



PANORAMA OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS IN AFGHANISTAN

FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF COORDINATION



TAWANMANDI
Strengthening Civil Society
in Afghanistan



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اداره هماهنگی کمکهای بشری و انکشافی برای افغانها دافغانانو لپاره د بشری او پرمختیایی مرستو د همفبرې
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ACRONYMS

AACN: Afghan Anti-Corruption Network	HRRAC: Human Rights Research and Advocacy Consortium
AAWU: All Afghan Women Union	IC: International Community
ACBAR: Afghanistan Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief and Development	IWA: Integrity Watch Afghanistan
ACFID: Australian Council For International Development	JAC: Joint Advocacy Committee
ACSFo: Afghan Civil Society Forum	JVC: Japan International Volunteer Center
AFCAC: Afghan Coalition Against Corruption	LSE: London School for Economic
AHO: Alliance of Health Organizations	MACCA: Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan
AKDN: Aga Khan Development Network	MoE: Ministry of Economy
AKF: Aga Khan Foundation	Mol: Ministry of Interior
ANCB: Afghan NGOs Coordination Bureau	Moj: Ministry of Justice
ANJU: Afghanistan National Journalist's Union	MoWA: Ministry of Women Affairs
AOAD: Accessibility Organization for Afghan Disabled	NCA: Norwegian Church Aid
AWN: Afghan Women Network	NGO: Non-Governmental Organization (ANGO: Afghan NGO and INGO: International NGO)
BAAG: British and Irish Agencies Afghanistan	NUAWE: National Union of Afghan Workers and Employees
CBO: Community Based Organization	OCHA: Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA: United Nations OCHA)
CCS: Center for Civil Society (CCS)	OHRA: Organization of Harm reduction in Afghanistan
CoAR: Coordination of Afghan Relief	PWJ: Peace with Japan
CPI: Counterpart International	RI: Relief International
CS: Civil Society (ACS: Afghan CS)	RRAA: Rural Rehabilitation Association for Afghanistan
CSAC: Civil Society Advisory Committee	SWABAC: Southern and Western Afghanistan and Balochistan Association for Coordination
CSCC: Civil Society Coordination Center	THRA: Training Human Rights Association for Afghan Women
CSDC: Civil Society Development Center	TJCG: Transitional Justice Coordination Group
CSHRN: Civil Society and Human Rights Network	TLO: The Liaison Office
CSJWG: Civil Society Join Working Group	UAY: Union of Afghanistan Youth
CSO: Civil Society Organization (ACSO: Afghan CSO)	UNDP: United Nations Development Programme
DFID: Department for International Development UK	USAID: United States Agency for International Development
ECHO: European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department	VENRO: Verband Entwicklungspolitik Deutscher Nichtregierungsorganisationen
ENNA: European Network of NGO's in Afghanistan	WCLRF: Women and Children Legal Research Foundation
EPD: Equality For Peace and Democracy	WPPC: Women Political Participation Committee
FCCS: Afghan Foundation for Culture and Civil Society	
GIRoA: Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan	
HAWCA: Humanitarian Assistance for the Women and the Children of Afghanistan	
HBS: Henrich Böll Stiftung	
HRFO: Human Rights Focus Organization	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Over the past decade and after the fall of Taliban in 2001, Afghanistan has received considerable support from the international community, first military but also financial contributions to rebuild the country and assist Afghan people in terms of humanitarian and development needs. Technical and monetary assistance have been given to NGOs and CSOs to fulfill those needs and also to strengthen and promote civil society (CS) actors in the country. 2014 is marked under the banner of transition, on political, security and economic levels. This specific framework provides the perfect opportunity to undertake the proposed study to identify the current capacity and challenges of CSO actors and coordination, and to put forth some perspective and prospective for civil society in transition. As a first step to a broader panorama of CSOs in the Afghan capital, this research focuses on current coordination and network entities from the standpoint of the Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief and Development (ACBAR). The main research questions this research addresses are what CSOs and umbrella organizations want and expect from different key players Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA), International Community (IC), and other CSO actors, and how ACBAR can support them. The study is based on qualitative research, taking an inductive approach to achieve the main research objectives, especially exploring the scope of work and capacity of coordination organizations and analyzing the current and potential comprehension of ACBAR and its objectives by its members and other CSO actors. Fieldwork was conducted in Kabul in spring 2014 utilizing questionnaires and interviews as well as via Skype to particular coordination or network organizations that comprise organizations working in Afghanistan. Questionnaires were shared with umbrella organizations and interviews were conducted, also to several CS activists and actors, as well as experts and members or representatives of donors and IC as well as GIRoA. ACBAR staff and ACBAR members also took

part to the study, by questionnaire, individual interviews, and a focus group discussion.

After a short introduction and history of CS in Afghanistan, this report tackles the evolution of CSOs in Afghanistan in the past decade. Further analysis leads to addressing the need for a definition or at least criteria of CSOs, and raising awareness among CSO and non-CSO actors in the country. The first main criterion is formal—the organization being not-for-profit; the second one is more substantial—the organization having the function of working for the interests of Afghan citizens. A civil society organization is defined in this report as a not-for-profit organization working around shared values and objectives to improve the life of the Afghan people through a variety of potential actions, from providing basic services to advocacy, socio-economic and cultural activities. CSOs can be different types of organizations, groups, formal or informal, Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs), unions, Community Based or Community Organisations (CBOs), or other types of organizations. A NGO is a specific type of CSO, subject to particular regulations and defined as a non-political not-for-profit organization. NGOs are mostly working in Afghanistan in the humanitarian and development sector with different levels of operation and orientation. A CBO operates at the local level and within a single local community. It can also have several activities, can be formal or informal, and can act as a service provider. It might also serve as a decision making group and be more aligned with socio-political activities. Per the selected focus on coordination, this report highlights existing coordinating bodies and umbrella organizations. An umbrella organization is an overarching organization, including member organizations, which works to coordinate activities in a single field or more generally.

In addition to these definitions, the study highlights the important variety of CSOs and the multiplicity of status, which can be an obstacle to the understanding

and functioning of CSOs, both from an internal and external perspective. The third part of the report further investigates coordination, initiatives and umbrella organizations, starting with an analysis of the selected theoretical framework of coordination and then an examination of the main donors, UN and GIRoA coordination mechanisms. The findings reveal that even if there are some ad hoc coordination mechanisms, they are absolutely not systematic and there is a lack of coordination and support of coordination bodies from both IC and GIRoA. The core of the study considers each umbrella organization and their intrinsic and extrinsic capacity and interactions. It shows that there are multiple existing coordinating bodies, general, sectorial, and international networks supporting the coordination of CSOs, mostly NGOs in Afghanistan. However, there is a gap, especially in terms of relations between them and meta-coordination. The informal Civil Society Joint Working Group (CSJWG) is then observed through the lens of interactions, resources and potential role in the future. CSJWG is in fact central in the network of coordination organizations in Afghanistan and could be a key player in the future.

Exploring the coordination networks and umbrella organizations in their own structure but also in relation with other actors provides perspective on the challenges of CSOs, both internal and external. Internally, the multiplicity of actors makes communication and coordination among those umbrella organizations more complex but also more imperative to avoid duplication. A lack of resources, as well as the shrinking of funding is another obstacle to their daily work. The analysis of the relations between CSO actors and the heads of networks also manifests a negative source of competition that impedes effective coordination between umbrella or network organizations. Externally, CSOs and coordinating bodies also face major challenges in their relations with different key players, including IC, GIRoA, media, and the private sector. Considering those challenges, the report focuses then on ACBAR's role and answers if and how one of the main Afghan umbrella organizations could play a greater role in coordination of CSO networks in the country. The findings demonstrate how and why ACBAR is still inaccurately perceived as an international organization, and shows the coordination activities of ACBAR while highlighting potential improvements, within ACBAR members and among other CS umbrella organizations. The key findings serve to inform ACBAR to feed its capacity development plan and to support

the formation and continuation of strong partnerships. The researcher makes recommendations to key stakeholders, which will be shared and disseminated with the report to CSOs, donors, national institutions, policymakers, development experts, and academics to improve both perceptions of and practices in Afghan civil society. Main recommendations are presented below.

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

TO CSOs and umbrella organizations

- Umbrella organizations and more generally CSOs must continue their progress in terms of more interactions and cooperation with each other. Afghan CSO actors should be led by the common good and interests of Afghan citizens. Coordination has to be more systemic, effective and consistent.¹
- Sectorial and regional coordination has to be developed. CSOs get together and join forces when they have a mutual goal and common interests and this need to be done in a more systematic way. There has to be continuous mapping of CSOs in Kabul and at the regional level and exchange of information between those initiatives, especially between the current initiatives.²
- A definition of CSO, or at least criteria for one, which has to consider the non-for profit activity and the function and purpose of the organization's activities to serve the welfare, defend and promote the rights of Afghan citizens, should be determined, shared and agreed among CS actors.
- CSOs, in particular coordination bodies need to modernize their data collection and information sharing system. Often data are collected neither methodically nor consistently which weakens the information system and sharing among CSOs. Data bases must be developed systematically and made public and available not only for the sake of CSOs but also for all players on the Afghan scene.
- CSOs must work to make their efforts visible by the public, which involves proper marketing techniques, in order to show their capabilities and good-will for trust building among the communities.

¹ See for further details, recommendations as the end of the report.

² Especially currently with UNAMA, EU, ICNL as well as Aga Khan Foundation.

TO Afghan government and institutions

- GIRoA and institutions have to develop awareness programs for government officials to highlight the importance and considerable role of CS in Afghanistan. The newly elected President and its government, as well as members of Parliament (MPs) or any other civil servant should consider CSO actors as a partner and privileged interlocutor for the Afghan public.
- A working group should be created with the new government, especially with MoE and MoJ, with government representatives, MPs, international advisors, as well as CSO actors to revise and perfect the legal framework together and to create a positive enabling environment for CSOs to work effectively in Afghanistan. The regulations vis-à-vis CSOs (Law on Association 2013), and NGOs (Law on NGOs 2005) should be reconciled or at least harmonized, especially in terms of registration, funding sources as well as monitoring by and reporting to the government.
- GIRoA and public institutions should support and facilitate coordination with CSO actors. The relationship between those players should not be limited to registration and reporting, or at best ad hoc phone calls and meetings. In each Ministry, state institutions, Parliament... there is a need to establish a specific department in charge of relations with CS actors, which can share data, information and contribute to the coordination of activities with CSOs.
- The new Government of Afghanistan has to also recognize CSOs as a major player for the future of the country. In cooperation with its new government and other key institutions, Parliament, Judiciary... the President must ensure the freedom of expression and association in Afghanistan, to guarantee that CSO actors can express themselves freely, individually or collectively and to ascertain that there won't be any condemnation or threat, presently or in the future, against such expression.

TO International and donors community

- CSO actors should be considered as great advisors with a rich knowledge of and experience in Afghanistan. Therefore the IC and donor agencies should engage in more consultation with them.
- As key players in the humanitarian and development

sectors, donors and IC actors must coordinate their actions and programs to support CSOs, during all phases of their programs and projects. This should occur in both the implementation phases, to avoid duplication, but also in the planning phase to formulate a common long term strategy of strengthening CSOs in Afghanistan. Regulation of coordination initiatives by sector as a means for progress in this direction is further necessary.

- Competition over resources limits coordination. Therefore donors should adopt a constructive approach to funding and allocation of resources in order to reduce resentment and rivalry between CSOs, and to encourage them to work together.
- IC and donors must support more capacity development of Afghan CSOs, especially through umbrella organizations. It should include training of trainers, by international and national staff and be both high-level training on certain topics, especially advocacy, as well as practical required disciplines like management, finance, HR, IT, etc...

TO Media and journalists

- The media, radio, TV, and national and international press have to encourage and implement new partnerships with CSOs and coordination organizations to share their achievements and extend cooperation between both actors.

TO Private sector and companies

- The private sector and CSOs have to connect with each other more. Both sides have to realize that they have common interests and overcome the general mistrust which still dominates their interaction.

TO Academic world and researchers

- More in-depth research, in terms of scope and resources need to be conducted on coordination and umbrella organizations, not only in Kabul but also in the provinces. Donors should support a long-term research project to map and study networks and coordination in each region of Afghanistan.

TO Afghan citizens

- Citizens of Afghanistan have to realize that CSOs is an important interlocutor and unconditional party to the future of the country and that they are working to defend and promote citizens' right and interests.

1. INTRODUCTION



“Coordination is a fantastic word but it is a difficult task. It is fantastic because everybody loves it—even the donor, even the politicians. It is a difficult task because there is a different definition; what is coordination among different stakeholders. Stakeholders are too much involved in their own politics and own individual internal work rather than from outside environment. The need for coordination in Afghanistan is not about leading CS, it is about to coordinating CS, which means CS in Afghanistan cannot be led. No one has the right to lead the CS but to coordinate.”

–A. Rafiee, Afghan Civil Society Forum, (ACSFo),

1.1 TERMS OF REFERENCE

ACBAR

The Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief and Development (ACBAR) is the oldest and the main independent coordinating body of Afghan and International Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO, currently 51 ANGO and 77 INGO)³. ACBAR was created in 1988 in Pakistan with its members, the International community and the Afghan Government, to serve four major purposes. First, ACBAR assists and facilitates the work of its members in order to efficiently and effectively address humanitarian and development needs in Afghanistan. Globally, ACBAR advocates for and represents the interests of the NGO sector in Afghanistan on behalf of its members. As a coordinating body, ACBAR also promotes high ethical and professional standards among the NGO community. Lastly, ACBAR contributes to the mobilization and strengthening of the role of civil society in Afghanistan.

³ According to the last updated contact list, July 2014. New members are accepting by ACBAR General Assembly.

TAWANMANDI

Tawanmandi, the Nordic+ programme working to strengthen Civil Society Organization (CSOs) in Afghanistan, and especially their advocacy capacity in five key areas: access to justice, anti-corruption, human rights, media, peace building and conflict resolution. Launched by a consortium of donors, Tawanmandi is managed by the British Council and provides grant funding and capacity development support to Afghan CSO as well as core funding for its core partners. As the main umbrella organization coordinating Afghan and International NGOs, ACBAR was chosen to become one of Tawanmandi’s Cross-Sector Sector-Based Core Partners (SBCP). SBCPs are key drivers to strengthen sector-based and issue-based advocacy and to encourage improved networking and greater collaboration among CSOs.

ACBAR has a Cross Sector SBCP received funding from Tawanmandi to support Afghan CSO capacity and also to promote their voice, on the regional, national and international level. In order to foster

CSO expression, ACBAR orders a report to evaluate capacity, challenges and functioning of CSO in Afghanistan, especially from the angle of coordination and networking.

1.2 EVOLUTION AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Civil society, or “Jamea Madani” in Dari is a complex concept, especially when it comes to defining it. Civil society is an “à la mode” term in the development world. Used and misused by academics, policy makers, development workers, the concept has neither a commonly agreed⁴ nor a practical definition.⁵ According to the Oxford Dictionary, civil society can be considered “a community of citizens linked by common interests and collective activity.”⁶ Civil society is also often described as an actor or sector, or by its form or functions. Merkel and Lauth stressed that “the civil society is the arena of voluntary, uncoerced collective actions around shared interests, purposes and values” and that “civil society is not a sector on its own but the space between societal actors.”⁷ According to C. Spurk, civil society can also be analyzed as a concept fulfilling seven main functions, respectively, “protection of citizens against attacks of despotism by the state or other institutions, monitoring for accountability, advocacy and public communication, socialization through the formation and practice of democratic attitudes among citizens, community building (...), intermediation and facilitation between citizens and the state, service delivery.”⁸

Historically, the origin of the concept can be traced to Cicero and Greek philosophy. The concept of civil society as it is currently understood emerged later in

the western context, particularly in Europe, in the 17th and 18th centuries with classical political philosophy. Locke, Montesquieu, Hobbes, Paine, Tocqueville, and Hegel have been the founders of the concept, dividing the state powers and highlighting that civil society is separate from the state and political society. Since then, there have been further theoretical developments and practical usages of the concept in diverse geographical and historical contexts including America⁹, Africa¹⁰, Eastern Europe¹¹, and even a “Global Civil Society.”¹²

Regarding Afghanistan and Muslim countries, some scholars have discussed the relevance of the concept in the Islamic world. Serif Mardin asserts that “civil society is a dream and an aspiration that is purely western” and cannot explain the social mechanisms of Islamic countries.¹³ On the opposite end of the spectrum, in “Civil Society in the Muslim World” A.B Sajoo argues against the theory of western exceptionalism, demonstrating “substantial evidence of civic institutions and cultural elements in Islamic countries.”¹⁴ As E. Winter analyses, quoting Arkoun from the same publication, civil society is about “citizens taking control of their own destinies, pluralist and interacting between multiple communities. It is necessary to do mapping, and not just of the formal institutions, in order to understand power, wealth and emancipation of the human condition.”¹⁵

Even before 2001,¹⁶ after the fall of Taliban and the arrival of the foreign military coalition in the country, the expression was used in the Afghan context, but more so to refer to the citizens and specific actors in civil society. For example, Amnesty International

4 T. Paffenholz, C. Spurk, Civil Society, civic engagement and peace building, Social Development Papers, conflict prevention and reconstruction, WB, Papers n°36, Oct. 2006, p. 2. Available at: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INT/CPR/Resources/WP36_web.pdf, consulted on the 15th of July 2014.

5 E. Winter, Civil Society development in Afghanistan, June 2010, p. 20. Available at: http://www.lse.ac.uk/internationalDevelopment/research/NGPA/publications/winter_afghanistan_report_final.pdf, consulted on the 15th of July 2014.

6 Available at: <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/civil-society?q=civil+society> consulted the 15th of July 2014.

7 W. Merkel and H Lauth, “Systemwechsel und Zivilgesellschaft. Welche Zivilgesellschaft braucht die Demokratie?”, *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, 6 (7), p. 3. Quoted by T. Paffenholz, C. Spurk, Civil Society, op. cit., p.2.

8 C. Spurk, “Understanding Civil Society”, with T. Paffenholz, “A Comprehensive Analytical Framework”, in *Civil Society and Peacebuilding: A critical Assessment*, ed. Boulder, CO, 2010, p. 67. Quoted in V. van den Boogaard, *Building Afghan Society “from the outside”*, International Affairs Review, Volume XX, Number 2, Fall 2011, p. 30.

9 For example R.D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The collapse and Revival of American Community*, NY, Simon and Schuster, 2000.

10 For example K. Appiagyei-Atua, *Civil Society, Human Rights and Development in Africa: A critical Analysis*, *Peace Studies Journal*, UK, Dec 2006.

11 W. Merkel, *Systemtransformation, Eine Einführung in die Theorie und die Empirie der Transformationsforschung*, Opladen, 1999.

12 M. Klador, *Global civil society, an answer to war*, Polity Press, 2003.

13 S. Mardin, *Civil Society and Islam*, in J.A Hall (ed) *Civil Society, Theory, History, Comparison*, Cambridge, 1995. Also E. Gellner, quoted by G. Battiston, *The Afghan Civil Society: a look from within*, Afgana, GC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Italy, 2007. Available at: http://intersos.org/sites/default/files/images/ricerca_la_societa_civile_afghana_versione_inglese.pdf, consulted on the 16th July 2014.

14 A.B. Sanjoo, *Civil Society in the Muslim World: Contemporary Perspectives*, London, 2002, Tauris Publisher quoted by E. Winter, op. cit, p. 16.

15 Ibid.

16 On history of Afghan CS, for example J. Howell and J. Lind, *Civil Society with Guns is Not Civil Society: Aid Security and Civil Society in Afghanistan*, Non Governmental Public Action Working Group Paper Series 24, London, LSE 2008, p. 8 available at: http://www.lse.ac.uk/internationalDevelopment/research/GWOT/pdf/WP24_Afghanistan_HowellLind_Web.pdf consulted on the 16th July 2014.

wrote an appeal entitled Human rights defenders in Afghanistan: civil society destroyed, stressing the devastating impacts of decades of conflict.¹⁷ After 2001, more and more actors – academics, Afghan activists, the international community, and development experts – referred to the concept. Indeed, articles on Afghan civil society flourished, including theoretical, general, and abstract studies,¹⁸ as well as inquiries with more focus on singular issues or concrete findings.¹⁹ For a long time it has been considered, especially by donors, that “it remains the burden of civil societies in different political contexts to better define their positions and develop more coherent strategies for organizing and articulating their views in public debates and policy making processes.”²⁰ During the first Bonn conference in 2001, voices of the development world denounced the lack of Afghan civil society players at the international level to participate to the discussion on the future of Afghanistan.²¹

Then, donors started to fund projects to support civil society organizations, mostly in terms of capacity development. For example, Initiative to Promote the Afghan Civil Society (IPACS) was provided with support from US funding given to support Afghan CSOs through Counterpart International.²²

CSOs then mushroomed in Afghanistan, with two major misconceptions from the beginning. First, most people since 2001 combined and often confused NGOs with CSOs.²³ While NGOs are part of CS, CSOs

are broader, and there are many different kinds of organizations that also constitute civil society, such as unions and associations. Major donors largely work with NGOs they are used to working with, registered with Ministry of Economy (MoE), and which are more structured and subject to different requirements than other types of associations or unions registered with other Ministries.²⁴ As knowledge and practice of civil society has improved, the distinction between these two types of organizations has become more apparent among Afghan and international actors. Nora Malikin, who works for InterAction, the largest alliance of US-based organizations, clearly distinguished between Afghan CSOs and Afghan NGOs from both a practical and legal perspective.²⁵

The second misconception is about the inclusion of traditional structures in the modern concept of civil society. As Elizabeth Winter, one of the experts on CS in Afghanistan wrote in 2010 “a dichotomy had been acknowledged between those civil society activists who believed that traditional structures and mechanisms could be built upon to take Afghan society forward and those who believed that they represent the past.”²⁶ She adds later in the report, a small portion of the population, representing a little part of urban educated elites, feel that “only democratic values and institutions, rather than traditional ones, should be promulgated in order to progress and to preserve the rights of individuals and minorities.”²⁷ While almost all internationally funded projects were not interacting with traditional structures (or at least reluctant to do so) back then,²⁸ nowadays most of the key national and international players in both the humanitarian and development sectors are engaged with these groups, and are even willing to engage more in the future.²⁹ There is a common understanding that traditional structures such as community councils, shuras, religious networks, elders, the disabled, women’s groups, youth groups, or any kind of community based organizations (CBOs), are part of civil society.³⁰

the 17th of July 2014.

²⁴ Interview F. Otten, German Embassy, Kabul, 1st of June 2014.

²⁵ Interview on skype, on the 19th June 2014

²⁶ E. Winter, op. cit, p. 11.

²⁷ Ibid, p. 38, 39.

²⁸ Ibid, p. 58.

²⁹ Interview F. Otten, German Embassy Kabul, op. cit, Interview V. Thiollet, French Embassy, Kabul, 20th May 2014, Interview O. Rouselle, ECHO, Kabul, 1st of June 2014, and Interview L. Docherty, DFID, Kabul, 5th June 2014.

³⁰ For more in depth analysis on the question, cf K. Borchgrevink; K. Berg Harpviken, “Afghanistan: Civil Society Between Modernity and Tradition”, in T. Paffenholz, Civil Society and Peacebuilding: A Critical Assessment, L. Rienner, 2010. Or K. Berg Harpviken, A. Strand and K. Ask,

¹⁷ Available at:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/en/library/asset/ASA11/012/1999/en/9d4b9e45-e035-11d0-865a-d728958ca30a/asa110121999en.pdf>, consulted on the 16th of July 2014. p. 1 “Two decades of conflict, repression and neglect have had a devastating effect on civil society in Afghanistan. With the virtual collapse of the educational system there are now several generations of Afghans who have received little or no education at all. War and repression have deprived the country of peaceful political activity and intellectual pursuits that are the very foundation of civil and institutional life. Most Afghan politicians, professionals or those engaged in literary and artistic activities have either been killed, have left the country or have died of old age while press and media activity has been reduced to its barest minimum. The negative impact of this impoverishment on the economic and social development of the country will be felt for decades to come.” And AI addresses recommendations to the Taliban and the Pakistani authorities.

¹⁸ For example K.B. Harpviken, A. Karin and A. Strand, Afghanistan and Civil Society, CMI/Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2002.

¹⁹ For example K. Borchgrevink, K. Berg Harpviken, Afghan Civil Society: Caught in Conflicting Agendas, PRIO, Conference Paper 27 March 2008.

²⁰ Briefing Report on International workshop, Aid Security and Civil Society in Post 9/11 Context, June 2007, quoted by E. Winter, op. cit, p. 11.

²¹ Interview S. Schmeidl, Kabul, 14th May 2014.

²² Cf below part III section 2 for more details.

²³ D. Moore, “Civil Society Law Reform in Afghanistan”, The International Journal of Not-For-Profit Law, 2005, Issue 1, vol 8. Available at:

http://www.icnl.org/research/journal/vol8iss1/art_1.htm, consulted on

According to the last numbers shared by the government, there are currently around 7,000 organizations registered in Afghanistan—2,000 NGOs registered with the MoE and 5,000 NGOs registered with the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), without even counting non-registered organizations. As an active member of Afghan civil society, Hayatullah Hayat explained “there are many other organizations not registered with any ministry. But we at the Civil Society Coordination Center (CSCC) are encouraging those to register to obtain a legal status.”³¹ Afghan civil society is vibrant and diverse, and this variety constitutes its richness.

CSOs can be different types of organizations, groups, formal or informal, Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs), unions, Community Based or Community Organisations (CBOs), or other types of organizations. A NGO is a specific type of CSO, subject to particular regulations and defined as a non-political not-for-profit organization. NGOs are mostly working in Afghanistan in the humanitarian and development sector with different levels of operation and orientation. A CBO operates at the local level and within a single local community. It can also have several activities, can be formal or informal, and can act as a service provider. It might also serve as a decision making group and be more aligned with socio-political activities. Per the selected focus on coordination, this report highlights existing coordinating bodies and umbrella organizations. An umbrella organization is an overarching organization, including member organizations, which works to coordinate activities in a single field or more generally.

In accordance with its statutes, ACBAR is “an independent body for the collective voice of NGOs operating in Afghanistan, dedicated to aid effectiveness, capacity development, advocacy, coordination, and information exchange services to address the humanitarian, recovery and sustainable development needs of the country effectively and efficiently. The members of ACBAR are committed to work in partnership with each other, the government, donors, local CSOs, and communities to support Afghan – led humanitarian and development assistance.”³² ACBAR’s mission is then focused on NGOs and its statutes refer also to NGOs registered

with and reporting to MoE.³³ This report intends to examine the capacity, challenges and functioning of CSOs in Afghanistan, especially regarding coordination. As ACBAR is working mostly as a coordinating body, and has only NGOs members, the targeted actors have been CSOs, being understood as organizations registered with either MoE or MoJ. Media organizations are considered more as trade organisations working in a specific professional field. As N. Ayubi explained in her interview “media organisations are part of CS but it’s a different work and a different concept. Media need CSOs more as a source of information.”³⁴

This report focuses on official, systematic coordination as opposed to informal coordination, and coordination geographically centered in Kabul. Coordination can be defined in numerous terms, depending on which aspect is emphasized. Generally, coordination can be defined as “the organization of the different elements of a complex body or activity so as to enable them to work together effectively.”³⁵ Coordination theory is a cardinal component of organizational theory in multiple fields including sociology, psychology, linguistics, law, political science, anthropology and even computer science.³⁶ A narrow definition of coordination could be “the act of managing interdependencies between activities performed to achieve a goal.”³⁷ Coordination does not only involve communication, networking or information sharing, but rather is much more than this and should involve a common aim and a collective prepared effort. Therefore, the theoretical framework for this research is mostly coordination theory, particularly regarding inter-organizational networks. As noted by N. Kapucu regarding inter-organizational coordination, “in complex and turbulent environments, organizations frequently develop formal or informal relationships in order to work together to pursue shared goals, address common concerns, and/or attain mutually beneficial ends. In recent years, such inter-organizational collaboration has become a prominent aspect of the functioning of many different types of organizations.”³⁸ The word ‘network’ will be

33 ACBAR Statutes Point 2.5, p. 5.

34 Interview N. Ayubi, The Killid Group (TKG), 16th July 2014.

35 cf oxford dictionary, available at: <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/coordination?q=coordination>
Consulted on the 17th of July 2014.

36 T. W. Malone, K. Crowston, “What is coordination theory and how can it help design cooperative work systems”, In: Proceedings of the Conference on computer supported cooperative work, LA, California, Oct. 1990.

37 Ibid, p. 3.

38 N. Kapucu, “Interorganizational Coordination in Dynamic Context: Networks in Emergency Response Management”, Connections, 26 (2)

Afghanistan and Civil Society, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Peshawar, Bergen, 8 Dec 2012.

31 Interview Hayatullah Hayat, 10th July 2014, Kabul.

32 Cf Annex 5 ACBAR Statutes.

used to describe “a multiple-organizational relations involving multiple nodes of interactions. A network is a group of individuals or organizations, who, on a voluntary basis, exchange information and undertake joint activities and who organize themselves in such a way that their individual autonomy remains intact.”³⁹

The following analysis draws a panorama of formally organized CS actors, in particular coordinating entities and then explores the role of ACBAR as one of the main existing coordinating body on the Afghan scene.

1.3 CONTEXT, AIM AND EXPECTED RESULTS

The study falls in the context of multifaceted transitions in Afghanistan, forming both obstacles and opportunities for civil society actors. 2014 is a turning point in modern Afghan history. Politically, Afghan citizens went to vote to elect their President for the first democratic transfer of power in Afghanistan’s history. CSOs, activists, journalists, and experts⁴⁰ are all highlighting the high participation rate as one of the achievements of CS, proving its evolution, not only in Kabul but also in the provinces. From a military perspective, all foreign troops are withdrawing from Afghanistan, a process that began last year. In terms of security, while the Bilateral Security Agreement is not signed yet,⁴¹ Afghan citizens and the government will rely on the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police to achieve and maintain a peaceful state. In terms of access to the population, service delivery, freedom of movement... the security situation has a large impact on the functioning of Afghan civil society. Economically, with the reduction of both international aid and international presence, most of the profit and nonprofit Afghan organizations will have to cope with a difficult financial situation at best, and a financial crisis at worst. Unemployment also affects the Afghan people; it was at its highest point in 2013 (20%) since 2006.⁴² Many CSOs are now facing a sustainability

2005, p. 35. Available at: <http://www.insna.org/Connections-Web/Volume26-2/4.Kapucu.pdf> consulted on the 14th July 2014.

39 Ibid. p. 35.

40 Interview S. Schmeidl, Kabul, 14th May 2014.

41 G. Owen, A Mutual Interdependency? The BSA and why the US still wants it, AAN, 9 Jan 2014. Available at <https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/a-mutual-interdependency-the-bsa-and-why-the-us-still-wants-it/>, consulted on the 17th of July 2014.

42 Afghanistan in 2013: A survey of the Afghan People, Asia Foundation, available at: <http://asiafoundation.org/country/afghanistan/2013-poll.php>, consulted on the 17th of July 2014.

problem, as funding is decreasing, inciting CS actors to rethink their activities and strategies and to look for other sources for financial support.

This particular context is a fruitful time to undertake the proposed study, addressing the current status and challenges of CS actors and coordination, and providing perspective and prospective in that matter. The purpose of this study is not to realize an exclusive mapping exercise of CS actors in Afghanistan, nor to provide a theoretical analysis of humanitarian and development coordination in the country. The research is a first step to developing a broader panorama of living CSOs in the capital of Afghanistan with particular attention to current coordination and network entities from the standpoint of ACBAR. The primary objectives of this study were to:

- Examine the definition of what constitutes a CSO and outline the types of organizations that are CS actors on the Kabul scene.
- Investigate existing coordination entities and their respective capacities.
- Explore the position, perception, and role of ACBAR in relation with those CSO actors both at present and for the future.

The main research questions that the report addressed were who CS actors are, what they want and expect from different key players GIRoA, International IC, and other CSOs actors, and how ACBAR can support them.

This report presents the findings of the study and examines progress from the perspective of CS actors in Afghanistan. Moreover, the key findings will be used to inform ACBAR’s capacity development plan, to train the new Civil Society Officer on networking and reporting, and to assist in the formation and continuation of strong partnerships. Finally, the conclusion and recommendations of the report will be shared with the main operative players – CSOs, donors, national institutions, policy makers, development experts, and academics – to improve both perceptions of and practices in Afghan civil society.

1.4 METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS

The study is based on qualitative research. It takes an inductive approach, following a review of literature on civil society in general and in the Afghan context, and on coordination theory and institutional theory.⁴³ To achieve the research objectives, a large questionnaire was drafted, including 47 questions, and adjusted according to the type of interviewee.⁴⁴ The interviews were semi-structured with both close-ended and open-ended questions. The interview was divided into six parts: (1) the background, role and organization of the respondent; (2) his/her understanding of CS/O in Afghanistan; (3) internal and external capacities of the organization; (4) the role on ACBAR; (5) ACBAR's relations with different actors; (6) positions and expectations of actors, mainly CSOs and ACBAR. 46 direct interviews were conducted in Kabul, and 4 interviews were conducted via Skype. The main network of CSOs registered were interviewed as well as CS activists and actors, unions, media agencies, youth groups, and women's groups to examine the organizational level of those structures and their own challenges and expectations. The analysis was also informed by experts, international bilateral donors, UN agencies, staff members of government ministries, and government programs to support sectorial coordination... The goal was to gather as much information as possible with the available resources, and from diverse key players to be able to analyze the subject from different positions and triangulate findings.

