



ACBAR Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief & Development

AUGUST 2015

ACBAR, ACBAR members and civil society advocacy towards the Senior Officials Meeting 2015

The Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM), the mechanism to monitor progress and review the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework (TMAF), presents an opportunity to demonstrate actual progress on the mutual commitments of donors and Government to supporting governance reforms. The meeting is a continuation of the high level meetings held every year to follow up on the new phase of partnership initiated at the Tokyo Conference (July 2012), based on principles of mutuality and accountability, through the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework (TMAF). During the Tokyo Conference in July 2012, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan presented a roadmap to achieve economic self-reliance by 2024. In addition, the Afghan government and the international community established commitments under the TMAF and pledged US\$16 billion (4 billion per year) in development assistance to Afghanistan through 2016.

This is the first high level meeting since the new National Unity Government of Afghanistan presented its reform plan at the London Conference on Afghanistan that was held on 4 December 2014. The purpose of the meeting is to review progress since the presentation of the Realizing Self-Reliance reform program, discuss key policy issues, and to jointly decide the way forward. During the SOM, the Afghan Government and the international community will reiterate mutual commitments in the form of a refreshed TMAF, which is now being called "Self-Reliance through Mutual Accountability Framework" (SMAF).

It is also an important time for those 'working on the ground' to highlight progress, challenges and recommendations for the SOM. NGOs in Afghanistan have a unique role in development and a long experience in delivering services to the population in health, education, agriculture, livelihoods and humanitarian needs in partnership with government. NGOs are also independent not-for-profit members of civil society and must hold the government accountable for its actions. As a lead coordinating body with 135 NGO members, ACBAR wrote an open letter to major donors and the Afghan Government with a number of specific recommendations to be considered during the SOM. These recommendations relate to four areas: aid effectiveness, governance, service delivery, and women's rights.

Specifically, the letter asks that in an effort to deliver services to its people, the Afghan Government should recognize the important role of NGOs and CSOs in the development of Afghanistan and an enabling environment for their work must be guaranteed. The space for humanitarian actors to operate in an independent, neutral and impartial manner must be respected and protected. NGOs have experience working in certain communities which are extremely difficult to access for government institutions. The continued work of NGOs is vital to ensure service delivery for these communities. Access to information with regards to the use of public resources, legislation and decision making should be improved so that NGOs and CSOs can effectively contribute to improving practices at national and sub-national levels. As part of this, NGOs and CSOs must be meaningfully consulted, and be able to actively participate in designing and providing inputs on the new National Priority Programmes, including the next round of the National Solidarity Programme.

As Afghanistan finds itself at the beginning of political and economic transition, it is more important than ever to have meaningful action by the international community and the Afghan government. The SOM should be used to ensure the SMAF is a serious and measurable framework, and includes a space for NGOs and CSOs to see effective services to the Afghan people. The open letter complements ACBAR's position papers written for the London Conference in December 2014. The open letter can be found at: <http://www.acbar.org/news/32/ACBAR's-Open-Letter-to-the-Senior-Officials-Meeting-in-Kabul-5th-September-2015.html>

Integrity Watch Afghanistan also produced policy briefs which relate to fighting illicit financial flows and corruption, enhancing public financial management and banking integrity, ensuring budget transparency, accountability and public participation, providing broader public access to information, ensuring proper exploitation of the country's abundant extractive resources, and insuring the rule of law in Afghanistan. These commitments should be accompanied with the implementation of new policies and mechanisms to ensure government transparency, accountability and citizens' participation in government decisions. Integrity Watch also calls upon Afghanistan's international donors to provide additional technical support and the necessary resources to allow the Government to improve its capacity for implementation of its commitments and to build a sustainable and self-reliant economy. More information can be found at: <http://www.acbar.org/files/downloads/Policy%20Brief%20-%20Taking%20.pdf>

