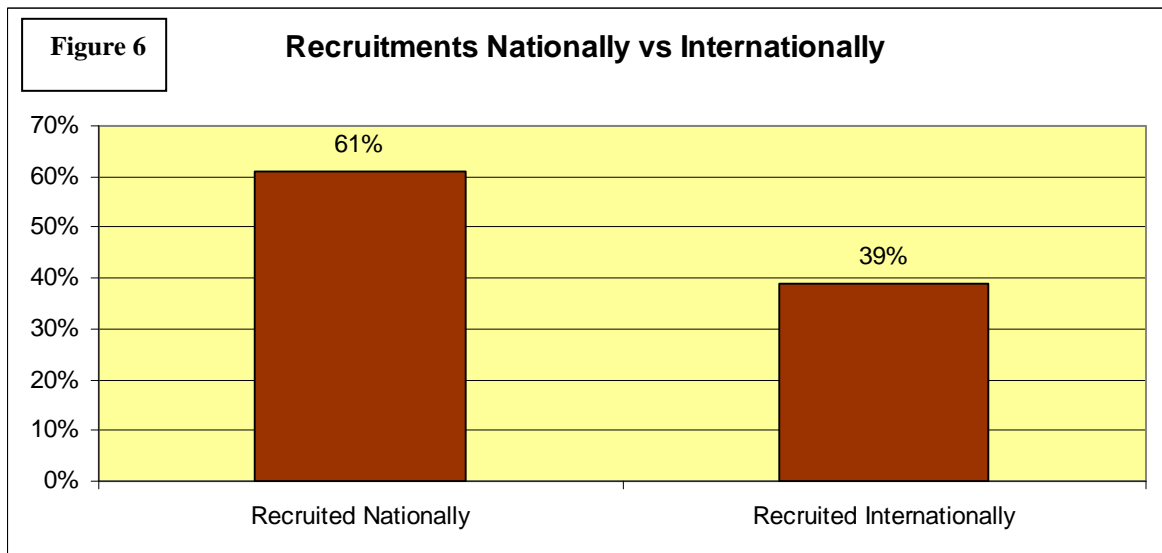
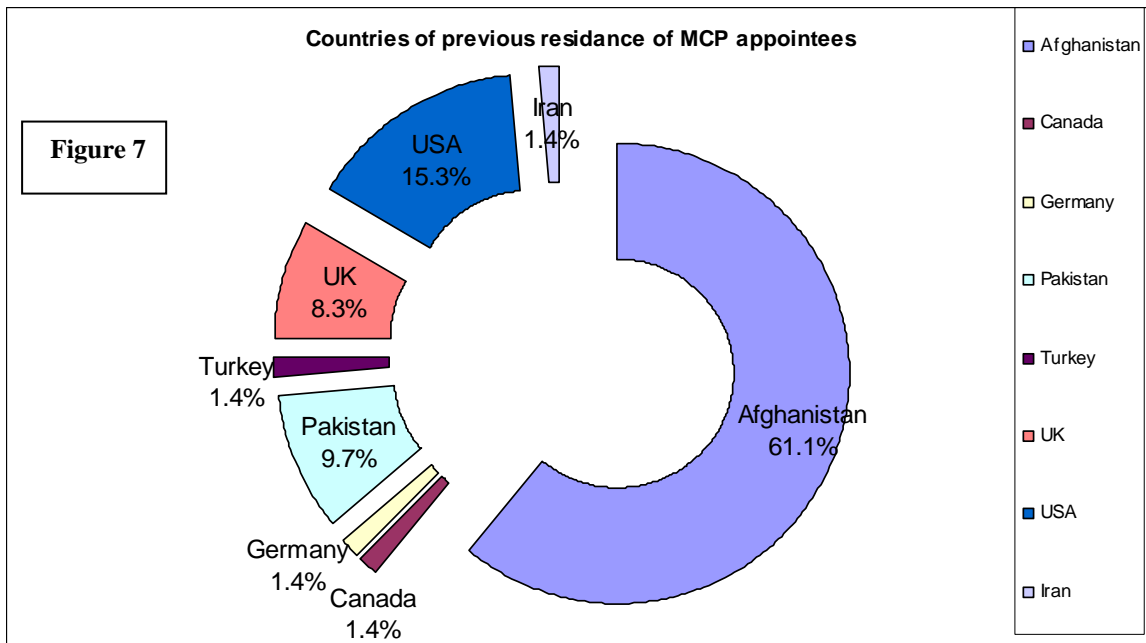


Figure 5, shows the proportion of MCP appointees attracted from various national and international agencies.

So far, around **1,900** applicants have applied for 150 positions advertised under MCP. The high number of applicants (an average of more than 13 for each position) shows the level of interest from applicants for MCP from within country and abroad. The high level of faith reposed by the applicants in MCP process which is reflected in such high number of applications, establishes the credibility of the open and transparent recruitment process adopted by CDS.

MCP has been successful in attracting Afghan experts from regional countries and overseas as well as from the national market. Figure-6 illustrates that about 39% of currently appointed MCP appointees have applied across the region and different countries of the world. At the same time experts from national market (UN agencies, private sector and international agencies) has also been attracted by the MCP. Figure-7 shows the success of the program in recruiting Afghan experts from different countries and local market.





Moreover, our survey result shows that the communication / outreach campaign by the program has played a significant role in disseminating the MCP opportunities and attracting qualified applicants. This has helped the CDS - MCP to select the best suitable candidate for the job.