In interviewing ACBAR members and staff, three separate instruments were used, including individual interviews with three employees,⁴⁵ including the Executive Director,⁴⁶ one focus group discussion where all ACBAR members were invited, and a questionnaire framed from the main topic of the group discussion and sent to all ACBAR members.⁴⁷ The focus group discussion was centered on three key matters: (1) members' understanding of and relationship with CSOs in Afghanistan; (2) the coordination mission

and practice inside and outside of ACBAR; (3) the present and potential role of ACBAR in terms of formal interaction with CS actors. Most of the interviews, internal and external to ACBAR were recorded with the verbal consent of the respondent and transcribed. The draft report was shared with the interviewees to ensure that they agreed with the use of their quotes. If the interviewee did not consent to the use of their name, the interviewee names were removed and replaced with their professional occupation.

Ideally, non-traditional donors would have been interviewed for this study. Several attempts were made to contact embassy representatives from Russia, Turkey, Iran, India, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, UAE, and Korea, however these countries did not respond to interview requests.⁴⁸

The fieldwork was conducted in Kabul between May and July 2014. The transcriptions of the recorded interviews were outsourced and the analysis and coding were done in June and July. Close attention was paid to the words used by the CS actors and key player respondents. The study follows a more descriptive approach than an interpretative one, the purpose being to reflect and analyze views and perspectives of the interviewees. The context was also been taken into consideration, especially the inherent uncertainties related to the manifold transitions and mounting tensions.

Within this research design, there were a number of limitations and challenges. First the ToR was broad but the researcher adjust the scope of the research be mostly focus on coordination entities in Kabul. The study is limited to qualitative research on coordination of CSOs actors in Kabul.

Firstly, ACBAR serves as a coordinating body and does not work directly with CBOs. Rather, individual members interact with CBOs when implementing projects.⁴⁹ Coordination among CBOs or between CBOs, NGOs and CSOs in general is not in the scope of the current research but could benefit from more analysis in the future. Secondly, both human and financial resources were limited. The budget allocated for this research was only enough to cover the cost of one researcher for a two-month period. Given this limitation, and as agreed upon in the ToR, the research

43 M. Lipson, "Interorganizational Networks in Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Relief: An Institutional Theory Perspective, 2003", Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Philadelphia, PA.

44 Cf Annexes 2, 3 and 4. External interviewees refer to non ACBAR members.

45 N. Tajali, Deputy Director and T. Sabri, Finance Manager.

46 J. Piquemal.

47 Cf Annex 3. We received 13 questionnaires back from ABCAR members, 6 from ANGO and 7 from INGO.

48 Because of time and acces constraints these interviews were not feasible. It is highly recommended that these interviews take place in future research.

49 Cf Group discussions within ACBAR members, 4th June 2014.

focus is Kabul. But further research with additional resources focusing on analysis at the provincial level could be undertaken in the future.⁵⁰

This geographic restriction also affects the findings. Even if some of the characteristics of CSOs actors and the coordination among them might be valid in other provinces of Afghanistan, the findings and conclusions cannot be generalized countrywide. Therefore, there is a great need to further research following the same methodology at the regional and local level.⁵¹

50 UNICET and NETDRAW softwares were used for the research. Statistic analysis, or/and matrix could have been developed with more time and more resources.

51 For research on Afghan civil society, including regional aspects, cf

The study is structured as follows. The first part presents a tableau of CSOs and the variety of actors in Afghan CS, while the second part focuses more on coordination between CSOs and other key players and examines the role of ACBAR and its potential in the future. Finally, after the analysis of the challenges and expectations of CSOs in Afghanistan regarding different actors, the researcher addresses recommendation to major actors in the country.

for example, E. Davin, A. Malakooti, A. Plane, Signposting Success, Civil Society in Afghanistan, Final report, Altai, Nov. 2012, Kabul. Also E. Winter, op. cit.

2. UNDERSTANDING AFGHAN CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS



"Civil society has become one of the favorite buzzwords among the global chattering classes, touted by presidents and political scientists as the key to political, economic, and societal success."

- T. Carothers, "Think Again: Civil Society", Foreign Policy (117) 1999, 2000, p. 18

In Afghanistan, the concept emerged after the fall of Taliban regime in 2001. At that time civil society was not as developed as is it at present. Parallel to the first Bonn conference, a civil society consultation was organized in Bad Honnef in November 2001. Led by the Afghan Civil Society Forum (ACSFo) and facilitated by Swisspeace, the goal of the conference was to involve Afghan civil society in the peace and reconstruction process of their country in order to achieve a more sustainable post-conflict reconstruction than a simple top-down government approach would achieve.⁵² However, the involvement of international actors in the selection and coordination of the conferences raised issues of legitimacy and representativeness of the participants regarding the whole of Afghan civil society. In this section, the analysis will focus on the evolution and history of Afghan CSOs, underline the variety of the Afghan CSOs, then will emphasize the need for a definition and awareness raising.

2.1 EVOLUTION AND HISTORY OF CSOS

Afghanistan is a non-secular State, and a country with many customs and a large degree of cultural diversity. As highlighted by N. Salimee, General Director of the organization for Coordination of Afghan Relief (CoAR) "the concept of civil society, debate, conception differs from each part of the world, Europe, Asia, and within each country. The maturity of this concept in Europe is different to the maturity in Asian countries, to the Balkans, to the Gulf countries, and others."⁵³ Even if the CS has existed for a long time⁵⁴, mostly in traditional forms, the state of CSOs really changed after 2001, both from a qualitative and a quantitative perspective.

Taking a quantitative look at the Afghan scene before 2000, it is evident that although local CSOs were indeed present in the country, their presence was rare and much more informal. According to a report carried out by the Foundation For Culture and Civil Society (FCCS), prior to 1990 there were only 6 active

⁵³ Interview Naeem Salimee, CoAR, Kabul, 3^d of July 2014.

⁵⁴ For more details about Afghan Civil Society before the 90's cf for example A. Wimmer and C. Scheter, "Putting State-formation first: some recommendations for reconstruction and peace-making in Afghanistan", Journal of International Development, n°15, p. 525, 2003. Available at: <http://www.princeton.edu/~awimmer/B55.pdf> consulted the 18th of July 2014.

⁵² ACSFo website <http://www.ACSFo.af/english>, consulted the 18th of July 2014.

CSOs reported in Kabul; between 1991 and 2000, around 8 CSOs were registered each year in Kabul. According to the same source, in 2001, 18 CSOs were registered in the country. This rose dramatically to 86 registered CSOs in 2002, 113 in 2003, 129 in 2004. 2005 then saw a decrease when 144 were registered, and in 2006, 21 CSOs were registered in the country⁵⁵, which is contested by other analysts⁵⁶ According to the Executive Director Afghan Health and Development Services (AHDS) Dr. M. Fareed Asmand, even during Communist, Mujahdeen, or Taliban time, there were lots of CSOs functioning in the country, either registered with Ministry of Planning or Ministry of Economy.⁵⁷

They are many more CSOs, registered or not registered in Afghanistan than the above numbers. The following years have seen an increasing amount of important CSOs mushroomed in Afghanistan. Political stability, international demand and funding, and better security⁵⁸ were some of the main reasons for this development.

From a qualitative perspective, CSOs were mostly influenced by external players, especially the donor community. These actors didn't only influence the agenda of the Afghan CSOs but also their direction and "raison d'être" as J. Howell described in his analysis.⁵⁹ In another paper, he stressed that the support of the international community, "who viewed civil society through a Western neoliberal lens, made decisions regarding representation while clearly failing to understand the complexities of Afghan civil society."⁶⁰ This had repercussions for Afghan CSOs, creating tensions among different ethnic groups, geographic representation, political and ideological positions, and in particular between traditional and modern structures in civil society. These divisions still exist in 2014 with leadership and ownership dilemmas exacerbated during international conferences from the preparation phase, to the implementation and return. Some of the same civil society actors were therefore present at the first London Conference

in December 2010, the second Bonn Conference in December 2011, as well as the Chicago NATO Summit in May 2012 and the Tokyo Conference in July 2012 and will be part of the second London Conference next November. The conclusions of the second Bonn conference stated the need for "further promotion of civil society participation, including both traditional civil society structures and modern manifestations of civic action, including the role of youth, in the country's democratic process."⁶¹

Conceptually, CSO does not refer to a singular type of organization. Considering the scope of study, there is a critical distinction between NGOs and CSOs. Both have been impacted by donors in choosing their activities, location, and sustainability. More and more CSOs have given preference to service delivery at the expense of other functions.⁶² Despite the donor-oriented characteristic and likely due to political and security situation, the newly educated generation, the Internet and new technology, and also to the support of the international community, in terms of funding, training, capacity development, projects... CSOs have made considerable progress. There are multiple new organizations and youth movements as Afghanistan such as 1400, women's groups, and even feminist organizations.⁶³ These networks are working as civil society activists and are establishing new organizations or further developing existing ones. A number of achievements have been accomplished, and according to Mirwais Sadaat, from the Canadian Embassy in Kabul, "CSO are now much stronger than back in 2001 or 2005".⁶⁴ Hasina Safi from the Afghan Women Network (AWN) and Idrees Zaman from the Cooperation for Peace and Unity (CPAU) shared this position and both stressed the successes of CSOs in Afghanistan.⁶⁵ They both referred to the elections as an example, respectively to the high participation rate and to the major role played by CSOs.⁶⁶ However, they also recognized the lack of definition and "unity of opinion" on the matter and the need to find common criteria to reach an understanding both inside and outside of CS actors.

55 N. Alawi, Afghan Civil Society baseline survey report, provincial analysis, FCCS, 2006. Available at: http://www.akdn.org/publications/civil_society_afghanistan_survey.pdf Consulted on the 18th of July 2014.

56 See for example discussion with M. Fareed Asmand, November December 2014.

57 Idem discussion with M. Fareed Asmand. Op, cit.

58 As we can observe a decrease of security in 2006 and decrease of registered CSOs.

59 J. Howell, 'Making Civil Society from the Outside – Challenges for Donors', The European Journal of Development Research, 12, n°1, 2000, p. 17.

60 J. Howell and J. Lind, Civil Society with Guns is Not Civil Society: op, cit. Quoted by in V. van den Boogaard, Building Afghan Society, op. cit., p. 33.

61 M. Safi, Civil Society in Afghanistan; a decade of progress and challenges, available at: <http://www.insightonconflict.org/2012/12/civil-society-afghanistan/> consulted on the 18th July 2014.

62 For example C. Spurk, "Understanding Civil Society", and T. Paffenholz "Conclusion", in: Civil Society and Peacebuilding: A Critical Assessment, op. cit.

63 Like the Revolutionary Association of the Women in Afghanistan (RAWA) working since now few decade in Afghanistan.

64 Interview M. Sadaat, Canadian Embassy, Kabul, 5th June 2014.

65 Interview H. Safi, Kabul, 7th May 2014. Interview Idrees Zaman, CPAU, Salah, Kabul, 1st June 2014.

66 Ibid.

2.2 LACK OF DEFINITION AND UNDERSTANDING OF CIVIL SOCIETY

"I like the idea of CS, how do I join?"⁶⁷ E. Winter recounted someone asking her at the first Bonn Conference. Even if there has been progress regarding understanding the concept of CS and CSOs as well as their theoretical environment, knowledge is still limited and there is still no common practical definition of it. There have been several attempts, mostly using the one from the Center for Civil Society (CCS) at the London School of Economics (LSE). ACSFo was operating under this definition, as follows:

Civil society refers to the arena of un-coerced collective action around shared interests, purposes and values. In theory, its institutional forms are distinct from those of the state, family and market, though in practice, the boundaries between state, civil society, family and market are often complex, blurred and negotiated. Civil society commonly embraces a Diversity of spaces, actors and institutional forms, varying in their degree of formality, autonomy and power. Civil societies are often populated by organizations such as registered charities, development non-governmental organizations, community groups, women's organizations faith based organizations professional associations, trades unions, self help groups, social movements, business associations, coalitions and advocacy groups.

Building on this definition and her findings, Elizabeth Winter suggested this as basis for further discussion:

Civil society is formed by individual and collective voluntary action around shared values, interests, purposes and standards which is intended to improve the lives of Afghan men, women and children without compromising their dignity. Action can take a variety of non-profit forms; from charitable work, through cultural activities, to advocacy and campaigning. Civil society organizations can include registered non-governmental organizations, community and self-help groups, art and cultural associations, women's organizations, youth organizations, professional associations, trade unions, business associations, faith based organizations, umbrella groups and coalitions.⁶⁸

67 Interview E. Winter, op. cit.

68 Op. cit, Winter.

Youth organizations should be added to the definition as requested by the author.⁶⁹

This is the most valuable definition of civil society in Afghanistan as it includes the variety of CSOs, as well as two essential aspects, highlighted by the interviewees and in the text. First, many participants who replied to the questionnaire referred to values. For most respondents, the definition of CSOs is not only formal, about registration, or structure of the organizations but also requires meeting more substantial conditions. To be a CSO, it requires a prerequisite, which lies in the adherence or compliance to core values. Hasina Safi from AWN and Seyar Lalee from the Civil Society and Human Rights Network (CSHRN) both mentioned values, democratic values, or even qualify a CSO as a "nonprofit value-based organization."⁷⁰ The issue raised by those "values" is their potential conflict with more traditional and customary values, present in the Afghan CS and among CSOs. An interesting initiative has currently started, within the Civil Society Joint Working Group, a platform coordinating CSOs centered in Kabul. Hayatullah Hayat explained,

We have to have a criterion besides being registered with one of the Ministries. I think for CSOs there are values. So any of the CSOs who follow those values can be our members and can be called from our perspective CSOs. And I think it is important because if we don't have values (mostly human rights, democracy and all this things...) (...). It's a big issue now within CSO networks and umbrella organizations who can be called CSO networks, who can be our members... It's a concern for everyone. We are listing the values and their definitions to which CSOs should be committed. When we have this, these values attached with a form will be sent out to CSOs, and those CSOs who are committed to these values can file that form and sign it. And then formally we can say that yes this is a CSO that can become member of the Civil Society Joint Working Group (CSJWG).⁷¹

This is also a way to decrease tensions between CSOs and more traditional form of CBOs and not to ignore the latter.⁷²

69 Interview E. Winter, Kabul, 2^d July 2014.

70 Interview H. Safi, op. cit. And expression from the interview Seyar Lalee, Kabul, 20th May 2014.

71 Interview Hayatullah Hayat, op. cit.

72 For more information about traditional CSOs, for example, K. Nawabi, M. Wardak and I. Zaman, *Religious, Civil Society: The Role and Function Of Religious Civil Society in Afghanistan, Case Studies from Wardak and Kunduz*, CPAU, 2001.

The second facet of the definition underlines the function of the CSOs. In her interview, E. Winter also defined CSOs by their role, as

...assist[ing] Afghan men and women, boys and girls in a specific issue the organization wants to take on. The benefit has to be the population, or part of the population, whether it is through direct services or lobbying and advocacy to change laws. It doesn't really matter. If you perform a function, which is making life of Afghan people better for people, you are CSOs. And there are good examples in Afghanistan, not only in Kabul.⁷³

This functional definition is common among different CS actors and international players and a majority of the respondents shared this understanding. K. Aoki, member of Peace with Japan asserted two missions of Afghan CSOs, doing both service delivery and monitoring of the government.⁷⁴ Many donors also see CSOs in this counter-power or watchdog role.⁷⁵ Maiwand Rahyab, who is now the Director of Counterpart International in Afghanistan also expressed that CSOs in Afghanistan play two major roles.

One role that ACSOs have and particularly did very well in the past is service delivery. Now it is sort of losing its relevance particularly when we speak about CS (activists) but I think even now some of the CSOs, mostly local Afghan NGOs are providing very critical services and the most needed in the provinces of Afghanistan (...). The second role is more focus on political and advocacy things. And we lose that side of CS. There is of course more advocacy type and raising awareness, research and advocacy training, awareness raising, legal aid... and this is more frequent now, especially in Kabul.⁷⁶

The distinction between Kabul and the provinces of Afghanistan is not only valid from a functional perspective of the CSOs, but also from an apprehensive one. S. Schmeidl relayed the words of a Kandahari woman, "now I can't go to the bazaar; in a civil society I would have the freedom to live freely in my own country and community."⁷⁷ In Kabul, if the concept is

increasingly more understood than in provinces, it is still mostly in the humanitarian and development spheres, and among CS actors or partners. Hayatullah Hayat also remembers a female colleague working with them to plan the Tokyo conference in 2012 who used to stay late for meetings and her brother would ask her where she was. He explained that she used to say she was in a meeting with CSOs, and he didn't know what she was talking about even though he was a doctor. Even in Kabul, among educated circles, there is no clear understanding of CS and its actors. The next step after agreeing on a practical definition is to raise awareness, not only within CSOs but also among citizens, to reach a general understanding of what a CSO is and its main role and functions. As emphasized by M. Frozanfar, a UN worker:

There is no unique or practical definition of CSOs. Actually in context of Afghanistan the CSO concept emerged in its modern sense in 2001. (...) So now CS can be defined as individual or collective efforts that are not considered private or personal advantages or benefits in it just for welfare and for the people at community level or provincial level or district level or country level.⁷⁸

Awareness should be developed, within trainings and public campaigns, media broadcasts, and other forms of publications. This would be a way to get a better knowledge on CSOs, and its diversity but also to increase the involvement of Afghan citizens among CS.

2.3 VARIETY AND STATUS OF CSOS

Two adjectives are regularly used to describe CS, which can be used to describe CSOs – fragmented and vibrant.

Of course at the very beginning, new start for Afghanistan after 2002 CSO activities, 'modern' CSOs were established in a different format. CSOs then became very fragmented among different fields (...) Usually at the very beginning we could not differentiate between NGOs or CSOs Because I do believe NGOs, which are busy with charity, with social work, with construction, with logistics are part of CSOs but a small portion, taking all the

consulted on the 21st July 2014.

⁷⁸ Interview M. Frozanfar, UNAMA Kabul, 4th June 2014.

⁷³ Interview E. Winter, op. cit.

⁷⁴ Interview K. Aoki, PWJ, via skype, on the 17th of June 2014.

⁷⁵ For example interview V. Thiollet, French Embassy, Kabul, 21st May 2014. Interview F. Otten, op. cit. Interview K. Ludwig, USAID, 2nd June 2014.

⁷⁶ Interview M. Rahyab, CPI, Kabul, 4th June 2014.

⁷⁷ CPI, Afghanistan Civil Society Assessment and How Afghans view Civil Society, Kabul, 2005, p. 108. Available at: <http://www.isaf.nato.int/ics/Afghan-Civil-Society-Assessment-and-How-Afghan-View-CS.pdf>

place. Now it's going better CSOs find this place in Afghanistan, especially in 2004, 2005, 2009, 2010, elections in Afghanistan has the human rights issues, women rights issues, freedom of media, and whatever, accountability and others, so new CSOs has been created.⁷⁹

This "huge variety of CSOs" is also often accompanied by political influence, donor-driven projects and entities, as well as a tendency to consider CSOs as businesses.

CSOs are often a means of entering the political world in Afghanistan, and as S. Schmeidl reminds, this characteristic is common in the Western context as well.⁸⁰ A number of key players in CSOs were working in the Afghan government before, and vice versa.⁸¹ The support of the international community impacted the development of CSOs both in a formal and material way. Formally, CSOs have been encouraged to register and adopt the status of an NGO, since they more easily meet the donors' requirements and the western conception of neutrality and independence.

The donor countries have, in fact, supported above all formally-instituted organizations, NGOs in the first place, because they are perceived as politically neutral even before being independent, as well as independent, structurally more flexible and more efficient in reaching the beneficiaries of their projects.⁸²

For more than ten years now, NGOs and CSOs have been donor and project oriented.⁸³ In a more substantial way, international funding has turned not only NGOs but also CSOs into short-term oriented organizations, mostly focused on service delivery with a serious lack of strategic vision.⁸⁴ "CSOs don't have any vision. If something happen it's only based on projects not based on a long term of strategy."⁸⁵ The international community strongly incited, expressly or

implicitly, the formation on NGOs as implementing partners perceived as subcontractors of major donors.⁸⁶

This dichotomy of NGOs versus CSOs is still very present on the Afghan CS scene. Most of the interviewees distinguished NGOs and CSOs, acknowledging the former as being part of the latter.⁸⁷ However, some highlighted that certain CS actors do not consider NGOs as part of CS, or at least felt that NGOs have different connotations and are more so implementation bodies, perceived as market and profit oriented.⁸⁸ R. Zia, working with the World Bank, explained:

I think from 2002 up until now, Civil society really evolved in this country. In 2002 people didn't know what it means, the term of CSO, because we didn't have it before. So we see an evolution in terms of participation of CS actors in different decision-making processes, or in different platforms in terms of engaging, talking, raising voices and all that. But the problem we still have is people think that NGOs are not part of civil society. So they see these two communities [NGOs and CSOs] as two distinctive ones, as members of two different families. Whether in most other country, they are part of each other; they complement each other. NGOs are an included part of CSOs. But here people look at it differently. People look at NGOs more like the type of organization that they look for projects, rather than doing some advocacy or raising voices or doing something beyond that just project implementation.⁸⁹

For a few years, Afghan NGOs (ANGOs) formed the majority of CS actors, seen as part of CSOs, mostly since the development of their capacity and the first limited progresses of Afghan NGOs was regarding advocacy, raising the voice of citizens, and protecting the national population. The question is a bit different

79 Interview M. Joyenda, AREU, Kabul, 14th May 2014.

80 Interview S. Schmeidl, op. cit.

81 Ibid, and for example N. Nehan who was the Senior Planning and Strategic Coordination Advisor for Ministry of Higher Education, Senior Admin and Finance Advisor for the Ministry and Grants Management Unit at Ministry of Education, Vice Chancellor of Kabul University for Admin and Finance, and Director General of the Treasury Department at MoF and is now the Director of Equality for Peace and Democracy (EDP) EPD.

82 G. Battiston, *The Afghan Civil Society: a look from within*, op. cit, p. 13.

83 For example Interview S. Schmeidl, op cit. And H. Safi, op. cit.

84 For example Interview S. Schmeidl, op. cit also A. Athayi, Henrich Böll Stiftung (HBS), Kabul, 2^d June 2014.

85 Interview F. Dashty, Afghanistan National Journalist's Union, (ANJU), Kabul, 20th May 2014.

86 For more analysis, also for example J. Goodhand and P. Chamberlain, "Dancing with the prince": NGO's survival strategies in the Afghan conflict", in: J. Pearce, *Development, NGOs, and Civil Society*, Selected essays from *Development in Practice*, Oxfam GB, D. Eade, London, 2000, p. 91. Available at: <http://www.developmentinpractice.org/sites/developmentinpractice.org/files/Development,NGOs%20and%20Civil%20Society.pdf> consulted on the 20th July 2014.

87 For example Interview N. Malikin, op. cit. M. Rahyab, op. cit, H. Safi, op. cit. V. Thiollet, op. cit, Also J. Nader, via skype, *British and Irish Agencies Afghanistan (BAAG)*, 17th June 2014. H. Nashir, Tawanmandi, Kabul, 13^d May 2014. A. Omerzai, *Afghan NGOs Coordination Bureau (ANCB)*, Kabul, 21st May 2014.

88 For example *Peace Training and Research Organization (PTRO)*, *CSOs Mapping Exercise*, shared by Tawanmandi. Jan. 2012.

89 Interview R. Zia, World Bank, Kabul, 19th May 2014.

when considering international NGOs (INGOs) working in Afghanistan. Though they are for sure key players on the Afghan CS scene, more tensions emerge when it comes to including INGOs in the ACSOs. From a functional perspective, INGOs also work mostly in service delivery, but also are advocating nationally and internationally for the defense and the promotion of the rights of Afghan citizens. The issue is exacerbated when it comes to representation and more precisely the legitimacy of INGOs to speak on behalf of ACSOs. It is important to stress that the majority of the international respondents were not only aware of this difficulty but also take this into account and involve several Afghan partners and CSOs in their activities and developing their positions, mostly through consultation.⁹⁰ Several active members of Afghan CS also underline that there should not be this negative or exclusive perception about INGOs working in Afghanistan if they are working for the interest of the Afghan citizens.⁹¹

In terms of status the distinction is clear between NGOs and CSOs, as both INGOs and ANGOs are registered with the Ministry of Economy (MoE) while most of the CSOs are registered with Ministry of Justice (MoJ). On the 15th of June 2005, President Karzai signed a new law on NGOs after three years of advocacy by national and international organizations to create a more enabling environment.⁹² Since the Taliban regime, NGOs were subject to the regulation on the activities of Domestic and Foreign Non-Governmental Organizations in Afghanistan. NGOs were inadequately defined and there was no clear registration criteria, no internal governance rules, no proper enforcement of reporting and public accountability rules, and no termination provisions.⁹³ After a few drafts, consultations with NGOs and umbrella organizations, the strong participation of ACBAR, the support of the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law, and elections, the final version was voted on in June 2005 by Afghan Parliament. Many improvements have been brought to the legal framework, enabling NGOs to work in a better environment with more intelligible and adequate

rules. Thus, the arbitrary establishment criteria were removed, the registration fees were reduced (from 30 000 Afg to 10 000 Afg for ANGOs and from 2000 USD to 1000 USD for INGOs), and the reporting requirements as well as liquidation procedures were improved.⁹⁴ Article 8 draws up a list of illegal activities that NGOs shall not perform (political activities, promotion of violence, participation in military activities, terrorism, narcotics, religious proselytism, construction business, import or export activities...). NGOs are properly defined in article 5.2 as “NGOs which is established to pursue specific objectives”. They are not-for-profit entities, bound by the non-distribution principle, so clearly separated from businesses.⁹⁵ NGOs are allowed to pursue a wide range of purposes, including both mutual and public benefit. NGOs also can form umbrella groups and coordination bodies. NGOs are able to join international organizations and create branch offices.⁹⁶ NGOs may be established by both Afghan nationals and foreigners, and by both natural persons and legal entities with at least two founding members.⁹⁷ Article 14 sets the mandatory content of the status. The registration authority must decide on registration applications within 15 days.⁹⁸ Article 19 strictly defines the grounds for denial, which are objective and related to the name (already existing) or incomplete application and the registrar must inform the NGO by a written letter. “NGOs may appeal adverse decisions, such as the denial of registration at the outset or the termination of an operating organization, to a special dispute resolution commission.”⁹⁹ The Ministry of Economy is the central registration authority of NGOs. Article 25 lists the potential sources of funding of NGOs (donations, legacies, grant, membership fees, property, and income generated from lawful activities). NGOs are subject to record keeping, financial auditing, and semi-annual reporting requirements.¹⁰⁰ “The termination of NGOs is subject to notice and the opportunity to respond and the assets of a liquidated NGO, after payment to creditors, will be distributed to another NGO working for similar objectives.”¹⁰¹

As for CSOs, the Law on Social Organizations was recently reviewed and adopted in September 2013,

90 Group discussions within ACBAR members, 4th June 2014.

91 For example interview H. Safi, *op. cit.*

92 For an analysis of the law D. Moore, “Civil Society Law Reform in Afghanistan”, *IJNL*, vol. 8, Nov. 2005, Available at: http://www.icnl.org/research/journal/vol8iss1/art_1.htm consulted on the 22d July 2014. For the law itself and legal framework applied to NGOs, ICNL, USAID, CPI, Operational guidelines for NGOs A comprehensive guidelines for NGOs in Afghanistan, 2012. Or ICNL library: <http://www.icnl.org/research/library/files/Afghanistan/law-2005.pdf> consulted on the 22d July 2014.

93 *Ibid.* D. Moore.

94 Article 15 of the law and chapter five on liquidation and dissolution. *Op. cit.*

95 *Op. cit.* D. Moore.

96 Articles 9 and 10 of the Law on NGOs.

97 Article 11.

98 Article 16 (1).

99 Chapter 6 of the law. D. Moore, *op. cit.*

100 Article 31.

101 D. Moore, *op. cit.*; article 14, 35 and 36 (chapter 5).

after major criticism regarding funding sources (in the previous law funds were not allowed and registration period was only 1 year).¹⁰² Before the new law, social organizations were defined broadly as “the voluntary unions of natural persons, organized for ensuring social, cultural, educational, legal, artistic and vocational objectives.”¹⁰³ Now the law lists and describes different categories: association, community, union, council, and assembly”. The new law also reconsidered the conditions for establishment and registration,¹⁰⁴ and the financial sources (entry due, membership due, publication dissemination, and donations),¹⁰⁵ opening the right to form a social organization to all “Afghans citizens, who have reached 18 years of age.”¹⁰⁶ However, the reporting requirements are different than for NGOs. CSOs registered with MoJ only have to submit one annual financial report and one annual activities report to MoJ¹⁰⁷ (and not semiannually as with NGOs and MoE), with far less control from the civil servants of MoJ than MoE.¹⁰⁸

102 For a commentary of the new law ICLN, USAID, CPI, Commentary on Law on Associations, 2014. For the law on associations 2013,; <http://www.icnl.org/research/library/files/Afghanistan/assoclaw.pdf> consulted on the 22d of July 2014.

For the previous law on Social Organization 2002: http://www.icnl.org/research/library/files/Afghanistan/Social_Org_Law_2002.pdf consulted on the 22d July 2014.

103 Ibid. Previous law.

104 Article 7 to 14 of 2013 Association Law.

105 Article 16.

106 Article 7.

107 Article 18 and 23.

108 Interview MoE representative, NGO department, Kabul, 3^d June

This duality of requirements causes disparities and trouble among CS actors and key players. Due to the lack of coordination between ministries and insufficient control on CSOs registered at the MoJ, as well as for the reasons explained above, the international community tends to work more with NGOs. ACBAR, according to its status, can only represent NGO members registered with MoE, including independent NGOs, NGOs created by local communities, and NGOs established with the support of the international community. However, in its daily work ACBAR interacts with CSOs regardless of where they are registered.

According to the last update in August 2014, 2010 NGOs are registered with the MoE, while 4,141 are registered with the MoJ—more than twice as many. Besides the duplication, there is also a high number of politicized organizations, business organizations (BNGOs), or “briefcase” CSOs (organization that exist only in name) within CSOs, NGOs included.¹⁰⁹ This is compounded by a lack of coordination, confirmed by all 48 respondents. Therefore, in order to examine which role ACBAR can play with which actors, it is first essential to study the coordination environment and mechanisms in Kabul, as defined in the scope of the report.

2014. And Interview MoJ representative, registration department, Kabul, 15th of July.

109 For example J. Goodhand and P. Chamberlain, “Dancing with the prince”, op. cit, p. 95.

3. COORDINATION, INITIATIVES, AND UMBRELLA ORGANIZATIONS



Coordination is not happening here among CS. Not only also among CS but also among the donors, Tawanmandi, us (CPI) and others, the Asia Foundation... I think it's just a dream. It is never going to come true. Nobody wants it. Everybody talks about it. And to me coordination is not only information sharing. Coordination is really what you do, where you do, who is doing I do this, you do that and we have the same goal. And I want to be honest about it and nobody – for maybe legitimate reasons – nobody wants to do it. They all try to. They have the intention to do it but so many factors took place not allowing coordination to happen.

- Interview with M. Rahyab

This harsh observation was shared by M. Rahyab, the Director of CPI in Kabul who has been working for decade with CSOs. To analyze and assess this statement the following section will first address the lack of coordination, and determine a definition and theoretical framework regarding coordination for further study. Then it will draw a picture of coordination mechanisms in Afghanistan before investigating more in depth coordination bodies and networks, core of the research.

3.1 DETERMINATION AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF COORDINATION

All interviewees agreed on the need for more coordination, and gave several reasons to support their observation.¹¹⁰ With more than 6,000 CSOs and no coherent database¹¹¹ or recent accurate mapping

¹¹⁰ Interview Z. Stankizai, Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) Aga Khan Foundation (AKF), Kabul, 22nd June 2014. S. Rashid, Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan (MACCA), Kabul, 15th July 2014. Also interviews H. Nashir, op. cit. Also A. Rafiee, H. Safi, E. Winter, S. Schmeidl, A. Omerzai, I. Zaman, M. Sadaat... op. cit.

¹¹¹ On this question, unfortunately the assessment of E. Winter in her report is still valid. There is a clear deficiency in terms of data collection,

exercise, it is very difficult to have a clear idea of the 3 Ws—who is doing what and where. There have been a few initiatives, especially sector-based, but they have been insufficient and sometimes it's not even shared or accessible to the public.¹¹² Therefore, there is a gap in terms of knowledge causing some repetition and duplication among CSOs, including Afghan and international NGOs and other type of organizations.

I think coordination is really important. If you want to make a difference, we need to be together. CS must have very strong coordination mechanisms in place and of course there should be coordination with other actors of the governance. It's clear if there is no coordination, there would be chaos, there would be duplication of efforts, resources will be lost, and it will have its effects on stability of the country. Because the stability actually is strongly link to the social services, that people need, the protection that people need.¹¹³

While every respondent agreed to the deficit of coordination among CSOs, both in the humanitarian

conservation and access. Cf E. Winter, Civil Society Development, op. cit.