The Research Institute for Women Peace & Security (RIWPS) also produced a briefing paper for the SOM. RIWPS is one of the Afghan partner organisations of the Bayan programme, sponsored by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and jointly coordinated by Cordaid, Gender Concerns and Oxfam Novib. The paper, "*The Stalled Agenda of Inclusive Security and Inclusive Peace Building in Afghanistan*" highlights the importance of women police and inclusive peace building. It explores structural and societal challenges which act as a barrier to inclusion and provides a number of specific recommendations for the inclusion of women in Afghan peace processes. For more information please visit: http://www.acbar.org/files/downloads/SOM_Briefing_Paper_RIWPS_Final.pdf

The Civil Society Joint Working group (CSJWG) also produced a briefing paper for the SOM, inclusive of, analysis benchmarks, monitoring and observation and recommendations. Afghan civil society had a 3 minute speaking slot during the SOM. Aziz Rafiee (male) and Zarqa Yaftali (female) were both Ayenda Conference participants and have been elected by the CSJWG to speak at the SOM.

"Secure Access in Volatile Environments" Research Study

In August 2015, ACBAR hosted a mini workshop in the ACBAR office, organised by Humanitarian Outcomes and the Global Public Policy Institute who are undertaking a three-year research programme in the world's most challenging operational contexts. The aim of the study known as Secure Access in Volatile Environments (SAVE) is to contribute to solutions for providing effective and accountable humanitarian action amidst high levels of insecurity.

The goal of the meeting was to engage and brief national NGOs on the findings of SAVE, regarding patterns of access and insecurity in Afghanistan, and to engage in a discussion on 'what works' for enabling access and aid quality. The results from the meeting will help identify issues and gaps for the SAVE programme to pursue in the final phases. As an overall goal, the study focuses on practical solutions for maintaining effective humanitarian response in areas of high levels of insecurity. This research includes three main components namely access, quality, and accountability and learnings.

Preliminary findings for Afghanistan

Looking at the situation of insecurity for humanitarian operations, Afghanistan has the highest number of major attacks on aid workers each year, including killings, kidnappings, or attacks that cause serious injury. The attack rate in Afghanistan is higher than all other countries except Somalia and Syria. Kidnapping (mostly short duration, non-lethal) is the most common form of significant security incident against aid workers, and as per the consensus of humanitarian community southeast and southwest regions are the most insecure and have the highest needs.

Humanitarian presence and coverage

Humanitarian organizational presence in the country has been fairly stable since 2006, but the configuration has changed: decreased in contested areas, and concentrated in more stable regions.

Highest humanitarian coverage (aid presence/people in need) in relation to humanitarian need is in the North East changes in presence due to funding/donor pressure: Reduced funding has led to decreased presence in Central Highlands. However, 'pull funding' for the South has had less effect.

The perception of interviewees was that there was a decrease in humanitarian aid, and an increase of insecurity and corruption. Most of interviewees said that food aid and clean water were their urgent needs. Insecurity and corruption were indicated as the main barriers while significant number of respondents talked on lack of enough aid.

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Activities and achievements from ACBAR Members

Aga Khan Health Service Afghanistan

The Aga Khan Health Service, Afghanistan was established in 2003 as part of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) to provide primary health care and curative medical care to the population as well as technical assistance in health service delivery to the Government. AKHS, is an active partner of the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in the implementation of the Basic Package of Health Services and the Essential Package of Hospital Services. Through its activities, AKHS, provides basic health and hospital services to the population of more than 1.6 M people in some of Afghanistan's most remote and inaccessible provinces of Badakhshan, Baghlan, and Bamyan. AKHS, provides services through 35 basic and comprehensive health centres, 32 sub-centres, two prison health clinics, and over 477 health posts. It also manages two district hospitals and two provincial hospitals in Faizabad and Bamyan.

AKHS, is also working with the Afghan government to develop a pool of qualified professionals in all areas of health care by offering continuous education for doctors, nurses and administrators, as well as technical advice and support on health policy, nursing standards and midwifery education.