¹¹² Interview M. Sadaat, op. cit. The Canadian Embassy led for example a gender mapping exercise, but this was not published. M. Sadaat agreed however to share the report with ACBAR but just for information.

¹¹³ Interview of S. Rashid, op. cit.

and development sectors, it was hard for them to determine what coordination really is. For most interviewees, coordination is simply more or less information sharing, with differences in opinion regarding frequency, quantity and quality.¹¹⁴ As defined in the introduction, coordination is more than communication. E. Winter, who has worked for an important part of her life to bring people together in Afghanistan, explains that the concept of coordination as follows:

[It] can be all sort of things, but it starts with giving people the opportunity to get together, to understand what each other is doing and therefore developing at least an understanding of each other and trust of each other to talk honestly about whatever it is they are working on. I think my experience in Afghanistan is that people are more likely to work together with a common aim. Sometimes it's an international conference, sometimes it's a particular thing, sometimes it's a law to fight against or to lobby for, and when people have a common aim it's much easier for them to collaborate. So I think coordination starts with the opportunity to meet, then it's information exchange, and from information exchange through trust building, working together on a theme, or an action. And then beyond that full collaboration.¹¹⁵

In the Afghan context, with a recent and vibrant CS formed by a large number of CSOs, NGOs, social organizations, umbrella organizations, and thematic and general networks, coordination is not an easy task. The structure of the network, more horizontal than vertical, influences the substance of the coordination. Coordination and networking-related activities and even management are increasingly less of a controlling typology, one-way and top-down, but more and more soft and flexible types with lateral and plural direction. Even in 1972, H. Cleveland predicted that "the organizations that get things done will no longer be hierarchical pyramids... they will be systems – interlaced webs of tension in control is loose, power diffused."¹¹⁶ Networking, especially here among coordination bodies and umbrella organizations involve voluntary action, which means not a contractual

obligation, a will from both sides (reciprocity), without affecting the autonomy or independence of the organization.¹¹⁷ Inter-organizational networks in practice can have a prominent role within CS and among CSOs. Notably, they can facilitate the information flow across organizations in terms of accuracy, speed, and amount of information. By increasing interaction among organizations, they can also "lead to development of trust which reduces transaction costs."¹¹⁸ Above all, social networks and capital "improves access to resources among network members," allowing members to take collective action and resolve problems with "less fear of defection and free riding."¹¹⁹

As "coordination creates value for the whole society,"¹²⁰ the interaction of organizations also instigates "greater complexity" in the entire system.¹²¹ With this, it is now critical to examine the landscape of support to CSOs and key players in the coordinating systems in Afghanistan.

3.2 LANDSCAPE OF EXTRINSIC COORDINATION MECHANISMS AND INITIATIVES

There are still a lot of gaps to be addressed, to bring all the key actors, CSOs, Afghan government, and private sector together. So the coordination needs to be strengthened. (...) My perception is that coordination is an issue in this country. There is no proper centralized planning. I think coordination, if you take a sector, whatever sector it is, a sector working on land rights, mine action, disaster management, whatever it is, all the actors working in that sector need to be together. For each sector, a focal point is needed, a focal organization, and that organization needs to be strengthened, supported. And then there should be proper meetings. There should be centralized planning for that sector. All the projects that are developed in that sector need to be made public and available; there should be proper management information system for that sector in place. And that center should facilitate

114 For example interview A. Khan, Human Rights Research and Advocacy Consortium (HRRAC), Kabul, 26th May 2014. Interview L. Docherty, Department for International Development (DFID), Kabul, 5th June 2014. Also interview J. Mohammad, Southern and Western Afghanistan and Balochistan Association for Coordination (SWABAC), 29th May 2014. Also H. Safi, A. Omerzai, V. Thiollet...
115 Interview E. Winter, op. cit.
116 H. Cleveland, *The Future Executive*, NY, H. Collins, 1972, p. 13. Quoted in N. Kapucu, op. cit., p. 36.

117 Cf. N. Kapucu, "Interorganizational coordination..." op. cit., p. 35.
118 J. Coleman, *Foundations of Social Theory*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1990. Quote from N. Kapucu, op. cit. p. 38.
119 E. Ostrom, *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action*, Cambridge, 1990. Quote from N. Kapucu, op. cit, p. 38.
120 Ibid. N. Kapucu, p. 35.
121 Ibid. p. 36.

communication and make sure the key players are talking to each other, they see each other and they work as a one team (...). And each sector needs this kind of approach and then there should be a link between the sectors. Probably one bigger organization should provide that link, which I think it's not happening.¹²²

The idea in this section is not to draw an exclusive panorama of all the coordination mechanisms or initiatives existing outside CS but rather those indirectly supporting coordination among CSOs. The aim is more so to give an overview of what kind of coordination or networks exist and how they are functioning in regards to CSOs. The analysis will first focus on the main donors and recent developments, then more on the UN system and finally on the initiatives within the Afghan government.

MAIN DONORS SUPPORTING CSOs

From a bilateral perspective, the US Embassy has given lot of money to strengthen and promote CSOs in Afghanistan. IPACS I (Initiatives to Promote Afghan Civil Society) was conceived and implemented through the work of Counterpart International, who won the funding from the US Embassy. The program ran from 2005 until 2010, mostly supporting two local Implementing Partner Intermediary Service Organizations (ISOs), ACSFo and the Afghan Women's Educational Center (AWEC).¹²³ A total of \$7.5 million in grants were disbursed to Afghan CSOs for over 135 projects; over half were given to women-led organizations.¹²⁴ In terms of knowledge and understanding of CSOs, the main achievements were the support of the MoE to create a special page on NGOs and make resources accessible to the public, as well as the publication of documentation on the status of CSOs in Afghanistan. IPACS was renewed and IPACS II started in 2010 for 3 years.¹²⁵ The second phase of the program awarded more than \$3.9 million in small grants to 34 local partners in 2012. CPI also assisted local partners in developing and submitting amendments to change Afghanistan's NGO law which were accepted by the MoE. Organized partners to lead more than 160 communities, regional and national

dialogues, through which more than 16,000 people gathered to call for improved government services. This program was focused primarily on building the capacity of CSOs and the creation of resources centers on organizational development, HR practices, financial management, and communications in Kabul and at the provincial level...¹²⁶ USAID has now developed a new 5-year program from 2013 to 2018 called the Afghan Civic Engagement Program (ACEP). This project is also being implemented by CPI to reinforce the role and viability of civil society and independent media in Afghanistan by providing technical assistance, capacity building, and grant support to organizations.¹²⁷ Major objectives include supporting civil society engagement with the government, increasing the ability of CSOs to advocate for policy priorities, expanding civic education, and improving CSOs' organizational capacity as well as their thematic expertise.¹²⁸

USAID is also supporting Aga Khan Foundation and CPI to initiate the certification of CSOs. The initiative aims for the creation of the Afghan Institute for Civil Society (AICS) with the involvement of most of the key traditional actors in Afghan CS, network and umbrella organizations. The role of the AICS will be to assess and certify adequate CSOs meeting relevant national and international standards, mostly in terms of internal structure and functioning. The objective is to raise the credibility of CSOs and systematize capacity development efforts.¹²⁹

Many other donors are supporting specific projects on an ad hoc basis with lower funding levels, involving partner organizations from the same nationality as well as local CSOs. For example, this is the approach of the German Embassy and the French Embassy.¹³⁰

From a collective perspective, Tawanmandi was created in 2012 by Scandinavian countries (Denmark, Norway, and Sweden) to support CS in Afghanistan. It is the only formally coordinated multi-donor program supporting CSOs in Afghanistan. The UK, via DFID and the British Council, is now managing the program and Switzerland has since joined this collective initiative. It is mostly a "grantmaking machine or network organization." Tawanmandi focuses on advocacy

¹²⁶ Interview M. Rahyab, op. cit.

¹²⁷ Interview K. Ludwig, op. cit.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Interview Z. Stankizai, op. cit.

¹³⁰ Interviews F. Otten, op. cit. or V. Thiollet, op. cit. The German are for example supporting HBS, which is working with several local CSOs like AWN, Wadan, Armanshahr Afghanistan Studies Organizations (ASASO) and new youth movement like Afghanistan's 1400...

and thematic areas with overall budget of 20 million USD for the 2012–2016 period. The program support key partners as well as more ad hoc projects in cooperation with Afghan and international CSOs, mostly NGOs like the Asia Foundation, Harakat, Mercy Corps, and Zardozi. Main donors (UK, Norway, Australia) also fund the Common Humanitarian Fund, which is a new trust fund managed by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).¹³¹ Tawanmandi is currently planning to evolve into a foundation in the future, allowing Afghans to take more ownership of the institution. However, many CSO actors feel that donor requirements are high and that Tawanmandi is only supporting prominent and well-known NGOs rather than individual CSOs.¹³²

The EU is also a notable player. In terms of humanitarian funding, The European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) has spent more than 913 million USD (680M Euro) in Afghanistan in the past 20 years.¹³³ ECHO funds UN agencies, NGOs and Red Cross / Red Crescent organisations who have to be registered organisations in Europe through a Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) or Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA). To obtain a FPA or FAFA, several conditions and criteria have to be met: office in Europe, legal, financial as well as administrative environment in place.¹³⁴ Therefore, ECHO cannot directly finance Afghan CSOs who may not have a presence in Europe but often the European organization funded is working in Afghanistan with local CSOs as implementing partners. For ECHO “coordination is a key element of their work.”¹³⁵ But it is mostly among international NGOs working in the Humanitarian sector.

While IC actors have made some progresses in terms of information sharing and cooperation, there is still room for improvement, especially in terms of coordination between donors and CSOs. From the donors’ side, there should be systematic coordination mechanisms, and not only bilateral or multilateral communication. The respondents from the donors’ side, even if they highlight some initiatives such as the general International Contact Group on Afghanistan¹³⁶ or more specifically the CS programs coordination

forum,¹³⁷ are mostly sharing information with the CSO they are working with and asking for information from colleagues on an individual, needs basis.¹³⁸ There are regular formal and informal meetings between donors such as the Humanitarian donors meetings, but these are mostly intended for sharing information. It can help coordination in case of large scale humanitarian crisis for example¹³⁹ but most of these kind of initiatives are less on real coordinated qualitative outcomes, or event collective design of future support to CSOs.

UN STRUCTURES

In the UN system, there are two principal structures whose the main role is coordination. Regarding humanitarian coordination, OCHA is one of the major actors in terms of money, resources and extent of geographic intervention.¹⁴⁰ OCHA staff has been in the country since the end of 2001 and the beginning of 2002 and subsequently withdrew with the creation of the United Nations Assistance Missions in Afghanistan (UNAMA).¹⁴¹ During the 1990’s in Peschawar, Pakistan, OCHA launched an operation called ‘Salam’ to support CSOs in Afghanistan and Pakistan. In late 2008 and early 2009, OCHA was then invited back into Afghanistan and be involved in the the “Standard Humanitarian Coordination Activities.”¹⁴² Since then, OCHA has focus on the:

Rebuilding of the humanitarian coordination architecture, moving to more standard products around the coordination, coordination humanitarian action plan and you know redeveloping the coordination architecture both at the national and at the operational levels in the provinces. And also beginning to work and rebuild the whole dynamic around humanitarian financing, with system of appeals and trust fund.¹⁴³

From 2010 to 2012, OCHA sharpened its focus to address “acute needs and geographical areas where needs are greatest.”¹⁴⁴ OCHA has also reviewed its strategy within the Common Humanitarian Action

131 More details below.

132 Interview H. Nashir, op. cit. Also H. Hayat, op. cit, A. Athayi, op. cit. J. Mohammad, op. cit, F. Otten, op. cit.

133 Interview O. Rousselle, ECHO, Kabul, op. cit.

134 Ibid.

135 Ibid.

136 <http://mfa.gov.af/en/news/chairmans-statement-international-contact-group-meeting> consulted on the 8th August 2014.

137 Tawanmandi, CPI, Asia Foundation, Open Society and Aga Khan

138 Interview F. Otten, op. cit. Interview V. Thiollet, op. cit.

139 Interview V. Thiollet, op. cit.

140 Cf <http://www.unocha.org/where-we-work/afghanistan> consulted on the 25th July 2014.

141 Interview A. O’Leary, OCHA, Kabul, 19th May 2014.

142 Ibid.

143 Ibid.

144 Ibid. “So you have a very significant presence of the actors in the north and northeast, the humanitarian based on needs cross the south half in Afghanistan where the conflict is most intense.”

Plan.¹⁴⁵ The funding available for CSOs working in humanitarian field is mostly accessible through the Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF).¹⁴⁶ From the UN side, there have been difficulties financing effective Afghan CSOs that are able to meet funding requirements. Moreover, A. O’Leary explained that there are around 2,000 NGOs registered with the MoE (including around 300 INGOs) and that:

When we look at those who have been actively participating in humanitarian response, there are less than 200. So again when we talk about civil society, what is civil society for us, we are looking at those who are actively involved in ongoing humanitarian response, who are involved in various coordinating structures whether it is cluster through operational coordination teams at the provincial level, whether it is the national clusters, or whether it is through the humanitarian country team. The reality is that when we look at what the actual capacity and the dynamics are, in terms of ability to deliver in a quality way, the record is very mixed. If we look for instance at what’s happening with the emergency response fund, which is a kind of tool for hazard response to have very quick funds, last year we received more than 100 proposals, just 30 were funded largely. Because what people were looking to do is mixed capacities at best, you have people who are looking to fund their ongoing activities under another umbrella and you also have very opportunists applications looking to what I will call ever called paper tigers, people, for instance NGOs, based in Kabul saying that they could respond in places like Kunar, places like Nooristan and places like Helmand without actually having had any track record in the past. So when we talk about where the overall accountability dynamics are going, ultimately it is the question of who are the credible partners who helped the, or what we call, the capacity to deliver in a quality way and in order to do that, largely you are looking at or NGOs with an established track record, not just in Afghanistan but in the provinces and districts where they are looking to implement. They have to have a degree of flexibility in the times of programming that they are prepared to and able to undertake. They need to be able to have a quite a good appetite for

risk and they also have to be able to engage with multiple stakeholders on the ground.¹⁴⁷

CSOs, international and Afghan, mostly NGOs, relayed that from their perspective communication and requirements of OCHA are difficult and complex.¹⁴⁸ Even if OCHA is a proficient existing structure for coordination of humanitarian activities, there is still a great need for training on OCHA requirements and procedures to apply to the CHF as well as capacity development for local CSOs, especially for Afghan CSOs.

The other UN structure that aims to coordinate UN actions and CSO activities in Afghanistan in a systematic way is the UN Clusters system. The UN Clusters system was established in 2008 to counter the lack of coordination and leadership in international responses to humanitarian crises.¹⁴⁹ The system was introduced as nine thematic clusters for coordination at both the field and global levels, with each field-level cluster led by a UN agency functioning as “provider of last resort” accountable to the UN Humanitarian Coordinator.¹⁵⁰ In Afghanistan there are at least 10 thematic clusters, together with their lead agencies, as follows: Education (UNICEF), Nutrition (UNICEF), Health (WHO), Water Sanitation and Hygiene (UNICEF), Emergency Shelter and Non Food Items (UNHCR), Protection (UNHCR), Food security and Agriculture (WFP and FAO), Emergency Telecom (WFP), and Logistics (WFP).¹⁵¹ The protection cluster also oversees 5 sector-based subclusters, including one on Child Protection in Emergencies. Being part of a cluster is one of the preconditions for any CSO in Afghanistan to obtain access to CHF funding. On the ground, there are remarks about coordination within the cluster system.¹⁵² The general view is that the cluster system as is insufficient and there is not enough interaction and coordination among them,

147 Interview A. O’Leary, op. cit.

148 ACBAR meeting, collective reply to Afghanistan Common Humanitarian Fund Questionnaire August 2014, 27th July 2014. And feedback from members, especially Afghan NGOs.

149 <http://business.un.org/en/assets/39c87a78-fec9-402e-a434-2c355f24e4f4.pdf> consulted on the 26th July 2014.

150 Ibid.

151 For the strategy of the cluster:

http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/_assets/files/field_protection_clusters/Afghanistan/files/APC_%20Strategy_2012_2014_EN.pdf consulted on the 26th July 2014.

An assessment of the clusters in Afghanistan: L. Geirsdottir, NGO and Humanitarian Reform Project, Assessment on the Afghanistan Kabul based Humanitarian coordination mechanisms June–September 2009. Available at: http://r4d.dfid.gov.uk/PDF/Outputs/Hum_Response/assessment-rep09.pdf consulted on the 26th July 2014.

152 ACBAR, Afghanistan Humanitarian Forum (AHF) meeting; 22nd May 2014.

145 <https://afg.humanitarianresponse.info/funding/common-humanitarian-fund> consulted on the 25th July 2014.

146 <https://afg.humanitarianresponse.info/highlight/common-humanitarian-fund-chf-afghanistan> consulted on the 25th July 2014. To apply to be eligible for funding <https://chfafghanistan.unocha.org/>

which is also acknowledged by the UN. G. Mensah, the Protection Cluster Coordinator [at UNHCR] explained, “I imagine there would be organizations [CSOs] which have been involved in lobbying, in advocacy on particular issues, so we do have some coordination with them but perhaps not as much as we should (...) There has not been sufficient engagement so far.”¹⁵³ Additionally, due to the rotation of UN international staff, there is often repetition and the process to reach a decision is very slow. Furthermore, as with most organizations, the functionality of the cluster is highly dependent on the quality of its management.¹⁵⁴ An ACBAR colleague stressed the weaknesses of the cluster system: Due to the level of paperwork and OCHA deadlines, clusters and their NGO members often felt rushed to submit something and didn’t have sufficient time to review and provide good quality input. Cluster meetings largely became focused on getting documentation right for CHAP/CHF, not about coordinated responses to various crises happening at the time. The 2015 process needs to be better streamlined and not divert the purpose of cluster meetings. If CHF remains focused on 1 or 2 clusters – the others have achieved little output for a great input.¹⁵⁵

The UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), which was established by the UN Security Council in 2002 at the request of the Afghan Government to assist it and the people of the country in laying the foundations for sustainable peace and development in the country, has no specific program for CSOs.¹⁵⁶ Nonetheless, UNAMA has been a serious supporter of coordination among CSOs at both the national and regional level. In its political mission, UNAMA has been involved with other IOs, especially “in supporting CSOs, particularly from the preparation to the participation in international conferences like London, Bonn, Tokyo...”¹⁵⁷ UNAMA was also behind the initiatives to create a Joint Advocacy Committee (JAC), which was further widened in terms of membership and structure and renamed as Civil Society Joint Working Group (CSJWG) just before the 2012 Tokyo Conference.¹⁵⁸

153 Interview G. Mensah, Protection Cluster Coordinator, Kabul, 18th May 2014.

154 Ibid.

155 L. Cameron, Comments on ACBAR collective answer to the Afghanistan Common Humanitarian Fund Questionnaire, op. cit. 28 July 2014.

156 website, <http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?tabid=12255&language=en-US> consulted on the 27th July 2014.

157 Interview of M. Frozanfar, op. cit.

158 Cf, M. N. Frozanfar, comments on the draft, September 2014.

UNAMA has thus been technically supporting and facilitating the meetings of Senior Officials (SOM as a follow up meeting of Tokyo conference, co-chaired by MoF),¹⁵⁹ or even of the Special Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board,¹⁶⁰ and is playing an important role in the following up on the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework (TMAF). The aim of those meetings was to review the mutual commitments and progress made by the IC and the GIRoA. UNAMA staff helps CS representatives to attend these forums and have their own positions, policy recommendations and position papers.¹⁶¹ UNAMA also encouraged CSOs “to set up forums, networks and coordination mechanisms with the aim of making CSOs come together, working together on common principles, and determining how CSOs can get more involved with the government in decision and policy making processes at the national and sub-national levels. Additionally, UNAMA is helping both CSOs and GIRoA to pursue overall development in different aspects in a good and trustworthy working partnership.”¹⁶² But here again, some critics emerged from CSOs regarding the legitimacy and representativity of the process.¹⁶³

The Global Environment Facility, Small Grant Program (GEF SGP) is an example of a specific program that aims to strengthen the role of CS among UN agencies. This program began in Afghanistan in October 2012, funded by GEF and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Not only NGOs but also CSOs can benefit from this programme. In terms of Coordination, UNDP has developed an interesting mechanism to reinforce their relations with CSOs.¹⁶⁴ The Civil Society Advisory Committee (CSAC) was created in 2000 as a

159 The senior official meetings are meeting in Afghanistan with Afghan and International Senior government officials, representation of International Community and donors. Last one was in July 2013.

Cf report http://mof.gov.af/Content/files/TMAF_SOM_Report_Final_English.pdf consulted on the 4th August 2014.

160 The JCMB is a joint meeting with development expert working in Afghanistan, Afghan officials, Ambassadors working in Afghanistan as well as main actors of international community, donors, UN agencies... The aim to monitor the overall strategic coordination of the implementation of the Afghanistan Compact and the interim Afghanistan National Development Strategy at the London conference. The last one was held in Kabul in January 2014.

Cf ToR http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/IMG/pdf/JCMB_TOR_-_English.pdf consulted on the 4th August 2014.

161 Interview M. Frozanfar, op. cit.

162 Ibid.

163 Cf part 4 on challenges of CSOs.

164 More details on UNDP engagement with Civil Society, UNDP website:

http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/partners/civil_society_organizations.html consulted on the 27th of July. And especially on Afghanistan:

<http://www.af.undp.org/content/afghanistan/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2013/12/18/CSAC-launched/>

formal mechanism for dialogue between civil society representatives and UNDP's senior management at the global level.¹⁶⁵ It was launched in Afghanistan in December 2013 and shows that "Afghan civil society is ready to play a meaningful role in supporting UNDP efforts for building a strong and resilient Afghanistan with institutions that foster accountability and good governance, and deliver quality development results for the citizens."¹⁶⁶ It includes 15 members of CSOs, representing different sectors and different structures, for example The Liaison Office (TLO), Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU), AWN, and ACBAR. The purpose of CSAC is to improve dialogue and consultation between UNDP staff and CSOs actors, to provide UNDP with advice on policies and strategies, and to serve as a platform for CSOs to give a stronger voice to Afghan Civil Society. This platform is a great achievement for improving UNDP activities and interactions with CSOs and can support coordination among different actors. Nevertheless, certain CSO actors feel that it is always the same organizations who end up representing the whole Afghan CS, and that it would be good to consider new young organization that is less well-known but very active.¹⁶⁷

Additionally, and again indirectly, the World Bank (WB) has administered the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) since 2002. It was established

To provide a coordinated financing mechanism for the Government of Afghanistan's budget and priority national investment projects. (...) It is the largest single source of on-budget financing for Afghanistan's development and is delivering important results within key sectors including education, health, agriculture, rural development, infrastructure, and governance. The ARTF is supported by 33 donors.¹⁶⁸

The WB also funds Afghan institutions through the International Development Association, which mostly supports service delivery related projects.¹⁶⁹ The WB does not have a direct relationship with CSOs through this platform, but engages with them on ad hoc basis

165 Interview S. Cordella, UNDP, Kabul, 5th June 2014.

166 Abdul Khaliq Zazai, Head of the Accessibility Organization for Afghan Disabled (AOAD), one of the members of the Civil Society Advisory Committee (CSAC) to UNDP Afghanistan that met for its inaugural consultation cf <http://www.af.undp.org/content/afghanistan/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2013/12/18/CSAC-launched/> consulted on the 27th July 2014.

167 For example interview S. Schmeidl, op. cit, I. Zaman, op. cit. H. Safi, op. cit.

168 ARTF website <http://www.artf.af/> consulted on the 27th July 2014.

169 IDA website <http://www.worldbank.org/ida/country/afghanistan.html> consulted on the 27th July 2014.

when there is a specific need for consultation, usually through CSOs or umbrella or network organizations like ACBAR or ACSFo.¹⁷⁰

AFGHAN GOVERNMENT

The Afghan government does not have a systematic or formal mechanism for coordinating with CS actors and efforts. Aside from regular administrative and financial interactions, there is no organized governmental support to CS actors and no coordination between different ministries to assist CSOs.¹⁷¹ There is no official entity or resource center, and the Afghan government has largely viewed CSOs as a competitor for international funding. In his article on the Civil Society Law Reform in Afghanistan, D. Moore attributes these words to President Karzai: "The three great evils Afghanistan has faced in its history are communism, terrorism, and NGO-ism."¹⁷² However Karzai has also previously expressed his support to Afghan CSOs, like for example, in a meeting with NGOs in 2000 he gave special thanks to NGOs for their great work in accessing remote areas and developing the competences and abilities of the Afghan citizens.¹⁷³ There is a general feeling within the Afghan CSO community, that neither the newly elected President, A. Ghani or the Chief Executive Officer Abdullah Abdullah really recognized the role of CSOs nor had any concrete civil society engagement prior to the the London Conference in December 2014. Although there is a commitment from both sides to engage more with civil society in 2015, there is still a lack of proper formal, systematic mechanism to do so, meaning even if the relations between CSOs and Afghan governmental institutions are improved, there is still a lack of trust from both sides.

Each ministry has some relationship with CSOs for specific projects, such as the Ministry of Education with the Global Partnership for Education Program,¹⁷⁴ the work of the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development with the National Solidarity Programme,¹⁷⁵ and the Ministry of Health with the System Enhancement for Health Action in Transition Project (SEHAT).¹⁷⁶

170 Interview R. Zia, op. cit.

171 Interview MoE representative, op. cit.

172 D. Moore, Civil Society Law Reform in Afghanistan, op. cit.

173 See for example discussion with M. Fareed Asmand, December 2014.

174 <http://moe.gov.af/en/page/gpe> consulted on the 27th July 2014.

175 <http://www.nspafghanistan.org/> consulted on the 27th July 2014.

176 Project assisted by WB, cf <http://www.worldbank.org/projects/>

In terms of humanitarian coordination, the Afghan National Disaster Management Authorities take the lead of the activation and coordination of response, with the government taking a primary role complemented by UN agencies, CSOs (mostly NGOs) and other national or international support “depending on the scale and impact of the disaster.”¹⁷⁷

However, one initiative is worth mentioning. The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) is a worldwide initiative that Afghanistan joined in 2010.¹⁷⁸ EITI is:

...a global voluntary standard to ensure transparency of payments from natural resources. Governments sign up to EITI to implement it at the national level. Extractive sector companies voluntarily sign up to EITI as a widely recognized global benchmark of good corporate practice and are also required to participate in the initiative in many of the countries in which they operate.¹⁷⁹

The Afghanistan EITI (AEITI) is under the Ministry of Mines and works closely with the Ministry of Finance, the private sector and civil society (defined as Non-governmental organizations such as trade unions, issue-based coalitions, faith-based organizations, indigenous people movements, the media, think tanks and foundations).¹⁸⁰ CSOs are part of the multi stakeholders group (MSG) made up of the government, company, and civil society representatives that oversee the AEITI implementation in a country. The MSG develops the country work plan, the production of the AEITI report and ensures that the AEITI contributes to public debate.¹⁸¹ The representation of CSOs in a formal and regular manner is a great example that should be reproduced or serve as an example for other ministries. CSOs are able to raise their voice and advocate to the government for policy change. After analyzing the main initiatives to promote and strengthen CSOs by external stakeholders, it is necessary to turn attention to the key players regarding internal coordination among CSOs.

P129663/afghanistan-system-enhancement-health-action-transition-project?lang=en consulted on the 27th July 2014.

177 <http://www.andma.gov.af/froot.aspx?info=346> consulted on the 27th July 2014.

178 <http://eiti.org/eiti> consulted on the 27th July 2014.

179 Ministry of Mines (MoM) <http://mom.gov.af/en/page/11365/1383> consulted on the 27th July 2014.

180 http://eiti.org/glossary#Multi-stakeholder_group consulted on the 27th July 2014.

181 Ibid.

3.3 SCENE OF THE CSOs COORDINATING BODIES, UMBRELLA ORGANIZATIONS AND NETWORKS

From 2005 onwards and especially after the law on NGOs, there was an “explosion of coordination initiatives”¹⁸², some registered¹⁸³ and some non-registered (for various reasons),¹⁸⁴ some general¹⁸⁵ and some specialized¹⁸⁶, some formal¹⁸⁷ and some informal¹⁸⁸, some regional,¹⁸⁹ some national,¹⁹⁰ and some international.¹⁹¹ The 2005 NGOs Law introduced an article to the Afghan legal system to define umbrella organizations and their status. Article 9 stipulates that:

- (1) For the purpose of expansion, improvement and implementation of activities and the completion of projects, organizations may create a working structure (as an umbrella organization). To acquire legal entity status, the umbrella organization must be confirmed by the High Evaluation Commission.
- (2) Three or more organizations, for the purpose of cooperation and better coordination of their work with relevant governmental agencies, shall form a coordinating organization as a non-governmental organization, according to the provisions of this law. (...).¹⁹²

There are number of internal CS initiatives for coordination in the form of informal coalitions or networks, like the Badakhshan Development Forum set up by AKDN in 2009 to provide local support to CSOs in the province.¹⁹³ Another example is the recent drive of five CSOs working in peace building – CPAU, TLO, Sanayee Development Organization (SDO), PTRO and EQUALITY for Peace and Democracy (EPD) – which came together and formed Salah Consortium, a peace network.

182 Interview V. Thiollet, op. cit.

183 ACBAR, AWN for example.

184 Afghanistan Anti-Corruption Network (AACN). In a reply to a questionnaire, M. S. Hamdam expresses that “AACN was established in January 2010, but not registered. The government opposed to register, because of their conflict of interest.” Also Villages associations, CBOs... as well as other form of more recent movement, like youth organization...

185 ACBAR, ANCB, ACSFo for example.

186 AWN, CSHRN for example.

187 ACBAR for example.

188 JAC (Joint Advocacy Committee) for example or now CSJWG.

189 SWABAC for example.

190 ACBAR, ANCB, ACSFo for example..

191 BAAG or ENNA for example (European Network for NGOs in Afghanistan).

192 Law on NGOs 2005 op. cit.

193 Interview Z. Stankizai op. cit: http://www.akdn.org/rural_development/afghanistan.asp consulted on the 28th July 2014.

It all started in a series of meetings of our organizations. The whole thing started in December or November 2012 and by May last year (2013) we signed the charter of cooperation and it continues to work. We have implemented a number of joint projects. We led the process of signing memorandum of understanding with the HPC (High Peace Council) on behalf of CS and leading some 70 other organizations, which endorsed this MOU or this charter. So with new projects coming and events of 2014, especially the political transition, I think Salah will have a regular office, secretariat and regular peace building projects to implement. We are working on this.¹⁹⁴

As defined in the scope of the research, the study focuses on formally registered bodies, umbrella organizations, or networks with coordination as a core mandate, working in or on Afghanistan, especially those based in Kabul. The report neither examines all umbrella organizations or network organizations existing in the country nor gives an exhaustive picture of coordination mechanisms in Afghanistan. It aims to target the main bodies, focusing on CSOs who are not ACBAR members, to analyze their capacity and to provide a greater understanding on regular actors working on coordination of CSOs in the Afghan capital. The examination is centered first on general coordination bodies, then on thematic ones, then regional and finally on international supporting networks. The information presented in this section is based on interviews and further research using websites, emails and phone calls. Some data may be missing due to lack of access or collection issues, the data being mostly unavailable, or certain actors refusing to cooperate with the research.

GENERAL COORDINATION NETWORKS



AGENCY COORDINATING BODY FOR AFGHAN RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT (ACBAR)

<http://www.acbar.org/>

Annual budget for 2014: around 625,000 USD

- Founding and scale

ACBAR was founded in August 1988 as an NGOs registered with MoE in response to the demand from many Afghan and international NGOs involved in humanitarian work in Afghanistan and with Afghan refugees in Pakistan. During the years of war (during both the Mujahedeen and Taliban) and a non-functioning state in Afghanistan, ACBAR served mainly to coordinate humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people implemented by its members in cooperation with other main stakeholders such as the UN agencies and donors.¹⁹⁵ Since 2001, ACBAR has partially changed its focus and has been concentrating its activities on the general coordination of its members, advocacy, dissemination of information, and promotion of ethical standards among its members through its Code of Conduct, which was revised in 2013.¹⁹⁶ ACBAR's main office is in Kabul, but ABCAR also has offices in Jalalabad and Mazar-e Sharif.¹⁹⁷ In 2005, ACBAR changed its status from an international to an Afghan NGO and is still registered with MoE.

- Mandate and activities

As an independent body for the collective voice of NGOs operating in Afghanistan, ACBAR is above all dedicated to aid effectiveness, capacity development, advocacy, coordination, and information exchange services to address the humanitarian, recovery and sustainable development needs of the country effectively and efficiently. The members of ACBAR are committed to work in partnership with each other, the government, donors, local CSOs and communities to support Afghan-led humanitarian and development assistance.¹⁹⁸ ACBAR also enhances and strengthens linkages and coordination with the

¹⁹⁵ Prologue, ACBAR statutes.

¹⁹⁶ Accessible on line <http://www.acbar.org/files/downloads/ACBAR%20GUIDE%20final%20version%20JP5%20.pdf> consulted the 29th July 2014.

¹⁹⁷ It used to have one in Herat, closed for financial reason but which might reopen soon (strategic plan 2014).

¹⁹⁸ Point 4 of the status, Mission.

¹⁹⁴ Interview I. Zaman, op. cit.

Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA) and other partners in the humanitarian and development sectors as well as supporting GIRoA and humanitarian partners in emergency monitoring and response according to need. ACBAR has a key role in influencing policies and practices on the basis of humanitarian and development principles and standards. In terms of coordination and networking, ACBAR encourages joint approaches and responses and share learning and information. Lastly, ACBAR's staff support to encourage adherence to principles in delivering assistance.¹⁹⁹ ACBAR mainly works on coordination and advocacy as well as training and capacity building of local CSOs, mostly NGOs.

- Members and membership

ACBAR members have to meet a certain criteria. To become a member, an organization has to file an application letter and a membership form including general information, office information, and narrative description to ACBAR. The organization has to be registered with the MoE, which allows, according to ACBAR's mandate, only NGOs to apply and not social organizations or associations registered with MoJ. The NGO has to share its statues of operation as well as its most recent annual narrative report submitted to the MoE and an endorsement letter from two ACBAR members as well as to sign the Code of Conduct.²⁰⁰ There are a number of benefits to joining ACBAR, especially in terms of support, access to information, promoting respect of ethical and legal principles, ensuring the reputation of member NGOs, and most importantly participating in national and international advocacy and influencing policymakers.²⁰¹ ACBAR is one of the only umbrella organizations that includes both Afghan and international NGO members in the country.²⁰²

Members have to pay a membership fee equal to 0.01% of their annual budget, up to a maximum of 5,000 USD.²⁰³ Membership fees around 20% of ACBAR's budget. Membership can be terminated when a membership organization ceases operations in Afghanistan, when a member organization notifies ACBAR in writing of its intention to withdraw, if a member organization is one or two years in arrears

199 Point 7 ACBAR Mandate.

200 ACBAR Membership Requirements: <http://www.acbar.org/ACBAR-Membership-Requirements/> consulted on the 29th July 2014.

201 ACBAR Membership Benefits: <http://www.acbar.org/Membership-benefits/> consulted on the 29th July 2014.

202 HRRAC also has national NGOs but itself is also a member of ACBAR.

203 Chapter 2, 2.4 statutes.

of payment of the annual membership fee, or if its behavior or activities violate ACBAR code of conduct. After a warning letter from the Director, membership will then be automatically terminated. Lastly, membership can be revoked if a member organization has been undertaking activities contrary to the aims and values of ACBAR, or is acting in contravention to ACBAR's guidelines and Code of Conduct.²⁰⁴ From the last update in August 2014, ACBAR has 128 members, including 77 INGOs and 51 ANGOs, working across Afghanistan.

- Capacity

Internal

ACBAR has a democratic structure with a General Assembly (GA) consisting of all the members of ACBAR represented by their Country Directors or their formal delegates authorized to make decisions on their behalf. The GA meets twice a year and is the highest decision making organ of ACBAR, approving annual documents and electing the Chairperson of ACBAR and the Steering Committee (SC) consisting of at least 4 members from Afghan NGOs and 4 members from INGOs, the senior legal representative of the organization in the country. The SC is a key organ of the organization, monitoring, informing, guiding, directing and assisting the work of ACBAR and the Secretariat. It includes 13 members (including the Chair and previous Chair and 8 members representatives) and meets on a monthly basis. The Secretariat is composed of all ACBAR staff as well as the Director. ACBAR has 5 departments, including administration and logistics, finance, information and coordination, training and capacity development, and one advocacy/civil society. There are around 30 staff in ACBAR's Kabul office. ACBAR has a Human Resources (HR) policy and is audited regularly on both a project basis and as a whole organization, and all staff members are evaluated every year. The main donors of ACBAR are currently Peace With Japan (PWJ) and Tawanmandi, which cover 63% of ACBAR's budget. 37% of ACBAR's budget comes from member fees and advertisements on ACBAR's website. ACBAR has neither a permanent translator nor a designer and used its staff to perform those tasks. . All ACBAR publications are translated into Dari and Pashto. ACBAR's strategy is reviewed every three years.

204 Ibid. 2.6 of the statutes.

External

Communications activities are shared between the information and coordination department, and the Advocacy department. There are least two meetings every month with all ACBAR members invited – the Afghan Humanitarian Forum (AHF) and the Afghan Development Forum (ADF), as well as the Directors meeting, and the Advocacy Working Group (AWG) – where members and external actors can raise a point, make a presentation and hold a discussion with members. Invitations are sent via email and ad hoc meetings can be called by ACBAR or by members, based on need. ACBAR is present on social media, largely Facebook but not Twitter.²⁰⁵ ACBAR is one of the only CSOs having a specific database on NGOs, contacts and activities, and posts a list of jobs available in Afghanistan on its website, as well as resumes and a list of advocacy documents and requests for proposals. ACBAR also releases a monthly newsletter, shared with CSOs, donors and the main actors in the humanitarian and development sectors in Afghanistan.



AFGHAN CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM ORGANIZATION (ACSFO)

<http://www.acsf.af/english/>

Annual budget for 2014: 3 Million USD (so far 1.7 M disbursed)

● Founding and scale

ACSFO was established in partnership between Afghan civil society actors and “Swisspeace” at the request of 76 participants in the first Afghan Civil Society Conference in Bad Honnef, Germany in 2001. The goal of the conference was to involve Afghan civil society in the peace and reconstruction process of their country in order to achieve a more sustainable post-conflict reconstruction than a simple top-down government approach would produce. ACSFO began its activities in February 2002 after initial funds were secured from the Swiss and German governments,²⁰⁶

and the ACSFO Office in Kabul was opened in May 2002. ACSFO’s mission is to facilitate the process of citizen building and state building through advocacy, capacity building and coordination.²⁰⁷ ACSFO has been able to reach to the most remote areas of Afghanistan. “ACSFO has established the widest network of grassroots CSOs, donors, partners, and committed individuals all over Afghanistan (...). ACSFO Regional Offices are located in Mazar-e-Sharif, Jalalabad, Gardiz, Kunduz and Bamyan.”²⁰⁸ The main office is in Kabul, but ACSFO also has offices in 9 provinces.²⁰⁹

● Mandate and activities

ACSFO is registered as an umbrella organization with MoE. It has implemented many different projects in the areas of advocacy, rule of law, civic education, peace building and research. Its objectives are to coordinate, expand and foster civil society networks in Afghanistan and abroad. They also identify, raise and incorporate the needs, concerns and views of Afghan citizens into the political, social and economic development processes. Lastly, they build institutional capacities of public and civil society entities and promote citizenship values and volunteerism.²¹⁰ ACSFO, being a major civil society forum, serves the purpose of improving coordination and networking among civil society actors as well as bridging the gap between the citizens and the Afghan government. In order to promote the concept of civil society, raise public awareness, undertake policy- and issue-based advocacy and strengthen coordination among civil society actors, ACSFO has undertaken different type of activities. Before 2006, ACSFO was mostly focused on civic education and elections (Local Governance Community Developments) with USAID, participation to promote Afghan CS with CPI (IPACS), civic education outreach on presidential and parliamentary elections, and support to the electoral process and awareness raising through media.²¹¹ Since then, ACSFO is also involved in awareness raising programs, advocacy and capacity building (promotion of women’s rights under Islam, networking and coordination, community and democratic policing, civil society

207 Vision and mission http://www.ACSFO.af/english/index.php?option=com_contentandview=articleandid=2:vision-and-missionandcatid=29andItemid=3 consulted on the 30th July 2014.

208 Ibid.

209 Ibid.

210 Objectives:

http://www.ACSFO.af/english/index.php?option=com_contentandview=articleandid=3:objectivesandcatid=29andItemid=3 consulted on the 30th July 2014.

211 Interview A. Rafiee, op. cit. And Background, op. cit.

205 Internal discussion to do so. The point might be raised in the next GA in October 2014.

206 Background on the website:

http://www.ACSFO.af/english/index.php?option=com_contentandview=articleandid=1:backgroundandcatid=29andItemid=3 consulted on the 30th July 2014.

empowerment through capacity building, networking and research).²¹²

- Members and membership

The ACSFo website has a special login for members and for staff. According to an interview with A. Rafiee, the head of the organization, ACSFo currently has 168 organizations as members and 42 applications under process, as well as more than 100 individuals and 5,000 applications from individuals under process.²¹³ To become a member, you have to be registered with any ministry, including MoE, MoJ, and MRRD... Therefore, its members can be CSOs, as well as NGOs, and ACSFo can have any coordination or umbrella organization as a member. Any CSO that wants to join ACSFo has to file a form, to be an active and democratic organization, and should not be “ethnically based, or family based or working on issues related to discrimination, religious fundamentalism, terrorism and others illegal activities. And the CSO has to work in a sector of activity.”²¹⁴ CSOs also have to meet certain criteria in terms of structure, to have an annual budget and an office.²¹⁵ Members must pay an annual membership fee of 3000 AFN (60 USD) for organization and 600 AFN (10 USD) for individuals.²¹⁶ According to A. Rafiee:

Our membership fees are much less than the expenses that we have. That is only making up to 7% of our budget. This year actually it was around 10%, perhaps 5% from the private sector and the rest is coming from the international money (around 90% from donors). Around 20% of our budget is also coming from our services because we sell our services to donors and to our members and partners as well particularly our capacity building services, our civic education services. We do training in different topics and these trainings are very professional.²¹⁷

- Capacity

Internal

ACSFo has a General Assembly (GA) including representatives of all members organizations, which meets every two years. The organization

also has a Board of Directors which consist of 9 national and 3 international organizations, high level representatives of Afghan CSOs and networks, and individuals from the media and academic spheres. The management of the organization is entrusted to the Executive Director, who also has a Deputy. In the Kabul office there are three main units: the Admin and Finance Coordination Unit, Program Coordination Unit (including a coordination and public relations department, a capacity development department, an advocacy department and a rule of law department), and Monitoring and Evaluation, Learning and Design Unit.²¹⁸ ACSFo has around 187 staff in total including 60 in the main Kabul office.²¹⁹ The strategy of the organization is reviewed every three years, most recently in 2013, and is accessible to the public.²²⁰ ACSFo is also subject to annual audit and is, according to its Director, “the richest organization in terms of policies”. ACSFo has 35 organizational policies in HR, finance, administration, advocacy, code of conduct, human rights, positive discrimination for women’s employment, training, coordination, rule of law, gender... and almost 80% meet international standards²²¹. ACSFo has worked with around 27 donors and is certified by USAID and DFID. Currently, their main donors are Oxfam Novib, Tawanmandi, CPI/USAID, Oxfam GB and GIZ.²²²

External

ACSFo does not see itself as a coordinating body but more as a “facilitator.”²²³

We are a facilitating coordination body. So we try to help our members, partners and other networks including ACBAR, including ANCB who are much bigger than us, much more powerful than us. We are trying to help them and also working with them and facilitate among these coordinating groups to create coalitions from time to time, to create working groups and task forces on different topics and different issues, and help them to create a stronger voice for civil society on important issues,

212 Ibid.

213 Email exchange with A. Rafiee from 2^d August 2014.

214 Interview A. Rafiee, op. cit.

215 Ibid.

216 Email exchange, op. cit.

217 Ibid.

218 http://www.ACSFo.af/english/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=78&Itemid=6 consulted on the 30th July 2014. And for a specific development on each department,

http://www.ACSFo.af/english/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=31&Itemid=9

219 Email exchange with A. Rafiee, op. cit.

220 http://www.ACSFo.af/english/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=88:ACSFo-strategy&catid=55&Itemid=8 consulted on the 30th July 2014.

221 Interview A. Rafiee, op. cit.

222 Email exchange, op. cit.

223 Ibid.

particularly about national issues—on nationwide issues.²²⁴

The coordination and communication work of ACSFo is mostly undertaken by the PR and advocacy departments. There is no regular meeting at ACSFo except the GA, but there are a lot of meetings on an ad hoc basis, or requested by members on specific issues by the advocacy committees working on environment, youth, people with disabilities...²²⁵ “We have at least 3 meetings a week and the meeting room is rarely empty.”²²⁶ ACSFo is part of several networks, including the South Asian Forum for Human Rights (SAFHR), as well as informal network like the JAC. ACSFo has MoUs with around 10 CSOs, mostly youth organizations.²²⁷ ACSFo also has 320 partners, including ACBAR, AWN, and other CSOs, umbrella organizations, networks, unions... ACSFo releases a monthly magazine called Jamea-e-Madani (Civil Society), and has a presence on Facebook and Twitter, though they are not very active on these platforms.²²⁸ ACSFo publications are published in three languages (English and two local languages) and there is no permanent translator; sometimes the translation is done internally by staff members, or it is externally sourced. ACSFo has a database of its members and partners, both organizations and individuals, as well as government officials.²²⁹



AFGHAN NGOS COORDINATION BUREAU (ANCB)

<http://www.ancb.org/>

Annual budget for 2014: around 200,000 USD

- Founding and scale

ANCB was founded in 1991 in Peshawar.

When the Russians invaded Afghanistan so many Afghans immigrated to other countries, particularly to Pakistan, and after that the international community on the ground wanted to assist the refugees in Pakistan. Many international agencies,

224 Ibid.

225 Email exchange A. Rafiee, op. cit.

226 Ibid.

227 Email exchange, A. Rafiee, op. cit.

228 Last post was early 2013. Consulted on the 30th July 2014.

229 Interview A. Rafiee, op. cit.

UN agencies, came to Peshawar—came to Pakistan to assist these refugees. Medical, health, water sanitation, education... so after 1989, these refugee agencies tried to encourage some qualified Afghans to establish their own local NGOs in order to provide or deliver services inside Afghanistan. So therefore at that time, at the beginning, 15 Afghan NGOs were established and started working both in delivering services in Pakistan and in Afghanistan. So there was need of coordination for the activities of these NGOs, international and Afghan. It was the need for that. Therefore some Afghans got together and established ANCB.²³⁰

ANCB is a network of national NGOs in Afghanistan coordinating the activities among its members with the government, international organizations, the UN and donor agencies.²³¹ ANCB has one office in Kabul and uses its members' offices in the provinces when needed.²³²

- Mandate and activities

Registered with MoE as a coordination body, ANCB strives to enhance the capacity of its member organizations through workshops, seminars, as well as building partnerships with other organizations for the enhancement of technical capacity.²³³ ANCB has been working throughout Afghanistan through its members in health, agriculture, human rights, women's empowerment, education, the environment, protection, capacity building and civic education sectors.²³⁴ ANCB currently only implements capacity building projects.²³⁵

- Members and membership

204 NGOs are members of ANCB.²³⁶ Only Afghan NGOs registered with MoE can become a member of ANCB. “98% of the members are working in Afghanistan, while 2% are working in Pakistan.”²³⁷ Applicants have to file a specific form with the name, address, executive staff, background, charter, structure, rules and regulations, activities and work plan, budget

230 Interview A. Omerzai, op. cit.

231 Introduction ANCB website:

http://www.ancb.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=22&Itemid=209 consulted on the 31st July 2014.

232 Email exchange with Dr. Ahmad, ANCB, 3rd August 2014.

233 Ibid.

234 Ibid.

235 Email exchange with Dr Ahmad, op. cit.

236 Ibid, and no 104 according to the website.

237 Interview A. Omerzai, op. cit.

and funding sources.²³⁸ They also have to present an attestation of at least five ANCB members, and to present their annual report. The statutes are very similar to ACBAR statutes.²³⁹ ANCB's membership fee is 6000 AFN per year.²⁴⁰

- Capacity

Internal

ANCB has a formal structure with a GA, Chairman and Board of Directors. The GA is responsible for electing the Board and the Chairman. The Board of Directors consists of 11 people, the Chairman, the Vice Chairman, the Director of Finance and 8 other members. It is the decision-making body of ANCB and is responsible for facilitating the GA for implementation of decisions, regulations and other programs. The Board of Directors includes ten members who are elected by the GA by a majority vote in a confidential election with specific criteria (voting members must have been members for at least 2 years).²⁴¹ ANCB comprises 15 staff and various departments, including administration, finance, logistics, training, communication and advocacy. The Board of Directors established ANCB's strategy for several years. The main donors who have been funded the organization are UN Women, USAID, and NED. This year, it's mostly Peace with Japan (PWJ). ANCB has an HR policy and is audited on a project basis after the completion of every project. ANCB is working in three languages – English, Dari and Pashto – but does not have a permanent translator.

External

ANCB does not have specific staff on advocacy or communication. ANCB is member of the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) and CIVICUS, a worldwide Alliance for Citizen Participation. The organization is also a partner of ACBAR and PWJ. ANCB has a database.²⁴² ANCB is present on Facebook but is not very active.²⁴³

238 Available on line: http://www.ancb.org/index.php?option=com_jdownloads&Itemid=261&task=finishandcid=3&catid=5 consulted on the 31st July 2014.

239 Even sometimes exact copy and ANCB even developed a job posting website, which is not functioning.

240 According to Dr. Ahmad, email 3rd of September 2014.

241 http://www.ancb.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=43&Itemid=54 consulted on the 31st July 2014.

242 Website was not functioning. Consulted on the 31st August 2014.

243 Last post end of 2012, <https://www.facebook.com/ancbkabul?fref=ts> consulted on the 31st July 2014.

CIVIL SOCIETY COORDINATION CENTER (CSCC)

No website.²⁴⁴

Annual budget for 2014: 31, 500 USD

- Founding and scale

CSCC was created in 2011.

One of the main ideas why CSCC was established is that through our needs assessment of CS we have found that most of the CS umbrella organizations were based in Kabul and most of them are focusing on issues and things related to Kabul. We have a saying that Kabul is not Afghanistan as Afghanistan is not Kabul. So we have seen that gap, and the members of CSCC, CS activists present in this initiative, there are in the country since long, they were CS activists but we have form CS coordination since 3 years for this purpose. So we are not new, but the name (CSCC) is new. We also wanted to focus on rural area, on provinces, on districts, and actually give the exact picture from the roots of the people, for instance how people are feeling in a war, how people are feeling, what is the actual situation in Nimroz, in Daikundi province... We have actually tried to focus on areas which are isolated. Besides that based on our assessment, we have CS groups which exist for centuries in this country but due to isolation, they have not been considered as CSO. For instance, elders' shuras, religious unions, even a mosque, women union, youth union, labor union and many different CSOs. Our focus to this issue is actually to facilitate the way for these traditional CS groups, which exist in the roots of community to have them on board.²⁴⁵

CSCC's main office is in Kabul and it has three regional offices in Herat, Kunduz and Nangahar.²⁴⁶

- Mandate and activities

CSCC is registered with MoE, mostly because according to the Director "it's more complicated, longer and more expensive to register with Moj. They ask for bribes, and to renew the license each year."²⁴⁷ CSCC is a network or umbrella organization with traditional and modern CSOs, and the goal of this

244 Interview H. Hayat, op. cit.

245 Ibid.

246 Ibid.

247 Ibid, According to the 2013 law on association and to the civil servant interviewed in Moj, the license is valid for 3 years and should not be renewed each year. Just the annual report must be submitted annually. Interview Moj, Kabul Op. cit.

center is to both support the capacity of local CSOs and also to inform them about Afghan CS, nationally and internationally, to train them on certain topics as well as to have them on board for advocacy initiatives...

In our community most of the disputes are resolved through the traditional CSO structure and due to isolation there are some concerns related to human rights violation and others. So we feel that if we include these people or if we have them on our Board, from one way, we will encourage them to say that they are also existing CSOs, very sustainable, for many years and if we train them on human rights, democracy, rule of law, they can overcome some violations happening in remote areas, particularly to women and children. That's how we are working.²⁴⁸

Civic education is also an important task of the CSCC, as well as networking and coordination. CSOs can meet and share their experiences and good practices... and they explain "we encourage exchange among our members."²⁴⁹ Advocacy is also an important part of CSCC activities. There are four committees on different topics, for example women's rights, that are involved in lobbying on respecting the law and the convention on elimination of violence against women (CEDAW).²⁵⁰

- Members and membership

CSCC has 385 member CSOs, including 25 network organizations, both formal and informal.²⁵¹ Any CSO registered with MoE or MoJ can join the CSCC. The applicant has to follow the rules of the organization and respect the national laws and the Constitution of Afghanistan. Members can be Afghan or international CSO, the only geographical criteria is that the CSO should work on Afghan issues or have activities

248 Interview H. Hayat. Op. cit.

249 Ibid.

250 Ibid.

251 Ibid. Described as follow Women Political Participation Committee (WPPC), Civil Society and Human Rights Organization (CSHRO), Afghan Coalition Against Corruption (AFCAC), ACSFo, AWN, Civil Society Development Center (CSDC), Human Rights Focus Organization (HRFO), All Afghan Women Union (AAWU), Afghan Anti-Corruption Network (AACN), Transitional Justice Coordination Group (TJCG), Human Rights Research and Advocacy Consortium (HRRAC member of ACBAR), Women and Children Legal Research Foundation (WCLRF), ACBAR, AEITI, SWABAC, ANCB, Afghan Civil Servant and Employees Union (AMKA), Afghan Foundation for Culture and Civil Society (FCCS). With Integrity Watch Afghanistan (IWA) and Equality For Peace and Democracy (EPD) that are not considered as our research as coordination or network organizations.

or interests in the country. There is an application form requiring certain documents, names, activities, registration number... to provide to become a member. Members also have to agree to adhere to a specific set of values (Human Rights, Democracy...). CSCC is now working in coordination with the CSJWG to draw up a list of those values and to include those on a form and to require that members sign it as a membership condition.²⁵² As explained H. Hayat, the problem within Afghan CS is that "many organizations are not registered. We are encouraging them to register themselves with MoE or MoJ for two reasons: they should follow the rules set by the government and they would have a legal status."²⁵³ The membership fee is only 1000 AFN per year (around 20 USD).

- Capacity

Internal

One of the differences of CSCC with other networks, most of the networks, is that we are totally working voluntarily. We have not received funds from any donor and we have not applied for it. Since our establishment 3 years ago, we are working voluntarily, all the members, the staff. I for instance am leading an NGO, another NGO [Organization for Social Development and Legal Rights]²⁵⁴ so far we have organization. So I am the Executive Director of that but besides this, you know it's a national issue [CS] and I have to contribute from my time to the nation.²⁵⁵

The CSCC has a GA, consisting of all members' highest representatives, who meet on an annual basis and elect members to form the Executive Board (EB). The elections are facilitated and monitored by the Independent Election Commission (IEC). Their EB is composed of 26 people, CS actors, activists, Directors, Professors:

...who can dedicate more time for the organization. And from that we have the Administrative Board (AB) comprising 4 people – me, the assistant, the spokesperson and the secretary. So what we do is that these 26 people from the EB are getting together on weekly basis, sometimes biweekly basis to discuss the issues on the agenda. And then on

252 Interview H. Hayat, op. cit.

253 Ibid.

254 No website and nothing on internet.

255 Interview of H. Hayat, op. cit.

yearly basis, the EB has to report to the GA.²⁵⁶

The CSCC does not have an HR policy for two main reasons, the voluntary aspect of the work and the minimal number of staff. They also do not have audits because they do not have external funding. The CSCC depends on the contributions of their own members and sometimes appeal to private sector financing. The CSCC has 4 technical committees, and for each committee the GA also elects one person. One committee focuses on women, another on culture and information, another on rule of law, and the last on outreach to the CSCC members. They support the members, answer questions, prepare conferences and statements, and develop CSCC's training and capacity development plan.

External

The CSCC has no specific communications department but has a spokesperson and an outreach department. The EB meets every week or biweekly and on an ad hoc basis if needed or requested by a member. All meetings are open to the public, government members, CS actors, donors... as observers. They don't have meetings or offices at regional level. There is no permanent translator, but all EB members have to speak English and at least one local language. CSCC explained that they are not a part of other networks "because we are coordinating them."²⁵⁷ They don't have specific partnerships at the national or regional levels, except with the Pak Afghan People Forum²⁵⁸ and good relations with CS actors and activists in India, Iran... They do not have a database and do not have a presence on Facebook or Twitter.

THEMATIC COORDINATION NETWORKS

Some networks are also thematic, concentrated on one field or working in one type of activities. There are also informal thematic coordination bodies, such as the Transitional Justice Coordination Group (TJCG) – Afghanistan²⁵⁹ or organizations that are called networks but don't really work on coordination of CSOs, such as the Afghan Analysts Network (AAN).²⁶⁰ Here

256 Ibid.

257 Ibid.

258 <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Pak-Afghan-People-Forum/463261850457053?ref=stream> consulted on the 1st August 2014. They have been working together on joint statements, in May 2012 on books held in Karachi borders.

259 <http://tjcgafghanistan.wordpress.com/contact/> consulted on the 1st August 2014.

260 <http://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/> consulted on the 1st August 2014.

the focus is centered on examining formal, registered thematic coordination or umbrella organizations, after first a brief presentation of several CSOs who are registered as unions with the MoJ.

UNIONS

Unions are a component of civil society but with a more specific focus, as they promote and protect individual interests. Union activities are often linked to training and legal support to individuals, and lobbying and advocacy towards the government. Four interviews were conducted with people in charge of four different unions – the National Union of Afghan Workers and Employees (NUAWE), Afghanistan's National Journalists Union, (ANJU) the Union of Afghanistan Youth (UAY), and All Afghan Women Union (AAWU).²⁶¹ Unions are a very particular type of CSO, working more on defending and promoting the rights and occupation of a specific group of people according to their vulnerability (women, or youth...) or their profession (journalists...). They generally do not have coordination of other CSOs as a core mandate. Furthermore, their mandate, structure and capacity are often comparable so the characteristics, similarities and differences with the other union respondents will be highlighted.

They generally had a basic website and a Facebook page²⁶², but with quite an active presence. ANJU²⁶³ and AAWU²⁶⁴ both have a website, though none of them were using Twitter. For instance: <http://nuawe.org/index.php?page=Homepage>

They mostly had an annual budget between 30,000 USD (ANJU, or even less for AAWU)²⁶⁵ and 100,000 USD.²⁶⁶ NUAWE's budget is more than this, around 800,000 USD due to the high number of members.

261 Interview F. Dashty, Afghanistan's National Journalists Union, (ANJU), Kabul, 19 May 2014. Interview M. Khan Danishjoo, The Union of Afghanistan Youth (UAY), Kabul, 5th July 2014. Interview S. Perlika, All Afghan Women Union (AAWU), Kabul, 16th July 2014.

262 <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Union-of-Afghanistan-Youth-%D8%A7%D8%AA%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%AF%DB%8C%D9%87-%D8%AC%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%81%D8%BA%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%86/229456360437115> <https://www.facebook.com/anju.af?fref=ts> <https://www.facebook.com/NUAWE?fref=ts> <https://www.facebook.com/pages/All-Afghan-Women-Union-AAWU/185647324972167?ref=stream> consulted on the 1st August 2014.

263 <http://www.anju.af/en/> consulted on the 1st August 2014.

264 <http://aawu.org.af/index-2.html> consulted on the 1st August 2014.

265 Interview F. Dashty, op. cit. or email exchange with S. Perlika, 2^d August 2014.

266 Interview F. Dashty, op. cit.

UAY's budget is around 126,000 USD.

- Founding and scale

Unions are generally a longer-established classification of CSOs, and are registered with MoJ. NUAWA is one of the oldest unions established in Afghanistan. It was created in 1964 to reflect the rights of the workers and employees in both the public and private sector. The workers' union has 24 offices in different parts of the country. ANJU, AAWU and UAY were created during the communist period (respectively 1980, 1992 and 1992), while AAWU is more recent. They all are represented in most provinces of Afghanistan.

- Mandate and activities

NUAWA works as a social partner with the government as well as other private employers. It is a not-for-profit, independent organization that aims to protect the rights of the workers and advocate for or against laws to ensure international social rights standards in terms of work conditions and environment. For example, they are working to prevent child labor, harassment and violence against employees, and gender based violence, "to improve the life of the workers."²⁶⁷ ANJU focuses on improving the life of journalists by different means, UAY on improving the lives of Afghan youth, and AAWU on improving the lives of Afghan women, mostly through trainings, capacity development, awareness campaigns and the promotion of international standards in their respective sectors.

- Members and membership

Unions usually have high number of members as they have both individual and organizational members. Individual members are generally overrepresented comparing to other types of CSOs. They also rely heavily on voluntarism and dedication. For example, NUAWA has 13,300 active members paying membership fees, and AAWU has 6,500 members, individuals and organizations.²⁶⁸ NUAWA has so far received 13 million AFN, and would like to raise their membership fee to 50 AFN a month to increase their revenue.²⁶⁹ Most union membership fees are low, generally less than 2,000 Afghani (20 USD) annually. UAY has a very low fee, only 10 AFN (2 USD) per month. Unions can be part

of umbrella organizations or coordination networks, as AAWU for example is member of AWN and ANCB. S. Perlika explained that AAWU is not a member of ACBAR because the requested fee is too high.

- Capacity

Internal

Most Afghan unions' resources, both human and material, are limited. Unions are often understaffed and underbudgeted. Unions are usually not as donor dependent because they don't receive much international aid money.²⁷⁰ NUAWA appears as an exception in terms of resources with 82 staff employed in Kabul. Most of the Unions have a democratic structure, similar to other modern types of CSOs, with a congress or GA, Board of Advisors or Directors, and a person in charge, either a Chairman, Executive Director, Managing Director, or Chief Executive. According to the status, the size and the mission of the union, they have different departments. For example, NUAWA has a HR section (or person), a finance section (or person), a communication section (or public relations, or media) as well as an international relation, a work law section, a women's section, a youth section, and a department for property.²⁷¹ NUAWA has one Board of Advisors in Kabul (7 persons including 2 women) meeting on a bimonthly basis, and one at the provincial level, meeting every 6 months (35 persons including 9 women).²⁷² The Boards are responsible for making decisions and the Director for executing them. The Congress meets every 4 years and the attendees select a Chairman. They also determine the quadrennial strategy and plan. Among the Congress a control panel is also elected to monitor the activities of the Boards and the Chairman.²⁷³ The Congress is led by a General Director and two deputies.²⁷⁴ Sometimes, due to economic problems the unions cannot get a full team, as is the case for UAY, ANJU and AAWU. Unions do sometimes have policies, but it's not so unusual for them not to have policies, unlike NGOs.²⁷⁵

270 Except AAWU which received a few times several funding for specific projects with diverse donors (Oxfam, HBS, MSI, CPI, CSHRN, UNDP, German Embassy, French Embassy...)

271 Ibid.

272 Ibid.

273 Ibid.

274 Ibid.

275 AAWU does not have HR policy for example. Email exchange with S. Perlika, 2^d of August 2014.

267 Interview K. Danishjoo, op. cit.

268 Interview K. Danishjoo, op. cit. And interview S. Perlika, op. cit.

269 Interview D. Shabrang, Deputy, NUAWA, Kabul, 25th May 2014.

External

NUAWE works in the three languages but they do not have a permanent translator. They try not to externally source translations due to the cost, but some of the staff support with translation in English.²⁷⁶ At the central level, NUAWE has 4 people involved in advocacy, lobbying and media.²⁷⁷ There are also monthly meetings to inform members about their activities and achievements and to collect all members' views and problems they are facing in the professional world.²⁷⁸ NUAWE as well as other unions have limited relations with other CSOs, mostly with other unions and organizations or networks working in the same field.²⁷⁹ However, there are no regular meetings or systematic coordination, and it's always ad hoc – often communication with no follow up.²⁸⁰ NUAWE also works with some partners and governmental and non-governmental actors, as well as international unions. NUAWE is member of the ITUC (International Trade Union Confederation) and other international organizations. NUAWE has an official website as well as a presence on Facebook and a database, as does AAWU.²⁸¹



AFGHAN COORDINATION AGAINST CORRUPTION (AFCAC)

<http://www.afcac.af/index.php>²⁸²

Annual budget for 2014: 150,000 USD

- Founding and scale

AFCAC was established in February 2012 to coordinate activities in the thematic area of corruption, following the belief that:

CS, parliamentarians, media and private sector can and must play a key role in the fight against corruption at both the community and national levels. A strong collective voice can ensure that all Afghans – including the marginalized, the

276 Ibid.

277 Ibid.

278 Ibid.

279 AAWU is for example member of AWN, ANCB... Email exchange with S. Perlika, op. cit.

280 Interview A. Athayi, op. cit.

281 Ibid.

282 Under construction Consulted on the 1st of August 2014.

vulnerable and the voiceless – have a say in this anti-corruption endeavor.²⁸³

AFCAC has one office in Kabul but has not established a regional presence yet.