Bamyan Provincial Hospital

Bamyan Provincial Hospital (BPH) is located 4 km from the centre of Bamyan Town in a relatively rural setting providing specialized medical cover to approximately 670,000 people which includes the population served from neighboring provinces. The hospital is the only referral facility in the central highlands of Afghanistan. The hospital has been managed by AKHS, A through a public-private partnership with the Government of Afghanistan since 2004. With the construction of new wards, and high quality diagnostic and laboratory services, the hospital has been upgraded from a district to a provincial hospital, and bed strength has been in

creased from 35 to 100 beds. BPH offers 24/7 emergency care and in 2012, there were more than 84,000 outpatient visits and 10,000 inpatient admissions. It provides modern medical and surgical techniques and offers in-patient services in paediatrics, medicine, surgery, therapeutic feeding, obstetrics and gynecology. Due to the growing volumes and the restricted capacity of enhancing further bed capacity, a new Bamyan Provincial Hospital (BPH) is being built at Mullah Ghulam, Bamyan. The new building, which is a project of the Aga Khan Health Services.

Aga Khan Health Service Afghanistan

Supported by the Government of Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade, and development (DFATD), the Aga Khan Health Services is expected to be completed by March 2015. The BPH will offer an additional 86 beds for pediatric, obstetric and gynecologic care in a region where women's access to healthcare has been severely limited. The new BPH is being constructed by the Aga Khan Planning and Building Services on 6.4 acres of land allocated by the Bamyan Municipality at the Mullah Ghulam site. The new Bamyan Provincial Hospital will be managed by AKHS.



Photo from AKHS Projects

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tashabos Education Organization (TEO)

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The Tashabos Education Organization (TEO) is a youth focused organization that promotes responsible citizenship and leadership, democratic governance and lessons in market economy, and facilitates networking to high school students in Grades 10, 11 and 12 in Kabul, Nangarhar, Parwan and Bamyán Provinces. TEO is a Kabul-based indigenous, nonprofit, nongovernmental organization registered with the Ministry of Economy since December 2010 and grew out of a Center for International Private Enterprises (CIPE) project. With funding support from National Endowment for Democracy (NED), TEO teaches youth the skills to become entrepreneurs through educational activities, including training on market based economies, fighting poverty and corruption, and the promotion of good governance and ethical business practices.

The TEO's mission is to advance the spread of democratic principles and sustainable development through the education of our youth.

Tashabos Program

TEO teaches youth the skills necessary to become entrepreneurs through educational activities, including training on market based economies, fighting poverty and corruption, and the promotion of good governance and ethical business practices. CIPE developed this curriculum to provide students education on these topics before graduation and implemented the program in 2004. TEO took over implementation in May 2014. The Tashabos program currently has 43 participating high schools with over 40,000 students learning the curriculum, and includes schools for both girls and boys. There are 17 schools for boys and 26 for girls.

The program works with 60 teachers who teach the Tashabos curriculum in their schools during the educational year.

At the beginning of the school year, students are encouraged to develop their own business by writing a business proposal. All the participating schools hold periodic Tashabos product exhibitions and have an exhibition room to bring together, exhibit, and sell sample products produced by the students. Near the end of the school year students compete within their school for the best proposals. The students with the best proposals then progress to a national competition that chooses the top three.

The primary objective of Tashabos is to instill in Afghan youth an awareness of the values of entrepreneurship, market economics, and democracy.

THE TASHABOS RESULTS FRAMEWORK

The Tashabos Results' Framework covers three activities:

1. Teaching the Tashabos curriculum in the 43 high schools by the Tashabos teachers.
2. School exhibitions of the products produced by the Tashabos students.
3. The Tashabos student business proposal writing competitions, held first in each school, then among the schools, culminating with the final event in Kabul.



Photos from Tahabos Project