- Mandate and activities

According to its website, AFCAC is a strong, committed, and coordinated coalition of non-state stakeholders advocating for democratic governance, human rights, accountability, transparency and integrity in all spheres of activity. AFCAC has been registered with MoE since 2013 as an umbrella organization. The overall goal of the AFCAC is to combat corruption in Afghanistan without discrimination or confrontation by empowering and energizing CSOs, parliament and the media to act, with due regard for the Afghan Justice Standards and Procedures. AFCAC also works in the following activities: enhancing the level of awareness of the public through awareness and educational campaigns; extending support to victims of corruption at all levels of society through advocacy campaigns and the provision of legal assistance; promoting accountability, transparency, integrity and the rule of law in the public and private sectors through targeted “watchdog” activities; facilitating access of interested individuals and groups to information (facts and figures) and literature on corruption and mitigation efforts through the AFCAC resource center; promoting cooperation among concerned parties involved in anti-corruption activities.²⁸⁴

- Members and membership

AFCAC is a coalition of 79 Afghan CSOs and non-CSO members committed to combatting corruption through integrated efforts and in close collaboration with other national and international entities sharing similar goals. Coalition members must have legal status, must be registered with the appropriate government agencies or official bodies as CSOs, academic or research centers, or business enterprises.²⁸⁵ CSO members can be either NGOs or another form of CSO registered with MoE or with Moj. Members must share a common vision, mission, goals and objectives.²⁸⁶ To apply to join AFCAC, any organization has to present their registration license,

283 <http://www.afcac.af/about-us.php> Consulted on the 1st of August 2014.

284 Ibid.

285 <http://www.afcac.af/membership.php> consulted on the 1st August 2014.

286 Ibid.

profile, bylaws, structure, fact sheet and other related documents to the Secretariat. The membership fee is 3,000 AFN (60 USD) per year, but the Chairman, with the approval of the Steering Committee, may propose changes to the membership fee if legitimate reasons have been put forward. AFCAC can also terminate membership at any time on certain defined grounds (substantial or formal violation of AFCAC rules and HR standards, or any type of corruption).²⁸⁷

- Capacity

Internal

AFCAC has a Chairman, appointed for two years by the Board of Directors during the annual GA. The Board of Directors (BoD), comprising 9 members, is the decisionmaking body of the organization and is legally responsible and accountable for governing and controlling the organization. It is responsible of policy and strategy, the finance of the organization, and the representation of the interests of its members.²⁸⁸ The Board names an Executive Body (14 members' staff) including the Director who is supported by two Deputy Directors in charge of providing administrative support. AFCAC convenes the GA on an annual basis. The BoD ensures that AFCAC's work is carried out according to its vision, mission and strategic plan. The BoD holds meetings on a monthly basis, while ad hoc meetings may also be held if required. The Director reports to the BOD on a quarterly basis and also whenever required for their review and input, while submission of the financial and narrative reports is the responsibility of the AFCAC top management and Deputy Directors. The chairman has the responsibility of ensuring proper and timely coordination between the AFCAC members, facilitating meetings, reviewing reports and budgets, overseeing the process of elections and advising the Steering Committee, AFCAC's top management, and its Deputy Directors on the criteria of membership, fundraising policy and other important matters concerning AFCAC activities and development. The Director manages all 11 AFCAC departments (monitoring and evaluation, media and publication, training, citizen legal advocate office, projects, IT, HR, finance, logistics, coordination and

information departments, the last including both research and resource centers).²⁸⁹ AFCAC has an HR policy and is subject to regular audits on an annual basis.

External

AFCAC has Communications and Advocacy Departments comprising four staff, two each. The coordination organization has general meetings on quarterly basis with its members to present its main achievements and current programs and to discuss future plans.²⁹⁰ AFCAC is also a member of CIVICUS and has several partners, mostly NGOs specialized in the fight against corruption or CSOs specialized in a targeted audience, including Integrity Watch Afghanistan (IWA), the Welfare Association for the Development of Afghanistan (WADAN), Afghan Public Welfare Organization (APWO), Afghan Women Services and Education Organization (AWSE)... AFCAC meets with its key members on policy issues and works together on policy initiatives, lobbying... AFCAC doesn't engage in regional or international activities at present. AFCAC is active on the internet via their website, Facebook and Twitter. AFCAC has a database but it is only accessible internally. Information can be shared on request and depending on its sensitivity.



ALLIANCE OF HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS (AHO)

<http://www.aho.org.af/>

Annual budget for 2014: 14, 000 USD

- Founding and scale

AHO was created in 2011 as a non-for-profit, non-political, independent civil society umbrella organization. AHO only has one office, situated in Kabul. The objective of AHO is to create a supportive environment for the NGOs working in the health sector in Afghanistan, and to ensure a functional coordination mechanism for quality, impartial, accessible, equitable and sustainable healthcare in the country."

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

²⁸⁸ <http://www.afcac.af/afcac-s-governance.html> consulted on the 1st August 2014.

²⁸⁹ Ibid and <http://www.afcac.af/organizational-chart.html> consulted on the 1st August 2014.

²⁹⁰ Questionnaire A. Sadaquat, Email received on the 10th August 2014.

- Mandate and activities

As stated on their website, Alliance of Health Organizations (AHO) is registered with the Ministry of Economy, along with all national and international health NGOs operating in Afghanistan. "AHO is an independent alliance of Afghan and international health NGOs that exists to serve and facilitate the work of its member NGOs in order to address efficiently and effectively health of Afghans." According to M. Sarwari, coordinator of AHO, "despite the large scale of the operation and the multiple players in health delivery, there was no formal Alliance for coordination, advocacy and information sharing amongst health NGOs".²⁹¹ AHO has been designed as a response to the need for strengthening the NGOs in health and nutrition sector, maximize use of them and improve coordination of health system delivery in Afghanistan. The main activities of the AHO are advocacy and coordination to and between national and international actors, including networking, support and legal advice.

- Members and membership

AHO currently has 30 NGOs members,²⁹² including a majority of national and international organisations. The membership fee is 1000 USD per year for all voting members. Non-voting members, and those organizations that do not have running projects within the specific fiscal year, are exempted from paying the membership fee for that year.

According to the Charter of the organisation²⁹³, membership at the AHO is subject to the membership criteria and members must be willing to abide by and follow AHO charter, have applied for and have membership approved. AHO members should meet the following criteria: The member is a Non-Governmental, not-for-profit, non-partisan, and non-proselytising organisation (NGO). The member should have a certificate of their organizations' registration with the Government of Afghanistan. The member should be involved in health and nutrition sector in Afghanistan. The members should maintain a transparent organizational and financial management system.

- Capacity

Internal

AHO is structured by three levels of managerial authority: the General Assembly (GA) / Board of Directors (BD), the Steering Committee (SC) as well as other specific committee and the Secretariat.²⁹⁴ The GA/BD is the superior body of AHO and has the power to overrule any decisions made by the Steering Committee as well as other Committees. GA/BD can establish sub-committees dealing with specific issues where there is a demand for such and to dissolve it, upon completion of its tasks. The GA/BD meets every quarter or bi-annually.

The GA discusses key issues including, approving the changes brought in the constitution of the AHO, issues related to the approval of the membership of the new applicants and suspending the membership of any member, as well as approval of the strategic plan of AHO.

AHO also has a SC of seven elected members including a Chairperson, Vice-Chair and Treasurer. The members of the SC are elected for one year. The SC is made of members from both Afghan and International NGOs and is responsible for the general operation guidance of AHO and shall represent it when necessary. The SC meets every month to discuss key issues and operations of the AHO. The SC also reviews the activities of the secretariat and reviewing the annual work plan of the AHO.

The Secretariat is composed of the salaried staff of the organization: one coordinator and one admin/finance officer. The coordinator manages day-to-day activities of the Secretariat according to the Statutes of Operation. He is also responsible for all staffing within the Secretariat. The Coordinator develops the annual plan and provides the reports to the Steering Committee and attends all Steering Committee and GA/BD's meetings without voting right. The members have the right to vote in the GA/BD. Each agency will designate two individuals, one of whom will be expected to attend the GA/BD. All meetings and events are forecast in the AHO annual plan. The GA meetings are organized and arranged through the SC by assigning a special committee who takes the responsibility. The meetings of the steering committee are organized through the secretariat and/ or any

291 Questionnaire and email exchange 6th January 2015.

292 Ibid.

293 Available on line http://www.aho.org.af/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/AHO_Charter_Final_English.pdf consulted on the 6 of January 2015.

294 According to the charter of AHO as well as discussion with M. Sarwari. Op. cit.

member of the steering committee each month. The ad-hoc meetings are organized in coordination with the secretariat and the steering committee. For each meeting, even the invitations are sent out through emails and or invitation cards.

As explained by M, Sarwari, coordinator of AHO, currently the organisation doesn't have any donor. AHO is funded and supported by the membership fee of its members which is paid annually. The future of AHO is not sustainable if the members do not contribute through membership fee. AHO has a constitution developed and prepared by the members and approved by the General Assembly since its establishment. The SC has assigned a core working group to develop a five year strategic plan for the AHO. The SC also reviews and drafts any necessary or required documents and papers and then submits them to GA for approval.²⁹⁵

AHO is regularly audited by the SC but not so much by external auditors, except if there is a specific project. Within the structure of the SC, a treasurer is appointed to oversee all of the financial activities covered in one year. AHO also has an operational manual which contains the HR policy, financial policy and other administrative, required by any organizations.

External

AHO mostly work in all three languages including English, Dari and Pashtu and AHO does not have any official translator. AHO is composed of several organizations working in the health and nutrition sector in Afghanistan. Sometimes, if any member has the capacity or finds an opportunity, they will announce and offer training to other members through AHO. The coordinator of AHO Secretariat is responsible for the overall communication of the organisation with external and internal entities and organizations. Furthermore, the SC takes part in most of the communications that are expected to be key issues for AHO. There is no specific department for the advocacy but the SC members are active advocates for the AHO.²⁹⁶

AHO is currently not part of any other network or partnership but often meets the other organizations at the meetings and seminars and events held at the national level related to health and nutrition. AHO has

²⁹⁵ Ibid.

²⁹⁶ Ibid.

a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Public Health of Afghanistan while it doesn't have any joint paper or commitment to any other entity.²⁹⁷

AHO is active in Facebook as well as Twitter under Alliance of Health Organizations. AHO doesn't have international activities so far. But it plans to build partnerships and joins coalitions in the region and global. So far AHO doesn't have any data base.²⁹⁸



AFGHAN WOMEN'S NETWORK (AWN)

Under construction: <http://www.afghanwomensnetwork.org/>²⁹⁹

Annual budget for 2014: Around 2 019 000 USD

- Founding and scale

AWN is a thematic network organization registered with MoE working on women issues.

AWN was established in Pakistan in 1995, when there were groups of women, individuals, and some organizations working for Afghan women refugees in Peshawar and then they were invited to the first Beijing Conference in 1995. Visiting each other there, they figured out that it was not only one woman who was here and representing women, so that was basically the idea that they needed a platform, an umbrella organization in order to do advocacy for the women there (in Afghanistan).³⁰⁰

AWN has its main office in Kabul and 3 subnational offices (Jalalabad, Herat and Mazar-e Sharif) and in the future, H. Safi explained that they are planning to expand at the regional level in order to facilitate a hub for their members and CSOs to work for women, to coordinate information and to step in for further joint development. AWN is a coordination network and does not implement projects.

- Mandate and activities

The mandate of AWN is "to convey to Afghan government, as well as the Afghan people and the

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

²⁹⁸ Ibid.

²⁹⁹ Official website was not functioning. It is under construction.

Consulted on the 1st of August 2014.

³⁰⁰ Interview H. Safi, op. cit.

international community that they have to value women's power and that they have to know that women have the capacity if the opportunity is given to them."³⁰¹ AWN focuses on 3 key areas: women, peace and security; women's participation and leadership; women's social and legal protection. Awareness, advocacy, capacity building and networking are the main activities to achieve the objectives and implement the strategy of the organization. AWN is also involved in peace building and recently the organization has taken part in the formation of a women police committee.

- Members and membership

AWN has 150 CSO members that are women-focused or women-led. In addition, 3,000 individuals, experts, and activists are members of the network. To join AWN, the CSO has to meet the criteria developed by the statutes and constitution of the network. The CSO has to be a women-focused organization or if it is an individual member he/she should be committed to women and women's power. It has to be registered with MoE with the NGO department. The organization also has to be registered with the Ministry of Women Affairs (MoWA) and, if it is also member of another coordination or umbrella organizations, it has to provide a written letter from the other network. Applicants have to complete a specific application process.

- Capacity

Internal

AWN has around 50 staff in their 4 offices in Afghanistan. As for the structure, AWN conducts a GA every 2 to 3 years with all CSO and individual members, who elect the Board of Directors (the candidate NGO has to have been a member for at least 2 years). The Board then appoints a Director for 4 years (subject to annual evaluation) and the Director selects a management team for each of the 5 Departments – Human Resources, Finance, Programs, Advocacy, and Network.³⁰² Besides this structure, AWN also has another group called the "core group", consisting of "people who have been with AWN since at least 10 years or the former board members, funders of AWN, and those who have all the time invested their time or energy without any further financial support as

a commitment to women rights."³⁰³ The core group can also serve as a third party mediator if a conflict emerges between the Board and the Director. AWN was very dependent on donor funding from different parts of the world including the US, mostly Europe, Asia... For the first time AWN will be "sustainable" for the next 3 to 5 years thanks to core funding and support of the Australian Agency for International Development (AUSAID) and Tawanmandi. AWN has a very concise strategic plan, which was revised in 2010. There are meetings with the Director, the Board and the core group every quarter, and ad hoc meetings whenever there is a need.³⁰⁴ AWN has internal policies on human resources and finance, and a policy forthcoming for programs.³⁰⁵ Each year, AWN undergoes an audited, and sometimes for a specific project or donor. There can also be a quarterly audit.

External

AWN does not have a permanent translator, but outsources to one or two of the translation companies in Kabul according to their rates. Usually, the publications are published in three languages – Dari, Pashto³⁰⁶ and English. AWN has strong partnerships with local and international organizations, such as UN Women. AWN has a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with other networks or umbrella organization like ACBAR, as well as organizations in Asia and Europe, such as Womankind Worldwide.³⁰⁷... Some partner organizations support AWN in networking and advocacy activities. The GA also supports the organization in networking, especially the network department. AWN meets with all members on a bimonthly basis to share information and those meeting are open to the public as observers. AWN has strong relationships with other network coordination bodies, and is considered as THE umbrella organization when it comes to women's issue in Afghanistan. AWN is also part of the CSJWG. AWN has a website under construction and a Facebook page but no Twitter presence.³⁰⁸ The organization has a

303 Ibid.

304 Ibid. For example if advocacy needed on a event, or if a major violation of women rights happens.

305 Ibid.

306 Ibid. According to H. Safi "We have been a little weak with the Pashto translation because actually the time has been very much stressed on us, so we wanted to send our information. But we have lately started to get organize and try to convey our message because there are some regions who do not understand Pashto totally, others Dari... So this is why our first target is local languages either Dari or Pashto based on the need of the region and then differently, because AWN whatever we are, we are because of all our partners, local or international."

307 <http://www.womankind.org.uk/> consulted on the 2d August 2014.

308 <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Afghan-Womens-Network->

301 Ibid.

302 Ibid. In 2013 AWN was in a bad financial situation with only one staff in each department.

specific database initiated with the support of CARE international.



CIVIL SOCIETY AND HUMAN RIGHTS NETWORK (CSHRN)

http://www.cshrn.af/CSHRN_English/index.html ³⁰⁹

Annual budget for 2014: 500,000 USD

- Founding and scale

CSHRN is a network established in 2004 registered with MoE as a specialized umbrella network in the thematic area of human rights.³¹⁰ The network was created when several CSOs found the need for an umbrella organization focus on human rights to improve coordination between CS actors, facilitate information sharing, plan collective response, and avoid duplication.

CSHRN aims to contribute to a society based on democracy and the rule of law in accordance with human rights, where all people are aware of their rights and dare to claim them through the rule of law. CSHRN is working to establish a capable human rights movement. By this it aims at increasing the understanding and the respect for human rights and the rule of law for everybody in Afghanistan.³¹¹

CSHRN is based in Kabul and has three regional coordination offices (North, East, West), with six offices in Afghanistan covering 26 provinces with members and partners organizations.³¹²

- Mandate and activities

The mandate of the organization is to establish a human rights movement to promote CS working in

AWN/126675357373948 consulted on the 2d August 2014. AWN is thinking about developing its Twitter.

309 The website is clear, structured with many information but lack of information of its members.

310 For more details on the history and background of the organization, History of CSHRN: http://www.cshrn.af/CSHRN_English/Documents%20of%20CSHRN/About%20Us/About%20Us10.htm consulted on the 2d August 2014.

311 http://www.cshrn.af/CSHRN_English/Documents%20of%20CSHRN/About%20Us/About%20Us.htm consulted on the 2d August 2014.

312 Interview S. Lalee, op. cit. And cf link to regional coordination offices:

http://www.cshrn.af/CSHRN_English/Documents%20of%20CSHRN/About%20Us/About%20Us.htm Consulted on the 2d August 2014.

this field and to raise awareness on HR issues and standards in the country to enhance the culture of human rights in Afghanistan.³¹³ CSHRN, according to its strategy, works in 5 key areas of activity: coordination, capacity building, monitoring the human rights situation in Afghanistan, advocacy, and public awareness. CSHRN prefers to focus on strategic, programmatic, and systematic approaches rather than project-based approaches. CSHRN prepares a three years program based on its strategy and findings and submits it to its donors. Despite focusing on long-term programs, CSHRN also implements short-term projects, especially joint projects with its member organizations to train its members (especially capacity development in management, human resources, finance...)³¹⁴ CSHRN also has a private radio channel, "Good Morning Afghanistan" which is a 30-minute broadcast on human rights in Dari and Pashto.³¹⁵

- Members and membership

CSHRN consists of 158 Afghan organizations³¹⁶ that are active in the promotion of human rights. At present, the member organizations all have their main offices in Kabul but have representatives in other regions of Afghanistan. Besides its member organizations, CSHRN works together with over 100 partners organizations in different regions of Afghanistan. To join CSHRN, the organization has to be an Afghan NGO registered with MoE or a CSO registered with MoJ or any other ministry. There is no membership fee to join. Many organizations want to become a member of the network, and S. Lalee explained that almost every two months there are 20 new applications.³¹⁷ CSHRN has a membership evaluation committee consisting of 7 members elected by the GA that is in charge of reviewing all applications and deciding if the CSO meets the criteria, if it's an active organization, transparent, and fulfilling its obligations (reporting to the dedicated ministry...). It has to be a human rights focus organization with a proper structure, an office, staff and activities. There is also oversight for existing members and if an organization is not meeting the criteria anymore CSHRN cancels their membership.

313 Interview S. Lalee, op. cit.

314 Ibid.

315 "The Voice"

http://www.cshrn.af/CSHRN_English/Documents%20of%20CSHRN/The%20Voice/The%20Voice.htm consulted on the 2d August 2014.

316 The website mentioned 58 but is outdated. Our discussion with S. Lalee assured us that CSHRN has 128 members organizations. Ibid.

317 Ibid.

CSHRN is a free network and there is no fee to become a member.

- Capacity

Internal

The overall decisionmaking body of the network is the GA, which consists of the representatives of all member organizations. The GA meets on a biannual basis and develops and updates the strategy of CSHRN to develop a strong human rights movement in Afghanistan. In addition, it conducts at least one annual meeting, where it discusses the activities carried out by CSHRN during the past year and elects the CSHRN Board.³¹⁸ The Board is formed by six Afghan nationals working on human rights issues, mostly from Afghan CSOs.³¹⁹ The Board chooses the Executive Director. CSHRN also has a statement committee responsible for monitoring the human rights situation and launching position papers or statements on behalf of the organization. Additionally there is a Human Rights Advisory Board including 11 members (in charge of annual reports), a reference committee (donor agencies receiving financial reports and giving advice and recommendations for strengthening of financial system), as well as a Secretariat responsible for administrative and managerial issues. The Secretariat is formed by 31 staff members including support staff from the Program, Admin, Publication, Education, Liaising and Resource Center departments.³²⁰ CSHRN's main donors are SDC, DANIDA and Tawanmandi,³²¹ but there are initiatives to strengthen relationships with other sectors, like academia or the private sector, or international networks to overcome the sustainability issue. CSHRN has a concrete strategy that has been revised two times since 2006. CSHRN also provides annual audit reports for donors and has an HR policy for the organization. CSHRN works in three languages, and the website is also in three languages (English, Dari, and Pashto) and has permanent staff for English and Pashto translation.³²²

External

The statement committee plus the Secretariat run and implement policy- and issue-based advocacy

318 http://www.cshrn.af/CSHRN_English/Documents%20of%20CSHRN/About%20Us/About%20Us.htm
Consulted on the 2d August 2014.

319 According to the website. But according to our interview S. Lalee,

320 Consulted on the 2d August 2014.

http://www.cshrn.af/CSHRN_English/Documents%20of%20CSHRN/Resource%20Center/Resource%20Center.htm

321 http://www.cshrn.af/CSHRN_English/Documents%20of%20CSHRN/Donors/Donors.htm consulted on the 2d August 2014.

322 Interview S. Lalee, op. cit.

initiatives for CSHRN. The Communication Liaison Officer is responsible for everything related to the communication policy of the organization. CSHRN conducts quarterly coordination meetings (QCM) in their Kabul office and regional offices of CSHRN for sharing information resources and developing new joint action plans. The QMCs are mostly for member organizations, but on specific topics partner organizations, international organizations, CBOs... are joining the meeting.³²³ CSHRN is member of several networks, like Afgana, Child not Brides... and also has good cooperation with partners and other networks like the Danish Institute for Human Rights and ENNA. CSHRN also has many MoUs, for example with ACSF, AIHRC, and is part of the CSWG. CSHRN also takes part in international conferences and events on human rights in different parts of the world and on key issues. CSHRN does not have any Facebook or Twitter yet but it is considering developing its presence through these platforms.³²⁴ There is for now no existing and accessible human rights database but developing one is a goal of CSHRN for 2014.³²⁵

REGIONAL COORDINATION NETWORKS

There are a few local networks working on coordination in different provinces of Afghanistan. However, only one works at the regional level in the southwest region, which is the most insecure and neglected by international aid. This section will address the background, mission, and capacity of SWABAC.

SOUTHERN AND WESTERN AFGHANISTAN AND BALOCHISTAN ASSOCIATION FOR COORDINATION (SWABAC)

<http://www.swabac.com/>³²⁶

Annual budget for 2014: 61,500 USD

- Founding and scale

SWABAC is a coordination body established in 1988 in Quetta Pakistan with international NGOs. "By the time it came inside Afghanistan a lot of international and Afghan NGOs in order to provide assistance for Afghan refugees in Baluchistan province of Pakistan

323 Ibid.

324 Ibid.

325 Ibid.

326 Not functioning at the moment but will be reactivated soon. Consulted on the 4th August 2014.

as well inside of Afghanistan in some remote areas, which were out of the control of the government.³²⁷ In 1995 SWABAC moved to Kandahar province in Afghanistan. The main SWABAC office is in Kandahar. SWABAC maintains a small office in Kabul but also uses its member's offices in Kabul.³²⁸ SWABAC is an important actor in CS for the southwest region and has taken part in several international conferences, like London in 2010. SWABAC is registered with MoE.

- Mandate and activities

The mission of SWABAC is to coordinate activities of CSOs in the region and to raise the voices and protect the interests of the citizens in this area. SWABAC mainly works in 3 fields of activity: coordination, advocacy, and the capacity building of members. SWABAC has some projects with Internews and UNAMA to work with CSOs in the region, especially the youth and media sectors in training and capacity development, mostly in journalism, computer, photography, editing... The problem is that these are mostly CSOs with different requirements, rules and regulations and they are numerous so it is difficult to distinguish between the real active ones and the others (sometimes just a name, no activity, no office).³²⁹

- Members and membership

In 1995 SWABAC counted 90 members. However, with Karzai's government and the new law on NGOs, some of their members couldn't register with the government because they were working in construction of roads or schools.³³⁰ Therefore, the number of members decreased to 45 members in 2005, though some other CSOs are asking to join SWABAC. The procedure is quite simple; all it takes is to file an application form with the required documentation, to prove the registration and the existence and activity of the organization. The application conditions are checked by a panel during the GA. If the organization meets all the requirements, then the GA votes on whether to accept the new member. The application should obtain a majority of votes, and if it does then it automatically becomes a member of SWABAC. The membership fee is around 1000 Afg (20 USD) per month. The membership can be withdrawn if the NGO is not working according to the code of conduct developed with ACBAR, or if the

organization is involved in illegal activities.³³¹ SWABAC members have to be registered with MoE but they are currently discussing the possibility of opening membership to other CSOs with UNAMA and MoJ.

- Capacity

Internal

SWABAC has a GA, which elects a Board of Directors (5 members) and a Chairman. The Chairman is chosen by a vote and the candidate who gets the most votes takes the position. The Board of Directors is the decisionmaking body of the organization. The main staff of SWABAC are in Kandahar but the capacity and the resources, both human and material, are very limited.³³² SWABAC employs one Program Officer, one Finance Manager, one Administration Officer, one Liaison Officer, and a Multimedia Training Unit which includes three trainers and one female trainer, and then drivers, guard, and a cook.³³³ In Kabul, SWABAC only has one Communications Officer in charge of information and coordination. SWABAC does not have anyone working specifically on advocacy and works jointly with other CSOs including ACBAR³³⁴, ANCB, ACSF... SWABAC's main donor for 2014 is Internews, but it is not a high level of funding and SWABAC is facing financial difficulties. Sometimes, the members contribute more to keep the organization running. In 2012 SWABAC hired an external consultant to work on the strategy of the organization but it is currently under review.³³⁵ SWABAC has an HR policy and is audited but on a project basis rather than regularly scheduled audits. In Kandahar, SWABAC has monthly or bimonthly coordination meetings³³⁶ with its members and partners, UN agencies... Each member presents their activities sharing information and good practices, to avoid duplication. SWABAC also takes part in the Provincial Development Council (PDC).³³⁷ The working language is mostly Pashto and English but there is an effort to translate documents into all three languages—Pashto, Dari, and English. English is mostly used in daily work and communications.³³⁸

331 Interview J. Mohammad, op. cit. SWABAC already done this in the past, 3 or 4 NGO were in the past. It was during the Taliban.

332 Ibid

333 Ibid.

334 For example for the preparation of the London Conference in Nov. 2014, SWABAC has been taking part to ACBAR initiative.

335 Interview J. Mohammad, op. cit

336 Depending on the security situation, Ibid.

337 Ibid.

338 Ibid.

327 Interview J. Mohammad, op. cit.

328 Ibid.

329 Ibid. Now SWABAC started with UNAMA this process to bring all this organizations under the charter of SWABAC. And we also started since the last year with UNAMA to establish database for all these NGOs and CS in the region.

330 Cf analysis on NGO law above.

External

In terms of external capacity, resources are also limited. The objective of SWABAC is:

...to be able to represent everything on behalf of our people at both the national and international level. We have done a lot and have more to do. There is a plan to open a resource center, but we need funds and staff, especially a Resource Officer. We also need an Advocacy Officer working just on advocacy issues for Kabul and the southwest region. Sometimes we know there is some issue somewhere on a certain topic but we have not been able to intervene due to a lack of resources. And there is a massive need of research. We did some³³⁹ but we are not experts and we need specialists in different sectors like women's rights, narcotics, and in particular poppy cultivation.³⁴⁰

SWABAC attempts capacity development with their member and partners, especially youth organizations and media with Internews, but their activities are limited geographically and could be extended with more funding. SWABAC has some partnerships and MoUs with different coordination bodies and CSOs including ACBAR, ACNB or AWN... Ad hoc meetings are also conducted in Kabul on certain issues or in emergency situations.³⁴¹

INTERNATIONAL NETWORK COORDINATION ON AFGHANISTAN

Many international coordination networks are working in the humanitarian and development sectors, general or thematic, formal or informal, worldwide, regional, or with a country focus. For example, InterAction is a prominent alliance of US-based NGOs, focusing on disaster relief and sustainable development.³⁴² This organization has specific working groups, including one on Afghanistan. However according to N. Malikin, since the transition period, because of the uncertainties, dwindling funding and the global humanitarian community being stretched by many concurrent crises, the INGOs have become less and less interested in Afghanistan.³⁴³ This section will analyze the two main international networks focusing exclusively on Afghanistan.

339 There was a survey to map CSOs around 2000. Ibid.

340 Ibid.

341 Ibid.

342 <http://www.interaction.org/> consulted on the 2d August 2014.

343 Interview N. Malikin, op. cit.



BRITISH AND IRISH AGENCIES AFGHANISTAN GROUP (BAAG)

<http://www.baag.org.uk/>

Annual budget for 2014: around 270,000 USD

● Founding and scale

BAAG is an Afghanistan-focused umbrella organization that was formalized in 1987 in the UK.³⁴⁴ It is based in London and its vision is "for a just and peaceful Afghanistan where every citizen is able to fulfill his or her potential, enjoy their economic and social rights, and play an active part in the development and governance of their country."³⁴⁵

Mandate and activities

The mission of BAAG is to:

...work together with member agencies and others to raise awareness of the needs and aspirations of Afghans, particularly the poorest and most vulnerable. It aims to promote policies to counter poverty and encourage good practice and policy in development and humanitarian work. As part of this mission, BAAG shares high-quality information and analysis about Afghanistan's development and reconstruction with donors, policy makers, other stakeholders and its members. This helps to stimulate dialogue and to inform policymaking and practice at local, national and international levels. It also gives policy makers, donors and the wider public a better understanding of the issues that confront the country.³⁴⁶

The main objectives are to coordinate the activities of the member organizations as well as share best practices to convey information that includes the views of Afghans and to contribute to policy and advocacy at the national and international levels, with a key aim to provide a platform for Afghan CS actors to express their ideas and opinions in Ireland, the UK and elsewhere.³⁴⁷ BAAG's main activities are focused on information sharing, networking, and coordination but it also undertakes research, conferences and workshops.

344 For more information on the background, <http://www.baag.org.uk/how-we-started-0> consulted on the 2d August 2014.

345 <http://www.baag.org.uk/about-us/vision> consulted on the 2d August 2014.

346 Ibid.

347 Interview J. Nader, op. cit.

- Members and membership

BAAG started with 5 members organization and currently comprises 30 Irish and British NGOs, or Irish and British branches of INGOs. The BAAG members have to be registered as a charity in the UK or the Republic of Ireland and must have either humanitarian or/and development programs in Afghanistan, work in partnership with Afghan or other international NGOs delivering programs in Afghanistan, or advocate with and on behalf of Afghans, including Afghan refugees in Iran and Pakistan.³⁴⁸ The membership fee is calculated on a sliding scale, from 210 to 2400 USD annually, and covers around 20% of BAAG annual budget.³⁴⁹

- Capacity

Internal

BAAG has only two full-time staff, a Director and a Program and Communications Officer, plus one Senior Advisor, one part-time Admin and Finance Officer, and a media consultant.³⁵⁰ BAAG also takes on interns and volunteers as needed. Often, members' organizations support BAAG in terms of human resources or finance. The leadership structure takes the shape of a Board of Trustees comprising seven individuals.³⁵¹ BAAG's main donor is currently DFID. BAAG does not have any staff solely dedicated to fundraising, but all staff are involved in scoping out and applying for fundraising opportunities. BAAG is in the process of developing a fundraising strategy to ensure the organization is sustainable in the long term. A core aspect of this strategy will be developing an approach to diversify funding sources.³⁵² BAAG has a 3-year strategy that is reviewed on an annual basis in consultation with its members, the Board of Trustees and Secretariat so as to stay in line with the ongoing changes in the political, social, and economic climate in Afghanistan, and the wider international community.³⁵³ BAAG conducts an annual audit every year, in compliance with donor and UK Charity Commission requirements, and also has an HR policy. As BAAG is London-based a majority of their activities are conducted in English. Key reports

produced by BAAG are translated into Pashto and Dari with the help of a translator who is hired when needed. Communications with those in Afghanistan is in English and Dari, as BAAG's Director is fluent in both so an external translator is rarely needed.³⁵⁴

External

BAAG's communications are managed by a full-time Program and Communications Coordinator. This includes managing BAAG's engagement in social media, maintenance of BAAG's website, reaching out to media, and the recruitment and management of a media advisor if and when needed. All staff liaise with members, civil society, donors, and other stakeholders to differing degrees, with the Director being interviewed by media outlets and participating in panel discussions with other organizations. BAAG's advocacy activities are managed by an Advocacy Group in which representatives of member agencies participate on a regular basis. Usually around 8-12 people participate, but the number has recently been increasing. Joint communication and advocacy is a key part of advocacy initiatives for BAAG's current projects, particularly engagement with the media. BAAG also facilitates a members meeting every quarter with additional meetings convened when needed. Topics discussed are dictated by member priorities and according to BAAG's projects.³⁵⁵ Recent topics have included advocacy priorities, the Afghan elections, and security. BAAG meets with its members on a bimonthly basis. BAAG further engages with think tanks such as Chatham House and APPRO in order to produce research reports and policy briefings. BAAG does not currently have any joint programs with other organizations. BAAG has pending joint funding applications with the EU NGO MONDO. BAAG meets with civil society actors in Afghanistan approximately 3-5 times a year.

BAAG partners with several networks and coordination bodies. It is engaged with Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPS), the Australian Council For International Development (ACFID), Verband Entwicklungspolitik Deutscher Nichtregierungsorganisationen e.V. (VENRO), ACBAR, and various other civil society networks in Afghanistan. Tawanmandi is also a key partner of BAAG. BAAG is also a founding member of the European Network of NGOs in Afghanistan

348 <http://www.baag.org.uk/members> consulted on the 2d August 2014.

349 Interview J. Nader, op. cit. And face to face interview on the 4th August 2014. 14 members are paying 210 USD each year.

350 <http://www.baag.org.uk/team> consulted on the 2d August 2014.

351 <http://www.baag.org.uk/about-us/trustees> consulted on the 2d August 2014.

352 Interview J. Nader, op. cit.

353 Ibid.

354 Ibid.

355 Ibid.

(ENNA) and sits on the Board.³⁵⁶ BAAG operates and has its headquarters in London with a lesser degree of engagement in Ireland. International activities include BAAG travel to Brussels in order to engage with ENNA and European actors as well as a visit to Australia to meet with key donors and organizations interested in Afghanistan. BAAG staff also goes to Afghanistan periodically throughout the year.

BAAG has a website, Facebook page, and Twitter account which are all updated regularly.³⁵⁷ BAAG compiles and updates an internal database of members, donors, and other contacts on a regular basis. BAAG also collates lessons learned in relation to forthcoming events and circulates them to relevant parties. BAAG is currently developing an online database of member's activities in Afghanistan, but it has not yet gone live. As an information sharing and networking organization, any information collected is usually shared as widely as possible.



EUROPEAN NETWORK OF NGO'S IN AFGHANISTAN (ENNA)

<http://www.ennanet.eu>

Annual budget:

- Founding and scale

ENNA is a network of individual NGOs and networks based in Europe who are actively involved in non-profit humanitarian and/or development assistance to Afghanistan. ENNA was created as an informal network by BAAG and several actors to support member organizations with lobbying and advocacy in Brussels and at the national and international levels, as well as to:

...encourage collaboration among member organizations on matters of mutual interest with a view to strengthening and improving humanitarian assistance, reconstruction and development efforts in Afghanistan. ENNA's overall goal is to ensure that national and international policies and decisions help to support Afghans build a safe and just society.³⁵⁸

356 <http://www.baag.org.uk/members/partner> consulted on the 2d August 2014. And interview J. Nader, op. cit.

357 <https://www.facebook.com/AfghanAgencies?fref=ts> <https://twitter.com/AfghanAgencies> both consulted on the 2d August 2014.

358 http://www.ennanet.eu/index.php?option=com_

ENNA has been based in Brussels, Belgium as a formal organization since 2012.

- Mandate and activities

ENNA is more of a network umbrella organization than a coordination body. Unlike ACBAR, the core mandate is not to coordinate the activities of members on the ground but more on lobbying and advocacy to European institutions and European governments. Currently there are some questions among members regarding ENNA's capacity and strategy, especially in terms of giving more voice to CSOs.³⁵⁹ The NGO members are divided on the role of ENNA, where some believe it has a traditional role regarding humanitarian challenges and others think that advocating to defend and promote Afghan CSOs is part of the mission. ENNA does not directly implement projects or activities; similar to BAAG, its members do. However, both networks organise conferences. "For us, keeping Afghanistan on the agenda with regular accurate advocacy, roundtables, workshops on Afghanistan on different topics which can interest our members such as health, nutrition, the peace process... is already a victory."³⁶⁰ Since its founding, ENNA has become recognized as a source of expertise on Afghanistan and is well placed to engage and consult with European national governments and European institutions on policy topics related to Afghanistan. The diverse nature of the membership, which incorporates NGOs from across Europe working throughout Afghanistan on a wide variety of humanitarian, reconstruction and development programs, enables ENNA to provide consistent high quality information and to engage in informed debate with donors, parliamentarians, the media and other organizations and individuals with an interest in Afghanistan.³⁶¹

- Members and membership

ENNA has 20 NGO members who all have operations in Afghanistan. Any non-profit organization or network based in Europe, involved in humanitarian and/or development assistance in Afghanistan and in agreement with ENNA's aims can apply to become a member. Current membership rates stand at 500 EUR per year. The applicant has to file a form with

[contentandview=articleandid=10andItemid=108](http://www.ennanet.eu/index.php?option=com_contentandview=articleandid=10andItemid=108) Consulted on the 3d August 2014.

359 Interview F. Pompetti, ENNA, via skype, 26th May 2014.

360 Ibid.

361 http://www.ennanet.eu/index.php?option=com_contentandview=articleandid=10andItemid=108 consulted on the 3d August 2014.

a document indicating the nature of the applicant organization's programmes or proposed activities in Afghanistan, a written reference from at least one ENNA member agency (or, if not possible, from another reputable organization), and a copy of the last Annual Report or equivalent of the applicant organization. Applications are submitted to the ENNA Steering Group for approval and recommendation to the wider membership at the next Annual Review Meeting.³⁶²

- Capacity

Internal

ENNA has partial resources and staff in terms of numbers. Only two people are working full-time—one Advocacy and Communications Coordinator and one Fundraising Officer who is also in charge of member relations—with a part-time Admin and Finance Officer.³⁶³ The European Commission has been funding this network but at present there are no donors engaged with ENNA. The organization survives on membership fees and grants. ENNA has a democratic structure with a GA comprised of all members and the Directors or Deputy, which meets once or twice a year, and elects the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors consists of 5 members' representatives and is the highest body of the organization responsible for taking decisions for the network. They vote on the strategy of the organization and decide on new applications. ENNA's strategy is pluriannual, the most recent being from 2013 though it has been described as "not very clear and vague."³⁶⁴ ENNA has an HR policy and is audited regularly.

External

ENNA has one staff member responsible for the advocacy and communication. ENNA takes part in international conferences in Europe or elsewhere on Afghanistan, or on themes related to conflict or the humanitarian and development sectors, which are an important issue or topic in the country.³⁶⁵ ENNA is not a part of any other network but has interesting partnerships with other umbrella organizations, especially BAAG and ACBAR, as well as AWN and APPRO.³⁶⁶ According to F. Pompetti, the previous

362 http://www.ennanet.eu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=8&Itemid=112 consulted on the 3d August 2014.

363 Interview F. Pompetti, op. cit.

364 Ibid.

365 Ibid.

366 <http://appro.org.af/> consulted on the 3d August 2014.

Director of ENNA:

Our network should be more focused on two aspects, providing services for our members and becoming a European platform to share INGO experiences and best practices with ANGOs and our partners as well as raise collective voices to keep Afghanistan on the agenda. It should be less of a 'self-sufficient entity' producing documentation for ourselves.

3.4 COORDINATION OF COORDINATION, NEED AND ASSESSMENT

While MoUs and partnerships exist between some umbrella or network organizations, and though most of them occasionally meet individually or more collectively to discuss a certain topic, there is a lack of follow-up and realization of common initiatives. The gap, in terms of "coordination of coordination" or "meta-coordination," is unanimous among CS actors. However, the solution to this observed issue is not and the views of the interviewees differed greatly from each other. Interviewees were asked whether their organization sees multiple coordination bodies as repetitious, whether their organization has any interest in creating a meta-coordination body or coordination between coordination organizations, and how this could be achieved and whether it would be useful. After analyzing the answers and looking at the diverse perspectives, this section will address the specific informal network for meta-coordination—the CSJWG.

META-COORDINATION?

The majority of the respondents were of the opinion that CSOs or any other actors should not create a new coordination body or network organization, whether it is a formal or on non-formal one. One even vigorously stated:

Don't create anything else; stop it please. There have been a lot of creations. People start things, and then just after 3, 4 friends get together all the time, it is formal or informal and then it is left. So I will suggest it's better to build up on what has been done. For example currently Tawanmandi, they have started

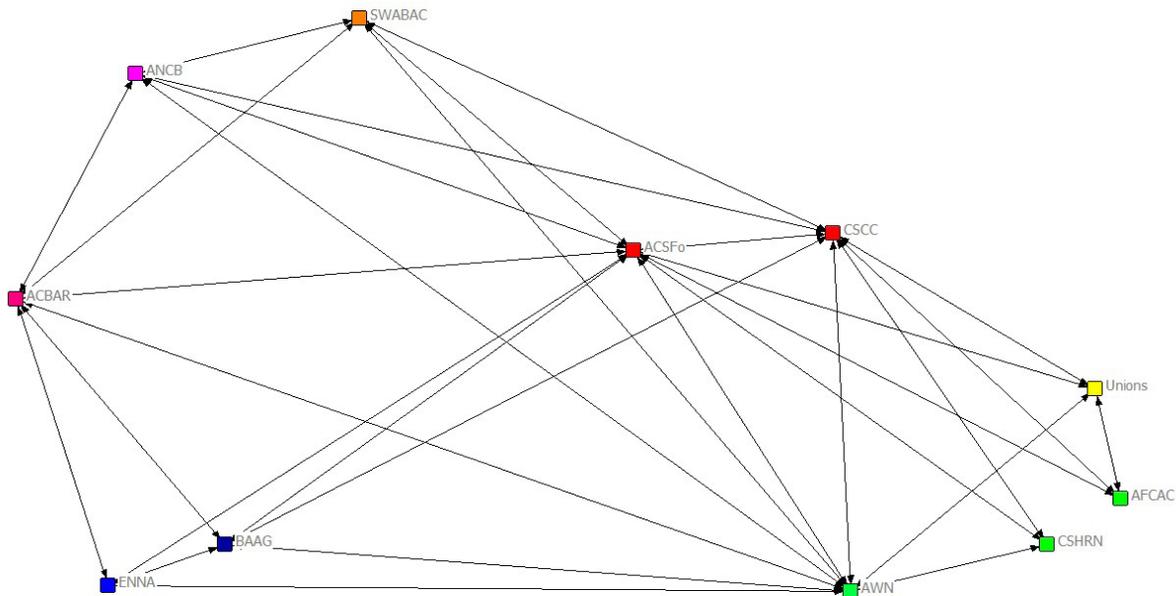


Figure 1: Network of main coordination bodies in Afghanistan¹

¹ AHO has been added at the end of the report so does not appear in the figure but will be on the right side with the green thematic networks.

to collect partners. So one of his partners is a core partner. I think the majority of their core partners are networks, which is a very good step for us in order to formalize our coordination of the networks. Beside that they also have some directors' forums where the directors of the core partners should participate, which will definitely do more coordination and they will know to know more about each other. So I will again say stop creating new things but try to collect scattered pieces of different networks and coordination that are happening in Kabul as well as the provinces.³⁶⁷

For most of the CSOs and active players in Afghan CS there is no need for more coordination or network organizations at the national level. In the same sense, interviewees are concerned about excessive numbers of coordination and umbrella organizations and the problems that could rise, and already do, in terms of multiplication and duplication. J. Nader, who is the Director of BAAG explained:

Having multiple coordination bodies could become redundant and duplicate work. For the most part, coordinating bodies are already engaged with each other and take it upon themselves to keep informed on what each other are doing. Many coordination bodies already meet regularly when possible and feedback updates to their respective networks. There is little need for a meta-coordination body in

the official sense.³⁶⁸

However some of the experienced CS actors interviewed expressed an interest in conceiving a form of meta-coordination, whatever shape it takes. Haris Nashir explained that:

Coordination of coordination is important and it sounds good, because right now when we are talking about coordination of coordination with those "heart organizations" they are not that active. There are no proper follow-ups and proper communication existing. What I observed from these (umbrella organization, networks...), they come together for a period of time and they just disappear. So I think there should be a mechanism for organizations to follow up on issues. So yes, I think it's a good idea.³⁶⁹

But he does not say anything regarding the practical manner or set up. Another CS actors and activist, Aziz Rafiee, added:

Afghan CS should have a union of coordination bodies. The union of coordination could be one of the solutions to bring those together very closely and agreed on important principles. As I said, we need to work to develop common goals and common principles and common values. So once we have common values, common goals and common principles, we actually can come together very closely, working together. It does not mean that

³⁶⁷ Interview H. Safi, op. cit.

³⁶⁸ Email exchange answers received on the 3rd of July 2014.

³⁶⁹ Interview H. Nashir, op. cit.

they are coming under us or we go under them but we can closely work with each other. I mean CS cannot be lead but can be coordinated. We can coordinate.³⁷⁰

E. Winter, as suggested in her report on CS development in Afghanistan, put forward the idea of a regular CS conference, not only in relation with International conferences about Afghanistan but also a national one. "Consideration should be given to having a standing conference of civil society and ways in which it could be supported financially by donors without losing independence of thought, which would enable continuous assessment, policy development and drafting of key messages by Afghans."³⁷¹ It could be an annual civil consultation process with a specific agenda and major actors from CSOs. This would be useful to identify "constituencies for change and support and ensure that."³⁷² In her interview, she confirms:

It will be really helpful to have a standing conference on CS. And I am wondering if Tawanmandi is the organization to facilitate that. Because it will be so helpful to know what are the ongoing policies and recommendations, including where people disagreed with each other, to have a policy paper saying such, these are the important issues... Instead of reinventing every time there is an international

conference and a request that everyone gets together to devise the messages and choose the delegates... So I think it would save time and also give the space and opportunity for people to relate to each other. But they are only likely to be willing to engage with this if they get something out of it.³⁷³

This excitement preceding the next international conference is predominant at the time of writing, in the middle of the Afghan political transition and the planning of the 2014 London conference. Tons of initiatives are germinating to represent CS actors and elect the ones who will travel and speak on behalf of CS, and the coordination of those initiatives is missing. The final aspect pointed out by E. Winter, as well as other interviewees, is also critical. CSOs coordinate with each other if they see a benefit from this coordination. Therefore meta-coordination, as any coordination activity, should add a certain value and the intention should come from the CS actors themselves.³⁷⁴ Lastly, for some of the respondents, there is already an existing informal meta-coordination: the CSJWG.³⁷⁵

COORDINATIONS NETWORK AND VOCATION OF CSJWG

"Modern organizational environments are becoming more complex at an increasing rate."³⁷⁶ As developed

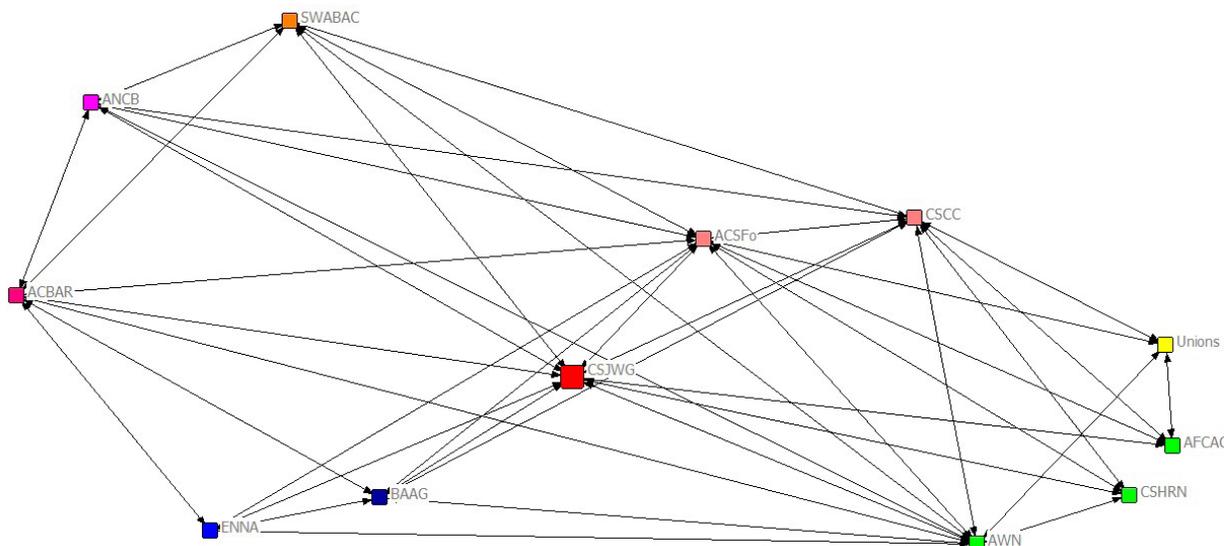


Figure 2: CSJWG as a core networking instrument¹

1 AHO has been added at the end of the report so does not appear in the figure but will be on the right side with the green thematic networks.

370 Interview A. Rafiee, op. cit.

371 E. Winter, Civil Society Development, op. cit, p. 59.

372 Ibid, p. 59.

374 Cf also interview F. Pompetti, op. cit. He insists on the quality of the content of the potential meta-coordination. And interview G. Mensah; op. cit.

375 Interview A. Omerzai, op. cit, also I. Zaman, op. cit.

376 N. Kapucu, Interorganizational coordination..., op. cit, p. 36.

earlier, the multiple organizations, and especially here the multiple coordination bodies, bring more complexity not only for each CSO to interact individually or collectively with each other but for the whole CSO structure as a system. As N. Kapucu adds in his article, mostly referring to K. Weick and W. Scott,

(...) Organizations tend to move towards higher levels of complexity, largely through networks. Organization must balance differentiation and coordination to successfully adapt to the rising environmental complexity. Organizations must also determine the scope of their activities and degree of vertical integration decisions. Depending on one's theoretical perspective, these balancing conflicts are either seen as inefficiencies [rational theory] or necessary parts of the negotiation process [natural theory]³⁷⁷

The following analysis is not about discussing one or the other theory but to examine the concrete interactions between umbrella organizations through the lens of inter-organizational theory and to draw a picture of the coordination network in the Afghan CS scene.

Interactions exist between the different umbrella organizations considered above. From primary communication to the signing of MoUs and partnerships between organizations, these interactions can take diverse forms. The figure below illustrates not only the formal but also the informal relations, as long as it's not a one-time occurrence or rare interactions. Pink signifies the general umbrella organization with more focus on NGOs, orange the regional coordination body, green the thematic coordination body, red the general coordination body accepting CSOs whatever their type, blue the international organizations, and yellow the unions.

The network is impressive and reflects three angles. First, the Afghan CS scene is still in development, evidenced by the relative number of actors and interactions. Second, the NGO-oriented umbrella organizations are closer to the international coordination bodies. Third, the main general coordination bodies who accept any type of CSOs are more in the center of network, developing relationships with all main actors on coordination.

From the perspective of meta-coordination, it is a crucial step to now consider the CSJWG, its background

and role in the scene of Afghan CSO networks. The CSJWG is an Afghan initiative that has been practically supported and facilitated by UNAMA (in terms of venue and involvement of actors). The involvement of UNAMA has to be further studied as it might be perceived as an external interference from the international community into CSO life and activities. Based on the TMAF, the CSJWG was given an official watchdog role to play regarding the government and the international community to monitor their commitments to the Afghan people. The CSJWG is organized based on the TMAF and the five key areas: Representational Democracy and Equitable Elections; Governance; Rule of Law and Human Rights; Integrity of Public Finance and Commercial Banking, Government Revenues, Budget Execution and Sub-National Governance; and Sustained Growth and Development.³⁷⁸ The CSJWG was established in 2012 and is a coordinating body including more than 30 CSOs, mostly umbrella organisations. It was created mainly to strengthen coordination among the CS networks and CSOs, to share experience and information among CSOs, to develop a strong voice for CSOs in Afghanistan, to increase and improve the watch dog role of CSOs towards government and international community commitments, as well as to represent CS at the national and international level through a transparent and coordinated election.³⁷⁹ The CSJWG is not a formal entity. It operates with a rotational Secretariat changing every six months through an election by CS actors and representatives of the main formal umbrella organizations. The CSJWG meets on a monthly basis, but if there are urgent issues or concerns ad hoc meetings can be arranged. The CSJWG does not have an office, staff, or its own budget.

There were a lot of contradictory words or remarks on the CSJWG. For A. Omerzai, who is ANCB Deputy Director and Senior Advisor, the CSJWG formed this meta-coordination and is functioning. For another, who preferred to stay anonymous on this point:

We already created a meta-coordination body, and it's the CSJWG. But CSJWG, as many other initiatives is not working. It's not working mostly because of internal competition, lack of incentive... Most of the time they don't see the bigger picture of it. In my

378 For the latest development of the Senior Officials Meeting: http://mof.gov.af/Content/files/TMAF_SOM_Report_Final_English.pdf consulted on the 6th August 2014.

379 Email exchange and discussion with Hayatullah Hayat, 13 August 2014.

377 Ibid.

personal view, I think at this point we should just let it go. They will come together if they have to. It works. What I am saying, and it's quite pessimistic, is that more push from anybody will not make anything better. More push, more money, more programs, more whatever, it did not work. What's happening is that what will happen, will happen organically, will happen naturally. It may happen later but it will happen stronger. And what the side implication of forcing coordination, what I have learned is that it just makes the real organic coordination happen much much much later. It slows down that organic getting together process.³⁸⁰

The same person confessed that the CSJWG also "has no format" and that participation is really low.³⁸¹

The question of the resources and the degree of formality of the CSJWG is a very tricky one, and CS actors are divided on it. Some recognized that the lack of resources is an obstacle for the proper functioning of the group, especially those who have been in charge of the Secretariat or involved in external coordination initiatives.³⁸² Others, or even the same person who recognized the need for more human and material resources, underlined the risk of a decreased participation of actors as soon as the level of formality of the structure increases.³⁸³ The important points to highlight in this analysis are firstly that CSJWG is a recent initiative, and secondly that 2014 is a specific context, as mentioned earlier, a year of transitions, politically, militarily... As I. Zaman stressed as a member of the CSJWG,

I found the network [CSJWG] to be very well coordinated with regular meetings, a lot of time with disagreements of course on certain issues. But at least there were coordinated efforts by some organizations to have a say on different topics. Unfortunately because of the elections I don't see that group very active.³⁸⁴

It is best to address recommendations (mostly in terms of human and material resources and fundraising strategy) and wait at least a few more months after the results of the elections to assess the functioning and performance of the CSJWG more in-depth. Even in its current informal frame, CSJWG plays a very

crucial role in the meta-coordination of umbrella organizations in Afghanistan and could be playing a greater role in the future. The figure below illustrates the network of the main observed coordination organizations with the CSJWG.

As shown in the diagram, CSJWG has a central position, especially because of its composition (mostly involving umbrella organizations), its legitimacy in terms of representation (mostly Afghan CSOs), and its coordinative function. For some of the respondents, ACBAR also has a role to play in this regard.³⁸⁵

3.5 ROLE OF ACBAR IN THE COORDINATION SCENE

ACBAR is one of the main umbrella organizations in Afghanistan. In this research, interviews were conducted with others coordination networks, experts, IC actors, and members of the Afghan government, as well as ACBAR member organizations. To support the recommendations and address one of the central objectives of the research, this section examines the perception of ACBAR in the Afghan context and its current and potential relations with CSOs, NGO members of ACBAR, and others.

PERCEPTIONS OF ACBAR

ACBAR is perceived by many as professional and efficient, by its members as well as externally by the international community, donors, government officials, and media.³⁸⁶ ACBAR has partnerships with different networks and umbrella organizations,³⁸⁷ and is part of several formal or informal coordination groups including CSJWG, CSAC and UNDP... ACBAR is also the point of contact for many coordination initiatives by other CS actors and is also leading its own advocacy initiatives, such as the positions papers for the London conference.³⁸⁸

One of the interesting findings of the research is

385 Several respondents agreed with more involvement of ACBAR of Afghan CSOs scene and coordination, not only focused on NGOs. For example Interviews of E. Winter, S. Schmeidl, A. Rafiee, F. Pompetti, or J. Nader, op. cit.

386 For example Interview K. Aoki, op. cit. S. Cordella, op. cit, A. O'Leary, op. cit, H. Nashir, op. cit as well as MoE representative, op. cit, and N. Ayubi. op. cit.

387 Cf above part III. For example with ANCB, with AWN...

388 Meeting in May with ACBAR members, and in June with others actors and umbrella organizations like AWN, SWABAC, ANCB, ACSF...

380 Interview, Kabul, Spring 2014. The respondent prefers to stay anonymous.

381 Ibid.

382 For example interview H. Hayat, op. cit. Also I. Zaman, op. cit.

383 For example interview H. Hayat, op. cit. or S. Schmeidl, op. cit.

384 Interview I. Zaman, op. cit.

that ACBAR is still considered by some CS actors (mostly non-ACBAR members) as an internationally dominated coordination body.³⁸⁹ ACBAR is a registered Afghan NGO and has 76 INGOs and 51 ANGOs. In addition, there is currently only two international staff—the Executive Director and one of the Deputy Director/ Advocacy Manager. This impression is not justified in fact, but is based largely in personal opinions based on singular events, tensions or remarks that have stayed in the mind of CS actors for decades. For example in a discussion with N. Ayubi regarding the preparation of the previous London Conference in 2010, she remembered that ACBAR gave priority to an international over an Afghan colleague.³⁹⁰ This was understandably not well accepted by Afghan CSOs, and because of an episode like this CS actors consider ACBAR as international, which is inaccurate. Zaman also recalled:

One issue that I see between these organizations [other umbrella organizations or networks] and ACBAR (...) where there has been a clash between ACBAR and these organizations have been who is going on which trip. The usual selfish attitude by many of us. And that role was given to ACBAR in different occasions like Tokyo, Bonn etc. That was not taken well by some organizations and that resulted into those organizations being angry and some even pessimistic about ACBAR. Yes, we also have expat staff in our office. We have expatriates who have PhDs but it doesn't make us international. It depends on how clear the roles are. So I mean having international staff, my personal opinion, shouldn't be an impediment for ACBAR or any other organization to take the lead on some issues or for us to not give that role to ACBAR.³⁹¹

ACBAR has to pay a specific attention to its coordination and communications activities to always highlight its Afghan members and partners and to include other Afghan CSOs as much as possible in joint initiatives. However, some CSOs and umbrella organizations also have to be critical, using their own judgment, and consider ACBAR's composition and scope of activities. Just because the organization has international staff and is one of the only coordinating bodies comprising INGOs does not mean that this organization relies on

389 For example M. Joyenda, op. cit., J. Mohammad, op. cit., S. Schmeidl, op. cit., I. Zaman, op. cit.

390 Interview N. Ayubi, op. cit. Apparently it was due to management and visa issues at the time. But it was not appreciated by the Afghan CSOs actors.

391 Interview I. Zaman, op. cit.

or represent mainly international assets or interests.

ACBAR plays a “key role” in terms of coordination, and members, CSOs and other actors are satisfied with its activities.³⁹² ACBAR is a very well known proficient umbrella organization with few critics.³⁹³ ACBAR is very attractive for donors, to connect them with ACSO, and also for its members to support them in their relations with the GIRoA and coordination of their activities. Nonetheless, ACBAR, as is true of any organization, can improve and can do more or carry out activities in a better way. It is expected to do so both by members and by non-members.

We expect ACBAR to serve and facilitate the work of its members in order to address the Humanitarian and Development needs of Afghanistan. We also want ACBAR to contribute to the mobilization and strengthening of the role of civil society in Afghanistan. ACBAR can also help us by advocating and representing the interests of the NGOs sector in Afghanistan on behalf of its members. We would also like ACBAR to promote high ethical and professional standards among the NGOs community.³⁹⁴

COORDINATION RELATIONS BETWEEN ACBAR AND NON ACBAR MEMBERS

The level of interaction between ACBAR and other CSOs or networks varies according to the mandate of the organization, the situation, the capacity, and their willingness to cooperate with each other. ACBAR have more relations with umbrella organizations with than single CSOs as entailed by its core coordinating function. Other umbrella organizations have often inquired as to whether they could join ACBAR as members. Most of them do not see the benefit and believe that it will result in a conflict of interest.³⁹⁵ However, some coordination bodies or networks organizations are members of ACBAR, such as CoAR. This would be an interesting case study to determine if there would be particular tangible benefit to another umbrella organization to join ACBAR and if there will be any kind of conflict of interest.

Before analyzing the role of ACBAR from the perspective of nonmembers, it is important to highlight

392 Interview S. Cordella, op. cit.

393 Cf two following sections for more details.

394 Interview H. Nashir, op. cit.

395 Interview A. Omerzai, op. cit., H. Safi, op. cit., A. Rafiee, op. cit.

another point regarding ACBAR's fee. Some of the participants expressed that the membership fee is too high for some Afghan NGOs to join ACBAR.³⁹⁶ However, it is important to note that the membership fee is an essential component of the organization, and ACBAR's sustainability depends on it. Moreover, there are other coordination bodies and umbrella organizations, like ANCB, CSHRN, and ACSF with lower membership fees, which allows Afghan NGOs and CSOs who feel that ACBAR's fee is too high to take part in such networks.

As for the question of meta-coordination, discussed above, some of the interviewees thought that ACBAR could also be an instrument for coordination of coordination, and others even felt that ACBAR should be the organization in charge of meta-coordination.³⁹⁷ However, others disagreed, and the present study leads us to advise higher and more active participation of ACBAR within the CSJWG rather than assuming the function of meta-coordination itself. Indeed given ACBAR's mandate, there is a question of legitimacy and representativity of ACBAR in a meta-coordination role. As ACBAR has NGOs exclusively as members it would not be justifiable in light of Afghan CSOs.

As stressed earlier, the request for more interaction and relationship with ACBAR and other umbrella organizations as well as CSOs has to come from their side also, and to be demand driven. Considering network organizations are at the heart of the analysis, the demand is there. Almost all coordination bodies and umbrella organizations interviewed called for more joint initiatives and for more cooperation and coordination, especially regarding advocacy and capacity building.³⁹⁸ Currently, ACBAR coordinates with other actors on an ad hoc basis as needed and some CS actors would like to see coordination be more systematic and ensure that Afghan CS voices are heard.³⁹⁹ For M. Joyenda, there is not enough coordination between umbrella organizations and they should meet more regularly with a common agenda according to the current main issues or challenges of CSOs.⁴⁰⁰

Everybody is doing coordination or working in this sector. But they do not share their knowledge and

396 Interview S. Lalee, op. cit.

397 For example I. Zaman, op. cit.

398 For example Interview H. Hayat, op. cit, S. Lalee, op. cit, J. Mohammad, op. cit.

399 For example interview M. Joyenda, op. cit. A. Khan, op. cit. A. O'Leary, op. cit. .

400 Interview M. Joyenda, op. cit.

information with each other. They should have a regular contact with each other, at least meet once a month, come together, share information, and coordinate among themselves.⁴⁰¹

In spite of these potential risks, this analysis of the capacity of umbrella organizations and networks as well as the needs assessment based on the interviews leads to the belief that ACBAR is currently the right organization to play a coordinating role in advocacy at the regional, national, and international levels. As underlined by F. Pompetti, former ENNA Director, ACBAR can be the voice of ANGOs but also support honest CSOs and give them the space and opportunity to meet each other, discuss challenges and strategy to overcome them, and possibly develop joint papers or events.⁴⁰² ACBAR is in a great position to work on both national and international advocacy because of its rich mixed composition of ANGOs and INGOs. Some international staff as well as INGOs are more careful with national advocacy on national issues, for fear of infringement on the internal affairs of the Afghan state and repercussion in regards to humanitarian principles, especially with respect to neutrality, impartiality, and independence. Most of the interviewees still insist on ACBAR developing its advocacy capacity.

I think advocacy with national authorities in order to represent the interests of the NGO community is important, as is advocacy with donors to promote continued funding for relief and development in Afghanistan, and advocacy with the international community to highlight the needs of the Afghan population and the issues faced by the NGO community such as attacks on health clinics and aid workers. For advocacy at the regional and international levels, ACBAR should definitely contribute to major conferences and events but should as much as possible work through partner organizations such as BAAG and ENNA for example.⁴⁰³

The development of the advocacy component is supported both by members and by other umbrella organizations, such as ACSF, CSHRN, AWN, and ANCB.⁴⁰⁴ At the national level ACBAR, in coordination with other umbrella organizations, can influence decisionmakers on laws and regulations or their

401 Ibid.

402 Interview F. Pompetti, op. cit.

403 I. Detlefsen, Relief International, op. cit.

404 Interview op. cit.

implementation, such as their coordination with AWN on the EAW law.⁴⁰⁵ By combining their efforts, CSOs gain influence and are more likely to be heard. At a regional level, ACBAR could also develop partnerships and examine new opportunities, also in terms of funding, with non-traditional donors like the UAE, Saudi Arabia... Internationally, ACBAR has MoUs with both ENNA and BAAG and has good relations with other key players and networks, which can be really useful for advocacy purposes.

Coordination comes with responsibility but if ACBAR continues to work professionally and effectively, it can become a great platform for CSOs, conveying the voice of all CS actors and assisting and promoting CSOs in Afghanistan by supporting joint events or partnerships. As E. Winter explained:

405 For example interview S. Schmeidl, op. cit.

I am a great believer in two things. One is having the opportunity to get together because then it reduces likelihood of misunderstanding and making the wrong assumption on people and/or organization. And the other is that it's really important to bring people together but you can only do this if you have people who are able to and who actually want to collaborate, have consensus. Unfortunately in some organizations, people are very protective of their own territory and it works against them, reaching consensus and working together.⁴⁰⁶

ACBAR could improve coordination and cooperation with other networks and develop a culture of collective performance and processes, as well as overcome the challenges of the Afghan CSO scene.

406 Interview E. Winter, op. cit.

4. CHALLENGES OF CSOs: THEIR RELATION WITH KEY PLANERS



CS umbrella organizations as well as CSOs are facing a lot of diverse challenges. As funding decreases, formal and informal alliances and networks are becoming an imperative for effective fundraising and advocacy strategies. Maiwand Rahyab highlights that:

CSOS are increasingly aware of it [the necessity of coordinate among each other] and they know that when it comes to advocacy and political discussions and things like that; they have no choice but to coordinate and to make sure that they join process together to get things done.⁴⁰⁷

There is a great need for coordination among CSOs, and especially among umbrella and network organizations. However, coordination is not an easy task and CSOs have been facing a lot of challenges, both internally and externally. They are situated at a crossroads, with certain expectations and concerns for the future, both near and distant.

4.1 INTERNAL CHALLENGES TO COORDINATION

The majority of internal challenges to coordination are detailed below. First the report highlights the multiplicity of actors of coordination, then the insufficiency of resources and modest capacity, and finally the lack of commitment of CSO actors and the negative competition among them.

MULTIPLICITY OF ACTORS

The landscape of CS coordination organizations, as is characteristic of a young CS, has a fair number of actors. This multiplicity of players does not make coordination easier. This is exacerbated by the fact that the collecting and gathering of information is usually not systematic and when there is data, access is complicated, unstandardized, and sometimes impossible. As E. Winter emphasized in her report, there is no common general database for either activities or information of CSOs.⁴⁰⁸ There are sometimes individual websites with some data available, but these are often not updated with only a little broad information. This gap in terms of access to information makes it more challenging to find out who is doing what and where to avoid duplication, requiring more effort before performing any coordination work. There is no centralized system and it's hard to get the correct information without personal networks. N. Malikin, from InterAction, shared her experience from Afghanistan prior to joining InterAction:

One of the challenges of those sorts of environments [conflict or post-conflict] is identifying within CS who is speaking for whom, what their interests are and who they actually represent. Because it's always hard in a challenging environment to discern the truth in this matter, especially as a foreigner with limited access.⁴⁰⁹

The panorama of CSOs is also so wide that it can be hard to distinguish between serious organizations

407 Interview M. Rahyab, op. cit.

408 E. Winter, Civil Society Development..., op. cit., p. 23.

409 Interview N. Malikin, op. cit.

and others. There are 7,000 CSOs, where some are politicized, and some were just established as an opportunity to make money, have projects and obtain income for themselves and their relations. That's why competent umbrella organizations that are aware of the activities and professionalism of their members are very important, as well as mapping initiatives at the national and local level. Other initiatives can also be useful, like the above-mentioned AICS, which will have the mandate to assess and give certification to Afghan CSOs. The role of AICS will also be to generate capacity development standards and assist CSOs on this path. Even if there is some skepticism regarding this initiative.⁴¹⁰

INSUFFICIENT RESOURCES AND PROGRESSIVE BUT STILL MODEST CAPACITY

Despite progress and achievements regarding the capacity and resources of Afghan CSOs, there is still a lot to be done and room for improvement. This statement makes sense for umbrella organization in two ways: (1) there is a potential increase for coordination bodies themselves; (2) umbrella or network organizations are an amazing tool to strengthen the capacity of all member organizations and to share resources with them. From a capacity-focused perspective, Afghan CSOs are uneven and there are important differences between CSOs... In terms of education, there is often a contrast between the usual actors in CS and the young generation. But thanks to international support, and the hard work of civil society actors, capacity has risen during the last decade. ACBAR recently conducted a workshop on refugees in Herat with the support of the Danish Refugee Council (DRC). The workshop included a discussion with J. Kingsley, who has been working in Afghanistan off and on for ten years, and she was impressed by the progress made by the Afghan staff members during this period.⁴¹¹ Still, the capacity of Afghan CSOs is modest, particularly in two areas: advocacy and writing skills.⁴¹² Afghans CS actors:

(...) need help is to put their ideas together. They are very good at vocal advocacy but pretty sadly not in written form. Because I work with them with Salah

410 Interview and recent discussion DFID, ACBAR November 2014.

411 Also discussion with J. Kingsley, ACBAR refugee workshop. Herat, 6th August 2014. She also mentioned the influence of Iran, and higher education standards in the region.

412 Estimation from several respondents, for example, Interview H. Nashir, op. cit. Interview M. Rahyab, op. cit. Interview S. Schmeidl, op. cit. Interview I. Zaman op. cit...

in that consortium, I helped to write a three-page report for the High Peace Council. They translated it of course. But really to put the statement down, this is the problem.⁴¹³

The international community and donors are still planning to support CSOs, and especially in capacity development, focusing on general training (HR, finance, project management...) as well as in more technical high-level training,⁴¹⁴ which is what CSOs need with proper sharing of knowledge and competencies.⁴¹⁵

From a resource-focused perspective a lot of money was spent by the international community to support the promotion and strengthening of CSOs. CSOs have flourished, but not always in a proper strategic manner or with sufficient monitoring mechanisms.⁴¹⁶ Nowadays, as funding is shrinking, resources of Afghan and international CSOs working in Afghanistan is following the same trajectory, of course with disparities between large international NGOs and other CSOs. Most of the Afghan CSOs are understaffed and have a very low level of resources. This also impacts coordination among members of umbrella organizations who are not able to join most of the meetings since there is not enough staff to actually cover the volume of work of the CSOs. Even when CSOs are sending someone to these meetings, it is often not the person in charge that can actually make decisions.⁴¹⁷ In her interview, E. Winter also stressed the time dimension, explaining, "The big question for those who run organizations is actually how much time do they have, to actually get to meetings."⁴¹⁸

LACK OF COMMITMENT AND NEGATIVE COMPETITION

Another critic expressed that leading CS actors lack commitment, engagement and strategic vision.⁴¹⁹ Those heading CSOs or umbrella organizations are

413 Interview S. Schmeidl, op. cit.

414 Interview K. Ludwig, op. cit. As well as proposal to DFID and UNICEF to finance capacity development of Afghan CSOs.

415 Interview H. Safi, op. Cit. And following section on external challenges.

416 Interview, the person prefers to stay anonymous and testifies that one of the bigger Programs of support to CSOs was financing one or several ghost organization for years, before it was assessed and decided to blacklist those organization.

417 Several interviewees shared this opinion with us, for example interview H. Safi, or interview I. Zaman, op. cit.

418 Interview E. Winter, op cit.

419 For example interview A. Khan, op. cit.

often still stuck on their own interests. “There is lack of a strong coordination, and everyone is concentrated on his own members.”⁴²⁰ There is also a gap in terms of leadership, and coordination requires leadership. As N. Malikin shared from her own experience:

[There is] coordination but there is also leadership. And certainly knowing my role I tried to coordinate efforts, but sometimes if I feel like members perhaps aren’t being progressive enough or they’re being timid or not doing anything, I am kind of used to my role, to say why are we not saying this. There is no reason you know. Especially in our meetings involving donors, people are afraid to say certain things because they are donors. But also as a good advocate you have to use this opportunity to advance whatever your goal is. So I think the challenge sometimes is getting people to say what needs to be said, to be bold. But to be honest I think another thing that I am struggling with is to get NGOs to participate (in coordination efforts).⁴²¹

Even if there have been improvements in the past few years with functional coordination initiatives, especially prior to international conferences, there is still negative competition among main CSO coordination actors. “Negative competition” was a recurring expression in the interviews.⁴²² There are several reasons for this negative competition, sometimes immoderate ego, different political views, mistrust between actors, lure of profit, as well as competition for resources...⁴²³ N. Malikin gave an example from the US on the New Deal for Fragile States initiative.

There were problems in the field on New Deal in Afghanistan because there was no identification in terms of who is engaging and representing CS. CSOs couldn’t even decide who will be representing them, and were creating conflicts.⁴²⁴

The important amount of international aid given to CSOs, without any clear strategy or decent regular monitoring, has certainly supported CS development but has also brought additional challenges. For example, a damaging impact of this is the reduction of citizens’ voluntarism in Afghan CS. If there is a voluntary group in the community⁴²⁵ and if there is some resurgence of those kinds of initiatives it remains an exception.

420 Interview H. Safi, op. cit.

421 Interview N. Malikin, op. cit.

422 At least appearing in 15 of our interviews. For example E. Winter, I. Zaman, R. Zia, A. Rafiee, A. Athayi... op. cit.

423 For example interview J. Nader, op. cit.

424 Interview N. Malikin, op. cit.

425 For example PTRO, CSOs Mapping Exercise, op. cit., p. 13.

Money is a big thing, especially in the initial stage of development of CSOs and NGOs here. Certainly there was competition. And that’s mitigating against people collaborating and being honest with each other. There is also the network situation here. And there have been times when there has been a competition between different heads of networks. Somebody might get invited to an international conference to represent Afghan CS. But this person is not representing my view or my organization or my constituency. So there is that very human kind of... That’s typical to human beings and you find a way to allow it to diminish and sometimes that means people negotiate between the different sides. And sometimes it’s just a question of providing the opportunity to the people to work together on a particular thing, it means that they collaborate more and they understand each other more.⁴²⁶

Some of these internal challenges are not specific to Afghanistan. Nonetheless, in the Afghan context, state building efforts, international presence and support, and the level of development add more challenges for national and international CSOs that umbrella organizations are part of.

4.2 EXTERNAL CHALLENGES TO COORDINATION

In the current Afghan context, there is an extreme competition over resources between CSOs. This was the case before, but since financial support is being reduced and donors countries as well as INGO are “losing interest in Afghanistan”⁴²⁷ and are engaging in other conflict zones, especially Syria, South Soudan, Lybia, and recently Gaza, the competition is becoming more and more difficult. This is also the case for the Afghan Government. The 2014 Afghan transition brings a new setting that also challenges CSOs in relation with other key players. With that, it is crucial to examine these interactions and the obstacles that CSOs and umbrella organizations are facing with current and potential interlocutors. Three questions were asked regarding the IC, the GIRoA, the private sector (PS) and media regarding relations, support needed, coordination and main challenges.⁴²⁸

426 Interview E. Winter, op. cit.

427 Interview N. Malikin, op. cit.

428 Cf questionnaire in Annex.

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

Interactions between CSOs and IC, mostly donors and UN agencies, are complicated and usually rare. Due to security reasons, the vast majority of international staff in the donor community are not in contact with Afghan citizens or CS actors, except their project partners. They generally stay in secure compounds and when they don't live in the same place, they move in armed vehicles and cannot go to most of the local CSOs, and some internationals cannot even go to a protected hotel or restaurant... The security situation and these restrictions do not facilitate contact or understanding of Afghan CSOs and society in general. The relationship between CSOs and IC is marked by ambivalence. Even where CSOs realize that IC and donors have been supporting the development of CS, they are strongly critical towards them. At the same time, they still expect support and funding from IC, and sometimes even from those they are criticizing. Several respondents complained about the attitude of some internationals or expatriates.⁴²⁹ H. Safi shared her view on this matter:

Our expectation is that we really need technical support, because the human resources within our network and within our secretariat are very limited. Now in order to increase that, we also have to increase more our capacity development initiatives for them. So what we require from the IC is honest technical support because I have observed that in most of the organizations, international advisors come and they treat the national staff as their servants, or their assistant. They never know the concept of mentoring. Because they have a feeling of insecurity within their own job that if I tell this national person everything there will be no job. I will have a lack of opportunity for my job. So that is what we have to highlight to the donors. CSOs in Afghanistan need honest technical capacity building and mentoring of national staff because that's true, that's an opportunity for Afghanistan and that's an opportunity for the IC as well. But then they are being honest with their work. Because if someone come and sit for 6, 8 months in a network or an organization but still after that if he or she goes and there is no archive in the organization, no system and no one knows how to write an email, to professionally communicate, so whose fault is that? I will blame this international advisor for that

because why has this person been there and taking 7000, 8000, 10000 USD? So it means that there has been less commitment and honesty with the work. So my request and expectation is real technical capacity building of the national partners. And that is in fact the sustainability of the network and the national organizations as well. After so many years if we are saying there is no capacity in Afghanistan and then again we blame the Afghan people. So what were those thousands and thousands of advisors who came and sat in different International Organizations (...)?⁴³⁰

This bitterness is not specific to the Afghan context is usually common in countries depending on international aid.⁴³¹

Another frequent criticism is that most of the time international staff comes, often young, with a high position and no proper knowledge or understanding of the context. In addition, they stay for a few months then are replaced by someone new and generally with no handover between them. The lack of comprehension has been highlighted over and over, even in the donors programs.

Some of the donors do not understand the context, because most of the time the donors are IOs, and they have worked in Africa, in Liberia, or in China. So they bring a project from there and they want to practice it in Afghanistan. And when the national people tell them that it is not practical in Afghanistan, they say 'oh it has been successful.' We should pilot that in Afghanistan as a model, with very small capacity and then we can see [if it's working or not]. So the challenge is that they should be more receptive to nationals for suggestions and recommendations because they are the people who are on the ground and know what the problem in the community is. For instance a very clear example is what is happening now with Badakhshan. The whole world is saying we are supporting the people of Badakhshan. But until today there are families who are dying from hunger. So what is the effect of that 100,000 USD given by that or this country. So that in the last week we might have lost lives of some people because of hunger. So that is how it works, they are sitting and making strategy, forming commissions and by the time they start working some people already died. So it is going to the context and to the reality of the

429 For example Interviews of H. Safi, A. Rafiee, I Zaman, A. Omerai, H. Hayat, or J. Mohammad, op. cit.

430 Interview H. Safi, op. cit.

431 For example E. Winter, Civil Society... op. cit. p. 27.

local people, in designing and planning for that.⁴³²

There is a lack of long-term vision and strategy in how key donors are programming their support to CSOs in Afghanistan. Y. Torabi, interviewed for another research in 2007, summarized the situation very well:

Up until now, donors and the international community have taken an incorrect approach, as they have not concentrated on the problems of the Afghans, but rather on the government institutions. On my part, I do not believe that institutions can be constructed without interacting with the society. It would be a construction that would not be sustainable in the long-term. Additionally, the programming of projects and funding should be a prerogative of the Afghan society. Many donors take an instrumental approach, using the civil society for their own purposes. This is a form of behavior that must be reviewed. The Afghan civil society has a specific task: to encourage social cohesion and State accountability; these should be its objectives, not those more circumscribed and specified by the donor countries. Without considering the fact that up until now, consultation has been rather limited. We have had experiences of international conferences in which the civil society had the right to just one 'seat', sometimes half even, as it was shared with the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission. The truth is that the civil society is not heard. And this affects the entire policy-making process in Afghanistan.⁴³³

S. Schmeidl among others also insists that there is a lack of long-term strategy and coordination between donors themselves.

Tawanmandi is a first step in this direction, but it is not enough. There should be more cooperation between donors and coordination to organize their support collectively, and not only in the implementation phase but from day one of the design of the future project.

If you think about donor communities and organizations, DFID, Tawanmandi for example, French make another program... The program is developed based on some consultations researches, but is still developed in the headquarters Paris, London, Washington, Tokyo... They come here to implement it. Then you have your financial deadlines, you have your program design... And you are

accountable to your congress, to your parliament, your ministry and for variety of compliance, financial political reasons right? When the program reaches here and reaches the implementation phase you hardly have opportunity to change things fundamentally. So what you end up doing is you share information that, for example we share with Tawanmandi. Tawanmandi and CPI do a lot of similar things. All we do is we share information we have this forum where we talk about things, we do this and we do this. Great. Ok can Counterpart and Tawanmandi sit together and say okay; we are going to stop this program, stop this program, and let's start from the scratch? Let's do joint programming, go back to the donors and say no. I want to send you back 20 million USD. Would they approve that? Nobody can do that. And the same applies for the CSOs. They worked with different donors and they have the same issues. And of course there is competition at all levels. So because of that I think what is happening in Afghanistan right now and I'm probably a bit pessimistic in information sharing versus coordination. Or to me coordination is a vague term. I don't like it at all. To me either you do joint programming or you end up sharing information. The thing in between the two is coordination which never happens.⁴³⁴

Donors have their own agenda and their own interests that are guiding all of their actions and support to Afghan CSOs whether they are in compliance with the CSOs' chief concerns or not.

In terms of relations between CSOs and donors, another consideration deserves to be raised. Many CSOs, especially Afghan CSOs, express difficulties understanding donor's procedures and guidelines, and testify that it is tough for them to meet donors' requirements.⁴³⁵ This again demonstrates the need of capacity development of Afghan CSOs. However, going to the roots of the problem, it is also often an issue of communication style and language.⁴³⁶ It would be beneficial for IC actors to become aware of this issue and adapt their communication skills to their interlocutor, not in a patronizing way but in a manner that is more constructive. There are many meetings where some internationals are speaking between themselves, sometimes very quickly,

434 Interview M. Rahyab, op. cit.

435 Cf for instance Interview A. Omerzai, or Interview J. Mohammad, op. cit.

436 This was also confirmed by J. Nader, who is the Director of BAAG, Afghan men who lives in London. Op. cit.

432 Interview H. Safi, op. cit.

433 G. Battiston, *The Afghan Civil Society: a look from...*, op. cit., p.22.

considering a complicated topic, or taking something for granted when it's not. Adjusting the speed of speaking according to the audience and explaining things more or in a better way are not difficult tasks and could really help to improve the understanding of information and the efficiency of coordination. Additional ideas should also include reviewing and standardizing procedures and requirements, as well as monitoring and evaluation processes between donors.

There are lots of documents, many donors ask for tons of them, but some like Tawanmandi have specific requirements, and ask for licence, annual report, financial report, certificate of registration, taxes, past reports... Other donors they also ask for several documents that make other implementing partners, CSOs, resources sometimes because they said I don't have the chance to be partner of this organization... I've seen some NGOs they are cutting the headers draft of paper and putting there and making some other document, some American NGOs or other NGOs and something like that. Their requirements must be simplified, authentic but simplified.⁴³⁷

Lastly, CSOs are donor-driven and dependent on international aid, which creates problems, especially regarding the direction and content of CS activities and the sustainability of CSOs. Since the end of the Taliban regime, the large international (financial) contribution to support CS in Afghanistan has affected the CSOs in different ways. It has been an incentive to create or develop CSOs according to the donor's format (mostly NGOs) and priorities (education, women...). Moreover, many donors always give funding to the same organizations, the ones who are well known that they have been supporting in the past. While it is understandable because: there is less work in terms of assessment and paperwork; it is less risk since they have already worked with those CSOs in the past; it contributes to helping an organization they have been already been assisting, so it ensures the continuity of the organization. However, it also disadvantages other CSOs, in particular small or new ones. Several types of organizations have been marginalized (unions, social groups, youth movements) and some sectors have been neglected (social, children's rights...).⁴³⁸

Most CSOs are completely relying on donor funding—so international money—to exist, which is a serious

437 Interview A. Khan, op. cit.

438 For example interview C. Roehrs, AAN, Kabul, 25th May 2014.

issue for the future of Afghan CS. Hopefully CS actors are starting to realize that they have to be creative and find new ideas and new ... Considering the question of sustainability, the challenge for international donors as well as CSOs is "how to support active Afghan CSOs, without forcing them into being project-based organizations?"⁴³⁹ And even if there is a certain apprehension from IC's side to core fund CSOs, it would be beneficial to leave the door open for core support. CSOs also have to deal with the sustainability of their organization in a proactive manner. They have to develop a strategy and approach different players... As summarized quite openly by F. Dashty:

Civil society organizations as much I know, most of them do not have vision. They are working based on projects. An idea comes up and they are turning it into a project proposal, running to find funding for it, implementing it right or wrong, reporting back to the donor and that's it. We have to have a vision to change the society in a positive way by using the initiatives, capacity and potential of the CSOs. This vision doesn't exist. At least I haven't seen this vision in any existing organization or network. As long as we continue this way, the day there is no funding, there is no organization.⁴⁴⁰

For umbrella organizations or networks, membership fees are one of the answers. The ones who established a fee can use it as a resource to support coordination activities.⁴⁴¹ Conversely, some of them share the opinion that having a membership fee restricts the potential number of members, especially those with very limited budgets.⁴⁴² The existence of both types of networks is favorable to the diversity of the CSOs. Additionally, CS coordination organizations also have specific challenges. First, donors are not really keen to support coordination networks⁴⁴³ and often each donor agency is supporting its own coordination body.

There is a huge gap in terms of coordination in Afghanistan Often partners, entities, they don't speak to each other, and it's happen within government, outside government, happens with any NGO, outside the NGO world, between donors, and beyond donors...⁴⁴⁴

439 Interview S. Schmeidl, op. cit.

440 Interview F. Dashty, op. cit.

441 For example ACBAR, ACSF, ANCB...

442 For example, CSCC. And interview H. Hayat, op. cit.

443 For example Interview S. Schmeidl.

444 Interview R Zia, op. cit.

AFGHAN GOVERNMENT

We must consider recent history; we are leaving decades of war behind us, first against the Soviets, then the civil war, then that against the Taliban regime. We are striving to rebuild the country, in all its sectors. In this type of situation, we need a strong civil society, which acts as a bridge between the government and the population, and which points out the people's problems to the government when the government fails to consider them.⁴⁴⁵

Most of the respondents were relatively indifferent towards the government. There were some common points in the interviews, stressing both the improvement but also the gap in terms of cooperation and coordination.

The era of the Karzai Administration has been marked by shared mistrust from both sides—Afghan government and institutions as well as ACSOs.

The relationship is a difficult one. The government considers that the civil society is always led to reason in negative terms and create problems; the civil society instead believes that the government is incapable and does not make sufficient effort to work together. It is crucial to improve this relationship. During my recent trip to Pakistan, I saw that some organizations of the civil society receive government funds, while here in Afghanistan, sometimes we fail to even speak to the government. The situation has to change; the government needs to understand the importance of the role played by the civil society, which, in turn, must learn to understand the problems of the government, which, in itself, is not overly stable, as it survives thanks to the assistance and funds of the international community. It is the time to start to change the culture of mutual criticism, and to encourage understanding, coordination and mutual aid. As Afghan Women Network we have worked with the government for the peace jirga: it was difficult, but in the end, we found support and managed to coordinate. We need to continue along this route.⁴⁴⁶

Both CS actors and government officials need to work together more and in a more efficient way. Several respondents highlighted that the government was often withholding information or at best were reluctant

to share it with CSOs. Even respondents with a good relationship with government institutions revealed that GIRoA is not truly cooperative and when there is cooperation, it's not really in a timely and professional manner.⁴⁴⁷ People, citizens, as well as CS actors often rely on personal connections to access services or information. This culture of individual and informal networking instead of formal, as well as the behavior of some government officials "who do not consider CS as a member of the country's governance"⁴⁴⁸ is neither serving nor promoting the cooperation and coordination between the two key players.

Moreover, there is still no systematized coordination effort and no support from the government side. Some respondents also compared the Afghan framework to other countries such as Bangladesh⁴⁴⁹ to illustrate that in Afghanistan the government is not working with CSOs and not promoting the role of CS, even when it comes to umbrella organizations.⁴⁵⁰ Even government officials themselves recognized that there is no formal official backing from the national institutions.⁴⁵¹ The legal environment has certainly advanced since 2005, with the new law on NGOs and with the new law on associations in 2013. However, improvements could still be made in terms of reporting, financial rules, taxations... as well as sources of funding for CSOs and conditions for registration. More support is needed from the government to enable CSOs to work in a favorable environment, and CS actors should be recognized as a partner and interlocutor in their own right. Four of the interviewees discussed the conflict between the organization elected by the CSOs to monitor the elections process (Free and Fair Election Forum Afghanistan FEFA) and the refusal of the government and the unilateral nomination of TEFA instead (Transparent Election Foundation of Afghanistan TEFA) prior to the 2014 presidential elections.⁴⁵²

The GIRoA has mostly considered CSOs has an instrument to assist its activities in terms of service delivery, but when it comes to political role of CS actors, the government is far more cautious. This is not totally detached from the programming and the support given to the CSOs by the IC and donors.⁴⁵³

447 Interview H. Safi, op. cit.

448 Y. Torabi, in: G. Battiston, *The Afghan Civil Society: a look from...*, op. cit, p. 28.

449 For example interview L. Docherty, op. cit.

450 For example interview V. Thiollet, op. cit.

451 For example interview MoE, or MoJ, op. cit.

452 For example interview A. Athayi, op. cit.

453 For example J. Howell and J. Lind, *Civil Society with Guns...* op. cit, p. 23 and following.

445 I. Tawallah, poet and journalist, *Writers' Association of Bamiyan*. in: G. Battiston, *The Afghan Civil Society: a look from...*, op. cit, p. 26.

446 Samira Hamidi, *AWN, Kabul, Ibid*, p. 26-27.

Yet, one of the first roles of CSOs is to be a watchdog in regards to the policies and actions of GIRoA, a role that was reiterated by almost all the respondents.⁴⁵⁴

The government appears to be convinced that it has no need for civil society, and in major issues of a national scope, it forgets to involve us. And yet the civil society, and the NGOs in particular, provide enormous support to the government, simply consider the National Solidarity Program and other national programs. Rather than recognizing our essential supporting role, the government criticizes the civil society, focusing on corruption, which actually only concerns part of the organizations.⁴⁵⁵

As highlighted by A. Rafiee, Director of ACSFo, “inside the politics of Afghanistan, every Afghan politician has their own agenda so common goals and common agendas have not been initiated so far. One of the challenges that the CS has is how to bring all together, on common agendas.”⁴⁵⁶ This would be beneficial for all players—GIRoA, IC, and CSOs, and ultimately Afghan citizens—especially in the context of transition. A. Rafiee also underlined concerns shared by many respondents of growing conservatism, the use of ethnic differences to further divide the country, and political transition.⁴⁵⁷ On the political transition, especially in a phase of recounting ballots, and fights between two potential future presidents, many CS actors are worried to see warlords coming into the GIRoA and the potential of the GIRoA to turn into a dictatorship or at least an authoritarian regime, and hampering the freedom of expression but also activities of CSOs as well as umbrella organizations.⁴⁵⁸

I do believe that there will be more networks, that people will see a benefit actually coming together and networking. But the biggest threat I see potentially for the government is coming more oppressive. And there is of course a threat from the insurgency as well in the outreach, how much they see us, so close to the State and the West, that they see us as targets.⁴⁵⁹

A majority of respondents were also anxious about security in Afghanistan.⁴⁶⁰ They were tired of the

decades of war and conflict and want peace, to be able to work efficiently and safely in all parts of the country.⁴⁶¹ With this in mind, it is very important for CSOs to share their concerns with several actors and raise their voices, especially in the coming London conference in November 2014, to make sure that they will still have a protected sphere to operate in for the future of Afghanistan.

MEDIA

Though media is part of CS there is a general understanding that they form a specific group with a specific status, almost like a trade.⁴⁶² In Afghanistan there are different types of media—those who are really independent and others who work for political or economic interests.⁴⁶³ The first type have converging interests with CSOs, including bridging the gap between citizens and the AG but also ensuring transparent governance and holding the government accountable to the public.

Without media, civil society would not be as strong. In an open society, the media are the eyes and ears of the people, from whom one expects to find out what is going on in the country. It is the most important tool by which to inform and explain and explain what is happening. After the fall of the Taliban, there was an extraordinary growth of media, but there are still a great many problems, including safety and a lack of government support in addition to a widespread lack of professionalism. Contents of many radio shows and TVs are approximate. There is also very little consideration of the direct or indirect influences that warlords may have over journalist. In Afghanistan corruption is rife and journalism also suffers this, hence the most delicate subjects are simply avoided. However, there is a hope that journalists recently graduated from university will improve the overall level and standard of journalism.⁴⁶⁴

Most CSOs have a good relationship with media, including press, radio, and TV. H. Safi summed up

454 For example H. Hayat, op. cit. Also A. Nasimi, Alliance in Support of the Afghan People (ASAP), Kabul, 7th July 2014.

455 Raz Mohammad Dalili, SDO in: G. Battiston, The Afghan Civil Society: a look from, op. cit, p. 26.

456 Interview A. Rafiee, op. cit.

457 Ibid.

458 For example Interview I. Zaman, A. Nasima, M. Joyenda, op. cit.

459 Interview S. Schmeidl, op. cit.

460 For example interview H. Hayat, op. cit., J. Mohammad, op. cit, M.

Rahyab, op. cit, H. Safi, op. cit.

461 For example A. Omerzai, op. cit.

462 Interview N. Ayubi, The Killid Group (TKG), 16th July 2014.

463 For an analysis of Afghan Media in Afghanistan, Afghan Media in 2010: Synthesis Report, Altai Consulting, Kabul, 2010. Available <http://www.altaiconsulting.com/docs/media/2010/Afghan%20Media%20in%202010.pdf> consulted on the 8th August 2014.

464 Ahmad Zia Ferozpour, lecturer, Balkh University, Mazare-Sharif, in G. Battiston, The Afghan Civil Society: a look from, op. cit, p. 31.

the interactions and the challenges AWN faced with media:

With media we have very good relations (...) They accept to reflect our messages. The only challenge is that sometimes because they are media, they don't think about the sensitivity of women issues. They want to reflect it in order to have more viewers. For them it's just a message. But for us, it's a very important message with humans behind it, conservative audience and particular context. So that is the challenge that some of them don't understand the sensitivity of how this message will be accepted by the ground. And this can affect badly the women. (...) Also they have to be more understanding towards the message they send out about women. Because I think that media is a very important part of CS. So the minute they understand that they are a very important part of the society, the matter of responsibility comes. And if the matter of responsibility comes then, they will have to send out a message that will help women in the short term as well as in the long term.⁴⁶⁵

They also have a common interest with CSOs to have their activities, programs, and achievements made public and reach out a high number of citizens, key players, donors, GIRoA... For the media, CS is a very real and practical source of information. However, certain tensions and concerns still persist in both camps. Some CSOs find that the cooperation from media is more need-based, so when they need something from CSOs they communicate with CS actors, but when CSOs need something from media such as a press release or a conference, they are still reluctant. "In recent times, the media are paying more and more attention to the battles of civil society. But on too much of an occasional basis. They need to make more effort."⁴⁶⁶ Even if collaboration is progressing, several CS actors are still suspicious of the media.

There is still a gap between CSOs and media and no proper systematic connection between them. CSOs always want to keep themselves in the corner. They don't want to have a lot of relations with media. They don't want media to be too much involved in their work, to monitor their activities, to see how much money they are spending...⁴⁶⁷

465 Interview H. Safi, op. cit.

466 Aziza Khairandish, CSHRN, Herat, in G. Battiston, *The Afghan Civil Society: a look from*, op. cit, p. 32.

467 Interview N. Ayubi, op. cit.

Cooperation has to continue and initiatives should be developed to link CSOs and media and to have media supporting CS actors in their advocacy role, such as the Independent Media Consortium (IMC) supported by Tawanmandi, which works on research, information and advocacy.⁴⁶⁸

PRIVATE SECTOR

Afghan philanthropy is not highly developed. Interviewees were divided on the private sector.⁴⁶⁹ Most of the main CS actors and umbrella organizations did not see the private sector as a partner or as an interlocutor. Though some CSOs were more open to discussing the private sector and potential initiatives, they were in the minority.⁴⁷⁰ For most respondents the private sector and CS are two separate spheres and do not have vocation to interact.

With private sector we are not involved a lot, because we don't want to be related to a specific group or a specific person, or a specific vision. We have received some offers from the private sector from different people but we have tried to avoid connecting with them because we don't want to show that we are working for a specific group or specific person. It might be a challenge for us. But so far we are still in the same strategy that we will try to avoid going with private sector initiatives. Because it's private sector and every private sector has their own objectives and their own issues, we do not want to, sometimes we do not agree. Because when there is a matter of business or for business people, business is important. There is much less of a social effect for them. But for us there is a social effect needed. So this is why we try, we have a very limited cooperation with private sector. I think it is a challenge that we are limited. And so far we have no thought about how to get closer to private sector and how to coordinate. Perhaps it might be coming out in our strategic planning process because of our stability in the future. So then we have to really indicate our identity to them so that they understand

468 Interview H. Nashir, op. cit. IMC recently worked on some issue with Ministry of Health and publish the report. The next day, MoH was called by the Parliament members to give explanation on this topic.

469 For example J. Dowdy and A. Erdmann, "Private Sector Development in Afghanistan: The Doubly Missing Middle", in: R. Blackwill and al, *American Interests in South Asia: Building a Grand Strategy in Afghanistan, Pakistan and India*, p. 109 and following.

470 For example interview H. Hayat, op. cit.

who we are, what we believe, what we want to do, and we don't want interference from them. And then we can think about it.⁴⁷¹

However, because international funding is decreasing, several CSOs are reviewing their strategy and are initiating new partnerships or formulating new plans to expand opportunities for financial resources. For example, the CSCC is the only umbrella organization that regularly appeals to private companies in order to finance events.⁴⁷² However, these kinds of initiatives are few. CSOs must still be prudent and selective in their approach to the private sector.

So yes to support of private sectors. But, for the right reasons and in the right way. It's the bigger challenge that is there. I think that we have seen it works quite well in some districts where individual businesses from the district are available and make a thorough response. But in terms of something systematic and more coordinated it's not quite there, and for me being more supportive of an approach to try to build from the bottom up based on much more detailed local understanding where the people are, and not just coming with the top down approach. I just wouldn't to be so sure about it at

471 Interview H. Safi, op. cit.

472 Interview H. Hayat, op. cit.

this point of time. I think we have enough challenges maintaining coherence with the existing actors to try it, without necessarily proper expertise. As I said, it can happen locally-great-but given where the actual capacities are at the national level. I would be a bit cautious.⁴⁷³

Donors and IC are also encouraging such initiatives.⁴⁷⁴ For example, during the next London conference a side event is organized on the private sector, and BAAG will participate in this meeting to work on networking, making contacts and developing relationships with private enterprises.⁴⁷⁵ Initiatives such as this should be developed more and more. Both players have to take a step toward each other to meet more regularly and get to know each other's activities, and to realize that they can have common interests and work together. For example, Roshan and Tolo companies are involved in some activities to support CSOs.⁴⁷⁶ But it remains an exception and it should be amplified to other sectors and other CSOs, especially umbrella organizations, to make sure they will be sustainable in the future.

473 Interview A. O'Leary, op. cit.

474 Interview M. Sadaat, op. cit. or L. Docherty, op. cit.

475 Interview J. Nader, op. cit.

476 Interview M. Rahyab, op. cit. Especially in research, also universities...

5. EPILOGUE AND RECOMMENDATIONS



"Coordination, we notice when it's missing, and we appreciate when it's here."

- J. Kingsley, Refugee Workshop, Herat, 6th August 2014

5.1 CONCLUSION AND KEY FINDINGS

Though the word civil society has for a few years been the "big idea on everyone lips"⁴⁷⁷ there is still no working definition of the term in Afghanistan, especially outside the development world. Agreeing on a common definition or at least common criteria as well as raising awareness is still a main task of CSOs as well as other key players on the Afghan scene, IC, GIRoA... This research on coordination bodies and umbrella organizations reveals a multiplicity of actors working for the general coordination of NGOs and/or CSOs, or in different sectors. Their level of capacity and resources and types of members vary. All Afghan umbrella organizations studied in-depth in this report are registered with MoE. For some, accepting both NGOs and CSOs registered with either MoE or MoJ is difficult because each legal framework is specific and the coordination bodies that deal with a large number of CSOs have a wider scope of activities and mandate.

The findings show that despite some progress in terms of coordination of CSOs, there are still major gaps

from all sides, on behalf of coordination bodies and networks themselves, but also with IC and with GIRoA and among and between themselves as well. This study also found that despite all the capacity building already provided in Afghanistan, there is a real need for honest and high-level capacity development, more targeted, and carried out by national or international experts who actually care for the country and the Afghan people.

There are enough coordination bodies on the national scene, between ACBAR, ANCB, SWABAC, AWN... these are the networks who have access to all parts of Afghanistan. Multiplication of networks will create some duplication and some misunderstanding and I am not against it but it is difficult to manage, to coordinate. It is better to strengthen the existing ones and their capacity.⁴⁷⁸

Furthermore, it was determined that the relationship and interaction between CSOs and key players, both IC and GIRoA, should be improved. Considering the Afghan government:

There is still a great deal of diffidence between the organizations that work to strengthen the civil society and the government. Collaboration is difficult

⁴⁷⁷ M. Edwards, Civil Society, Cambridge, Polity, 2004.

⁴⁷⁸ Interview J. Mohammad, op. cit.

for both. The perception that the government has of civil society is extremely negative and vice versa. Both think that certain duties should be their exclusive prerogative. I think it will take a while before the government accepts the organizations of civil society as part of the development and reconstruction process, and before civil society, on its part, agrees to work with the government. Today, however, at least there is a clearer understanding of just what the tasks of each player, government, civil society and the international community, really are.⁴⁷⁹

Assessing ACBAR as an umbrella organization, it was determined that coordination organizations need to form a network system and that there is need to increase and improve interaction and cooperation individually and between each other but also collectively for the sake of meta-coordination. The CSJWG was identified as an important informal coordination body with lot of potential but also shortcomings and deficiencies, mostly in terms of human and material resources as well as a low participation rate.

A key result of this research is the important call from CS actors to develop and improve coordination with ACBAR as an organization. The general opinion of ACBAR members was more nuanced, with a majority of members wanting to see more cooperation and coordination with other CSOs, especially networks or umbrella organizations. However, some expressed concerns about the spreading of activity and ACBAR's capacity and mandate, and would like to first see ACBAR improve internally and focus on its current core coordination mandate. Coordination between local CSOs but also with international CSOs present in Afghanistan is indeed a capital task for the efficient functioning of CSOs in the country, and not only in the humanitarian and development sectors. Though it is not ACBAR's role to lead this coordination with CSOs in Afghanistan, it is ACBAR's role to take a share and contribute to this coordination. The question is how to do this.

Advocacy is likely to be the right way to move forward to further cooperation and coordination between ACBAR and other umbrella organizations. The decision to take this path belongs to the GA and has to be both, formulated by Afghan CSOs plus wanted

and endorsed by the NGOs members. ACBAR, as one of the only coordination bodies representing international and international NGOs in Afghanistan occupies an excellent place to promote joint initiatives and encourage constructive advocacy at the regional, national, and international levels.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

There is still more to be done to improve coordination among CSOs, especially by umbrella organizations in Afghanistan. As such, the author gives the following recommendations based on the research findings and ACBAR's mandate and strategy.

INTERNAL RECOMMENDATIONS TO ACBAR MEMBERS

- Regarding the external perception of ACBAR as an internationally dominated body, ACBAR as well as its members should design tools and/or communication materials to raise awareness on the composition, resources and activities. Both should make sure to reach a proper understanding and awareness of the mainly Afghan essence of ACBAR.
- ACBAR has to keep working on developing the capacity of its members, in particular ANGOs. Technical training must be provided both by the training department and external advisors. In agreement with ACBAR SC and the Director, the GA could envisage continuing capacity building or training of trainers for ACBAR members.
- ACBAR would benefit from extending and intensifying its relations with others actors, especially the private sector, the academic world, and regional Asian and Middle East actors. This could be a source of funding as well as interaction for further coordination and better knowledge and understanding of CS challenges and potential remedies.

479 S. Gheffar, Humanitarian Assistance for the Women and the Children of Afghanistan (HAWCA), in: G. Battiston, The Afghan Civil Society: a look from..., op. cit. p. 27.

EXTERNAL RECOMMENDATIONS TO NON MEMBERS

TO CSOs AND UMBRELLA ORGANIZATIONS

- Umbrella organizations and more generally CSOs must continue their progress in terms of more interaction and cooperation with each other. Afghan CS actors should be led by the common good and the interests of Afghan citizens. Coordination has to be more systemic, effective and consistent with several non-exclusive propositions as follows.
- There is a clear need for regular monthly or bimonthly meetings between all formal coordination organizations with an agenda discussed in advance and proper follow-up. If CS actors choose the CSJWG as a suitable mechanism for this meta-coordination, it could benefit from more structure and resources, mostly administrative and coordinating support staff and an office.
- CSOs, on the initiative of and in coordination with networks, could conceive, prepare and orchestrate a national annual or biannual conference led by CS actors to share the concerns and challenges of CS, raise its voice, and look for collective solutions and principles of action. This would be a positive achievement for 2015 and follow-up on the London conference.
- Sectorial and regional coordination has to be developed. CSOs get together and join forces when they have a mutual goal and common interests and this needs be encouraged in a more systematic way. There should be continuous mapping in Kabul and in the regions and an exchange of information between those initiatives, especially between the current ones undertaken by UNAMA, Aga Khan Foundation, EU, and ICNL.
- CSOs and in particular coordination bodies need to modernize their data collection and information sharing systems. Often data are not collected methodically or consistently which weakens the information system and sharing among CSOs. A database has to be developed systematically and made publicly available not only for the sake of CSOs but for all players on the Afghan scene.
- A definition of CSO, or at least criteria for one,

which has to consider the non-for profit activity and the function and purpose of activities (to serve the welfare, defend and promote the rights of Afghan citizens) should be determined, agreed upon, and shared among CS actors.

- Awareness campaigns should be also conducted on what CSOs are and what their role and activities are, in particular regarding umbrella organizations, not only within CS but also outside CS circles.
- CSOs as well as umbrella organizations would benefit from more continuous and trusting interactions with media and must develop these relations. The media can be a great interlocutor and can disseminate information and promote a positive image of CSOs' work and ultimately of Afghanistan.
- Coordinating bodies as well as networks and CSOs have to promote and develop new interactions and partnerships with different actors, in the context of decreasing of funding, especially with the private sector as well as non-traditional donors. This should be a key aspect for all future strategic development of CSOs and networks organizations.
- CSOs must work to make their efforts visible by the public, which involves proper marketing techniques, in order to show their capabilities and good-will for trust building among the communities.

TO AFGHAN GOVERNMENT AND INSTITUTIONS

- GIRoA and institutions should develop awareness programs among government officials to highlight the importance and considerable role of CSOs in Afghanistan. The newly elected President and their government, as well as members of Parliament (MPs) and any other civil servant should consider CS actors as partners and as privileged interlocutors on the Afghan scene.
- A working group should be created within the new government, especially between MoE and MoJ, with government representatives, MPs, international advisors, as well as CS actors to revise and perfect the legal framework together and to create a positive and enabling environment for CSOs to work effectively in Afghanistan. The

regulations vis-à-vis CSOs (Law on Association 2013), and NGOs (Law on NGOs 2005) should be reconciled or at least harmonized, especially in terms of registration, funding sources as well as monitoring by and reporting to the government.

- GIRoA and public institutions should support and facilitate coordination with CSOs actors. The relationship between those players should not be limited to registration and reporting, or at best ad hoc phone calls and meetings. In each ministry, state institution, Parliament... there is a real need to establish a public information department in charge of relations with citizens and institutions as well as CS actors, which can share data, information and contribute to the coordination of activities with CSOs.
- The new President of Afghanistan must also recognize CSOs as a major stakeholder for the future of the country. In cooperation with its new government and other key institutions, Parliament, Judiciary... the President should ensure the freedom of expression, association and reunion in Afghanistan, guarantee that CSOs actors can express themselves freely, individually or collectively, and ensure that there won't be any condemnation or threat, presently or in the future, against such expression.

TO INTERNATIONAL AND DONORS COMMUNITY

- CSO actors should be considered as great advisors with a rich knowledge of and experience in Afghanistan. Therefore the IC and donor agencies should engage in more consultation with them.
- As key players in the humanitarian and development sectors, donors and IC actors must coordinate their actions and programs to support CSOs, during all phases of their programs and projects. This should occur in both the implementation phases, to avoid duplication, but also in the planning phase to formulate a common long term strategy of strengthening CSOs in Afghanistan. Regulation of coordination initiatives by sector as a means for progress in this direction is further necessary.
- Coordination initiatives and umbrella organizations need to be beneficiaries of international funding. The international and donor communities have

to finance coordination activities by supporting not only projects with networks of CSOs but also core funding of specific effective umbrella organizations.

- IC and donors must support more capacity development of Afghan CSOs, especially through umbrella organizations. It should include training of trainers by international and national staff and be both high level training on certain topics, especially advocacy, as well as practical required discipline like management, finance, HR, IT...
- Assessment of capacity and performance of CSOs and umbrella organizations has to be a mandatory precondition before the decision of financially supporting any organization. Monitoring should happen in the country and during all the project phases. And donors, as well as IC should be open to fund any organization after this assessment, regardless of size and whether they had supported it in the past.
- Donors and IC need to fund more research and reinforce research capacity in Afghanistan. They must also continue building the capacity and resources for data collection, conservation and sharing.
- The international community needs to be proactive and certain that the new government and public institutions will recognize and respect CSO actors and their capacity to work in a peaceful democratic environment.

TO MEDIA AND JOURNALISTS

- The media, radio, TV, both national and international press, has to encourage and implement new partnerships with CSOs and coordination organizations to share their achievements and extend the cooperation between actors.
- Journalists need to share a positive image of CSOs and make the public as well as government aware of the role played by CSOs in Afghanistan.
- Media has to closely monitor government activities and to inform CSOs, especially umbrella organizations, anytime there is a need for further coordination, follow up or advocacy measures.

TO PRIVATE SECTOR AND COMPANIES

- The private sector and CSOs should form closer bonds. Both sides have to realize that they have common interests and overcome the general mistrust which still dominates.
- Strengthening CSOs and benefiting from advertising in different regions, as well as a positive image for the company is a favorable in regards to economic situation and is also a key resource for CSOs and their sustainability in the future.

TO ACADEMIC WORLD AND RESEARCHERS

- CSOs as well as researchers must focus their energies on more in-depth research. More resources should be dedicated in both coordination and umbrella organizations in both Kabul and the provinces. Donors should support a one year to 18 month research project to map and study coordination networks and within each region of Afghanistan.
- With more resources and time, further research could be done on the topic of coordination from different angles, using comparative methodology to study experiences within different post-conflict or developing countries, with an emphasis on best practices and lessons learned from the perspective of coordination.
- The use of statistics and more network analysis software would also definitely benefit such research. Again, this would require adequate

resources and an extended period of time.

- Researchers and other members of the academic community should develop relationships with emergent actors in Afghanistan. The current economic, political, and military transition decreases funding and innovative solutions might be found with neighboring countries and new partners.
- Professors, researchers, and students must develop closer relationships with CSOs and umbrella organizations. These agents could exchange knowledge and expertise and positively add value to each other's work.

TO AFGHAN CITIZENS

- Citizens of Afghanistan have to realize that CSOs are an eminent interlocutor, are here to stay, and they are working to defend and promote citizens' rights and interests.
- Those who can afford to volunteer in a country where international funding is decreasing should start initiatives, supporting CSOs or other unpaid activities to help Afghan people.
- Afghan citizens must pay close attention to the selection of the next government and ensure that CSO actors can work in a free environment and that together they hold public institutions accountable in a transparent framework.

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ANNEXES

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Annex 1: List of participants

The views of the people interviewed are individual views and do not represent their organization.

Interview K. Aoki, PWJ, via skype, 17th June 2014.

Interview A. Athayi, HBS; Kabul, 2d June 2014.

Interview S. Cordella, UNDP, Kabul, 5th June 2014.

Interview M. Khan Danishjoo, UAY, Kabul, 5th July 2014.

Interview F. Dashty, ANJU, Kabul, 20th May 2014.

Interview L. Docherty, DFID, Kabul, 5th June 2014.

Interview M. Frozanfar, UNAMA Kabul, 4th June 2014.

Interview H. Hayat, CSCC, Kabul, 10th July 2014.

Interview M. Joyenda, AREU, Kabul, 14th May 2014.

Interview A. Khan, HRRAC, Kabul, 26th May 2014.

Interview S. Lalee, CSHRN, Kabul, 20th May 2014.

Interview K. Ludwig, USAID, Kabul, 2d June 2014.

Interview N. Malikin, InterAction, skype, on the 19th June 2014.

Interview G. Mensah, Protection Cluster Coordinator, Kabul, 18th May 2014.

Interview MoE representative, NGO department, Kabul, 3d June 2014.

Interview J. Mohammad, SWABAC, Kabul, 29th May 2014.

Interview Moj representative, registration department, Kabul, 15th July.

Interview J. Nader, BAAG, skype, 17th June 2014.

Interview H. Nashir, Tawanmandi, Kabul, 13d May 2014.

Interview A. O’Leary, OCHA, Kabul, 19th May 2014.

Interview A. Omerzai, ANCB, Kabul, 21st May 2014.

Interview F. Otten, German Embassy, Kabul, 1st June 2014.

Interview S. Perlika, AAWU, Kabul, 16th July 2014.

Interview A. Rafiee, ACSFo, Kabul, 13th July 2014.

Interview M. Rahyab, CPI, Kabul, 4th June 2014.

Interview S. Rashid, MACCA, Kabul, 15th July 2014.

Interview O. Rouselle, ECHO, Kabul, 1st June 2014.

Interview M. Sadaat, Canadian Embassy, Kabul, 5th June 2014.

Interview H. Safi, AWN, Kabul, 7th May 2014.

Interview N. Salimee, CoAR, Kabul, 3d July 2014.

Interview M. Sarrah, EITI, Kabul, 27th May 2014.

Interview S. Schmeidl, expert, TLO, Kabul, 14th May 2014.

Interview D. Shabrang, Deputy, NUAWA, Kabul, 25th May 2014.

Interview Z. Stankizai, AKDN, AKF, Kabul, 22d June 2014.

Interview V. Thiollet, French Embassy, Kabul, 20th May 2014.

Interview E. Winter, expert, DFID, Kabul, 2d July 2014.

Interview I. Zaman, CPAU, Salah, Kabul, 1st June 2014.

Interview R. Zia, World Bank, Kabul, 19th May 2014.

Annex 2: Questionnaire for coordination entity

YOUR ORGANIZATION IN AFGHAN CONTEXT

1. Could you please tell me when your organization was established? And in which Ministry it's registered? And how much is your annual budget for 2014
2. What was/is the mandate of your organization, and the reasons why it was created? And did the mandate and mission change over the time?
3. How many members does your organization have? (for coordination organization) and is there a criterion to be member of your network? Or coordination? How much is the membership fee?
4. Where is your organization working in Afghanistan? Office only in Kabul? Or somewhere else?

UNDERSTANDING OF CSO IN 2014

5. What do you understand by CSO in Afghanistan? Included/excluded? And what is for you the main role of CSO in Afg?
6. What do you understand by coordination of CSO? And What is the main role of coordination agency of CSO in Afg?

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL CAPACITY

Institutional Capacity

7. How is your organization structured? Different unit? Logistic department? And how many staff does your organization have (national/international)
8. Who are the main donors of your organization? And is your organization sustainable? (local sources, diverse sources, fundraising officer)
9. Does your organization have a proper strategy? How often is it reviewed? And by who? (Coordination...)
10. How is the leadership of your organization? Does your organization have a Board or Steering Committee? Does your organization have a committed Director/leadership? How many time he/she changed since 10 years?
11. Does your organization have regular audit? How often?
12. Does your organization have HR policy?
13. What kind of activities do you have? How many programs and projects does your organization run?
14. Is your organization working in English? Dari? Pashtu? Does your organization have a permanent translator?
15. Technical capacity? Does your organization provide training for your staff? For your members (for coordination body)
16. Do you think your organization is effective? And what could your organization improve?

Networking Capacity

17. Does your organization have a communication department? How many staff? Does your organization have an advocacy department? How many staff? Join communication and advocacy?
18. How often your organization meets its members? Frequently? (for coordination body) What are the main

topics that are discussed?

19. How are the meetings organized? Does your organization invite only the members of the network? Are the meetings of your organization public? Invitation via email...?

20. Is your organization part of any other network? How many?

21. How often does your organization meet other NGO? CSO? Did your organization work collectively with other? Did you have programs with others? Activities with other? Join paper, briefing, lobbying, policy initiative, fundraising activities, forum...?

22. Does your organization have any partnership? Short term? Long term?

23. Is your organization active on internet? Website? Social network, FB? Twitter?

24. Does your organization have regional activities? International activities? (sharing experience with different countries)

25. Does your organization have a data base? Access one or in your organization? Do you share the information you collect on the field?

26. How is the public image of your organization? (public perception, media, government)

ROLE OF ACBAR

27. Are you member of other organizations? Network? And why are you not member of ACBAR?

28. How could ACBAR support your organization? Generally? and in terms of advocacy And what kind of activities could be developed? Generally? and in terms of advocacy? Platform? Sharing knowledge? Good practices...? Promotion of positive image? Services providers?

29. Does your organization see multiple coordination bodies like a repetition? And does your organization see any interest in creating a meta-coordination body, or coordination between coordination organizations? How? And would it be useful?

RELATIONS WITH ACTORS

Donors and IC

30. How are the relations of your organization with donors and IC? and what kind of support does your organization need from them? UN? Bilateral cooperation? Should they support more individual NGO? More specific projects? Or more coordination, networking? Both? Legislation, platform, code of conduct, rules and regulations...?

31. What are the main challenges of your organization with the donor's community?

Afghan Institutions

32. How are the relations of your organization with Afg government? Ministries? Municipalities? Services providers? Police? Judiciary? and what kind of support does your organization need from them? Should they support more individual NGO? More specific projects? Or more coordination, networking? Both? Legislation, code of conduct, rules and regulations...?

33. What are the main challenges of your organization with Afghan institutions?

Media

34. How are the relations of your organization with media? and what kind of support does your organization need from them? Should they support more individual NGO? More specific projects? Or more coordination, networking? Both?

35. Main challenges for your organization with media?

Private Sector

36. How are the relations of your organization with private sector? and what kind of support does your organization need from them? Should they support more individual NGO? More specific projects? Or more coordination, networking? Both?

37. Main challenges for your organization with private sector?

POSITIONS AND EXPECTATIONS

Positions

38. What is the position of your organization in terms of transition, political, international support and security?

39. Have your organization been part of international conferences on Afg?

40. Is your organization represented at the international level? And does your organization represent your members at national and international level (for coordination body)

41. Does your organization plan the London conferences?

42. Does your organization have position you would defend? If yes which ones?

43. Would your organization agree with the focus on the 4 following points as a top priority for London conferences: Women rights, Aid effectiveness, Governance and Service Delivery (ACBAR advocacy)? Or does your organization has different priorities? And which ones?

Expectations

44. What are the expectations of your organization in 2014 in the Afghan context?

45. What are the major stakes for your organization in the future (short term and long term)? Fear? Funding?

Annex 3: Questionnaire for ACBAR members

UNDERSTANDING OF CIVIL SOCIETY (CS)

1. What is civil society for you? Civil society organization (CSO)? What should be included? Excluded from this concept?
2. What are the most important role and challenges of CS/O in the current Afghan context?
3. Are you working in your activities with both CS/O register in Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Justice or Ministry of Information and Culture, one of them? Or all?

COORDINATION

4. What is for you coordination? Activities?
5. How do you think ACBAR coordination is working? In terms of agenda, time, meetings, staff, public relations, communication, frequency, service delivery, initiatives, support, feedback, cooperation with different actors, support with the Afghan government, advocacy....?
6. Are you coming regularly to the meeting? If not, can you explain why? Interest, time, capacity, not enough staff, language problem....?
7. Do you coordinate also by yourself with other actors, UN, donors, private sector, media...? When? How? Regularly?
8. How is your relationship with the following actors, and precise if any specific challenge(s)? International community? Afghan government and institutions? Private sector? And media?

EXPECTATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

9. What are your expectations for the future regarding ACBAR? Do you think ACBAR should work more with other actors of CS which are not members of our organization?
10. Would you support more advocacy work? National, regional and international and do you think ACBAR would be seen as legitimate?
11. What are, from your perspective and experience the main role and challenges that CS/O have in the current context in Afghanistan?

Annex 4: Questionnaire for experts

YOU IN AFGHAN CONTEXT

1. Could you please tell me a bit about your background?
2. Aim of the report? Methodology? Feeling about interviews, willingness of people to share?

UNDERSTANDING OF CSO IN AFGHANISTAN

3. What is for you Civil Society in Afg? Included/excluded? Brief history and evolution you perceived about CSO in Afg?
4. What do you understand by CSO in Afghanistan in 2014? Included/excluded? And what is for you the main role of CSO in Afg?
5. Do you think CS/O changed since 2001? Since your report? And how ?
6. What do you understand by coordination of CSO? And What is the main role of coordination agency of CSO in Afghanistan?

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL CAPACITY

Institutional Capacity

7. How is capacity of CS in Afghanistan? 2001? 2014? (internal, institutional, audit, HR, languages, technical capacity)
8. Who are the main donors involved with CSO in Afghanistan?
9. Does your organization have a proper strategy to work with CSO? How often is it reviewed? And by who? As well as coordination with other donors?
10. How is the leadership of your CS / organization?
11. Do you think language is an obstacle to (build) CSO? Or language capacity affects CSO?
12. Do you think ethnical diversity is an obstacle to (build) CSO? Or ethnical tension affects CO?

Networking Capacity

13. How is external and networking capacity of CS/CSO? Communication? Advocacy?
14. Do you think CSO meet enough and share opinion?
15. Do you think there are enough shared initiatives and activities?
16. How is your perception of cooperation of CS/O in the current context?
17. What could improve? In terms of cooperation and coordination? National, regional and international?
18. How is the public image of CSO, in Afg and outside Afg?

ROLE OF ACBAR

19. Does your organization see multiple coordination bodies like a repetition? And does your organization see any interest in creating a meta-coordination body, or coordination between coordination organizations? How? And would it be useful?

20. Should ACBAR support CS/O initiative? How could ACBAR improve relationship with different CSO?

21. Would it be ACBAR role to coordinate between CSO? Would ACBAR be legitimate for this?

22. Could ACBAR develop some new activities with members and non members? And between them? Platform? Sharing knowledge? Good practices...? Promotion of positive image? Services providers?

RELATIONS WITH ACTORS

Donors and IC

23. How are the relations of CS/O with donors and IC? and what kind of support does your organization need from them? UN? Bilateral cooperation? Should they support more individual NGO? More specific projects? Or more coordination, networking? Both? Legislation, platform, code of conduct, rules and regulations...?

24. What are the main challenges of CSO and the donor's community?

Afghan Institutions

25. How are the relations of CS/O with Afg government? Ministries? Municipalities? Services providers? Police? Judiciary? and what kind of support does your organization need from them? Should they support more individual NGO? More specific projects? Or more coordination, networking? Both? Legislation, code of conduct, rules and regulations...?

26. What are the main challenges of CSO and the donor's community?

Media

27. How are the relations of CS/O with media? and what kind of support does your organization need from them? Should they support more individual NGO? More specific projects? Or more coordination, networking? Both?

28. Main challenges of CSO with media?

Private Sector

29. How are the relations of CS/O with private sector? and what kind of support does your organization need from them? Should they support more individual NGO? More specific projects? Or more coordination, networking? Both?

30. Main challenges of CSO with private sector?

EXPECTATIONS

31. What are your expectations in 2014 in the Afghan context?

32. What are the major stakes for Afghanistan in the future (short term and long term)? Fear? Funding?

ACBAR STATUTES

As amended at the General Assembly on 30th April, 2013

1. NAME

This body shall be known as the “Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief and Development” (ACBAR).

2. PROLOGUE

ACBAR was created in August 1988, in response to the demand from many Afghan and international non-governmental organisations involved in humanitarian work in Afghanistan and/or among the Afghan refugees in Pakistan. During the years of war and a non-functioning state in Afghanistan, ACBAR served mainly to coordinate the humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people implemented by its members in cooperation with other main stake holders such as the UN Agencies and donors. Since 2001, ACBAR has partly changed its focus and has concentrated its activities on general coordination of its members, advocacy, dissemination of information, and promotion of ethical standards among its members through the Code of Conduct.

3. VISION

ACBAR as a trusted facilitator with a view to supporting Afghanistan as a peaceful and just society where people live with dignity and achieve fulfilment.

4. MISSION

ACBAR is an independent body for the collective voice of NGOs operating in Afghanistan, dedicated to aid effectiveness, capacity development, advocacy, coordination, and information exchange services to address the humanitarian, recovery and sustainable development needs of the country effectively and efficiently. The members of ACBAR are committed to work in partnership with each other, the government, donors, local Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and communities to support afghan – led humanitarian and development assistance.

5. CORE VALUES

- The Code of Conduct (COC) is a set of shared norms, principles and values that aims to guide the conduct of NGOs in Afghanistan. Below are the general principles of ACBAR as promoted by the COC:
- We are committed to comply strictly with international humanitarian principles and human rights law.
- Our work is based on principle of DO NO HARM and it focuses on responding to emergencies, to chronic needs, reducing the impact of disasters and climate change, and dealing with the root causes of poverty, meeting basic needs, and enabling communities to become resilient and self-sufficient.
- We are accountable to those whom we seek to assist, to those providing the resources, and to legal authorities.
- We are transparent our dealings with the government and community partners, the public, donors and other interested parties.
- We are independent and we strive to maintain our autonomy according to Afghan and international law, and to resist the imposition of conditionality or corrupt practices that may compromise our missions and principles.
- We will not discriminate against any individual or group on the grounds of gender, political affiliation, ethnic origin, religious belief or sexual orientation

6. ACBAR VALUES

- Commitment and Excellence
- Social and Economic justice
- Accountability and Transparency
- Empowerment and Collaboration
- Compassion and Empathy
- Innovation and Sustainability

7. ACBAR MANDATE

- ACBAR is an independent coordinating body of Afghan and international NGOs that exists to serve and facilitate the work of its NGO members in order to address efficiently and effectively the humanitarian and development needs of Afghans.
- All member organisations agree to provide humanitarian and/or development assistance to the Afghan people regardless of ethnic background, political affiliations, or religious beliefs according to the Code of Conduct of NGOs in Afghanistan.
- Member organisations are independent, neutral, non-partisan, non-proselytising and do not participate in military activities
- Enhance/strengthen linkages and coordination with the GoIRA and other partners in humanitarian and development sectors.
- Support GoIRA and humanitarian partners in emergency monitoring and response according to need.
- Influence policies and practices on the basis of humanitarian and development principles and standards.
- Promote good practice and standards; and adherence to principles.
- Enable joint approaches and responses and share learning and information.
- Provide safety and security analysis of changes to the working environment that may affect delivery of assistance, and advice and support to assist adherence to principles in delivering assistance.

8. CORE FUNCTIONS OF ACBAR

- To provide a consistent representative body within the Afghanistan humanitarian and development community with donors, government and UN agencies and coordination bodies.
- To monitor the humanitarian situation and disaster response in the country and to support coordination of emergency and rehabilitation interventions in affected areas.
- To monitor the development needs of the country and to support the sustainable development interventions.
- To build members capacity towards effective and timely individual and collective responses to emergencies
- To influence policies, practices and resource allocation in favour of peoples and vulnerable groups affected by humanitarian crisis and emergencies.
- To facilitate and promote the presentation of a strong and consistent NGO voice and common action to influence policy and practice;

- To advocate for and represent the mandate and the interests of the NGO sector in Afghanistan on behalf of its members and their beneficiaries;
- To provide information of relevance to ACBAR members and other humanitarian and development actors;
- To promote high ethical and professional standards among the NGO community;
- To promote best practices, standards and programme quality in emergency, recovery and development responses.
- To gather and collate data and opinions for engagement with key external stakeholders.
- To promote transparency and partnership with key humanitarian stakeholders, especially between NGOs and the government and people of Afghanistan
- To enhance shared learning and information exchange.

CHAPTER 1 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

1.0 ACBAR IS COMPRISED OF THREE COMPONENTS:

- General Assembly
- Steering Committee
- Secretariat

1.1 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The General Assembly consists of all the members of ACBAR represented by their Country Directors, Country Representatives, Chief of Mission or their formal delegates authorised to make decisions on their behalf.

The General Assembly shall meet twice a year – the Annual General Assembly in March or April and the Mid-Term General Assembly held in September or October.

The General Assembly is the highest decision making organ of ACBAR and will approve the annual budget, the annual report and annual plan.

The General Assembly will elect the Chairperson of ACBAR and the Steering Committee by simple majority vote. At least four members of the Steering Committee shall be from Afghan NGOs and at least four from INGOs.

Only the most senior legal representative of the organisation in country can stand for positions on the Steering Committee. In running for any position, candidates should expect to be present for the coming year.

Should the number of elected members of the Steering Committee fall below 12 (after the four alternate members have replaced the permanent members); the Mid-Term General Assembly may elect replacement members the remaining term of office.

Extra-ordinary meetings can be requested by at least 10 members with the agreement of the Steering Committee. Members must be notified at least 48 hours in advance by e-mail.

1.2 STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee of members will monitor, inform, guide, direct and assist in the work of ACBAR and the Secretariat. This body will have 13 members (including the Chair and previous Chair), and represents the

membership profile with at least four members from Afghan NGOs and four from INGOs.

Steering Committee meetings will convene on a monthly basis, on the last Thursday of the calendar month from 2.00–4.00pm. A meeting schedule for the year will be circulated to members at the beginning of the year. Ad hoc meetings may be called as required.

The Chairperson of ACBAR will Chair the meetings of the Steering Committee.

The quorum for Steering Committee meetings is 7 persons

1.3 SECRETARIAT

The ACBAR Secretariat has been established to deliver ACBAR services on behalf of the membership, to whom it is accountable, through the Steering Committee and the Chairperson.

CHAPTER 2 MEMBERSHIP

2.0 MEMBERS AND MEMBERSHIP

ACBAR shall be composed of members who are willing to abide by and follow the Code of Conduct for NGOs in Afghanistan, the ACBAR Statutes and any additional membership criteria as decided on from time to time by the General Assembly

2.1 MANDATORY CRITERIA FOR ALL MEMBERS

Members must be nongovernmental, not-for-profit, non-partisan, non-political neutral and non-proselytising organisations (NGO), providing humanitarian or development assistance in Afghanistan

Members shall accept and sign up to the Code of Conduct for NGOs Engaged in Afghanistan attached at the end of this document

The member must show conclusively that it has been fully operational as an NGO (as defined in the NGO legislation) for a minimum of twelve months in Afghanistan

A Member must provide documentary evidence of registration with the Government of Afghanistan.

Members must pay annual membership fees, which are due in the first two months of receiving the annual request for payment.

Prospective members must be sponsored by the Director or Deputy Director of two member organisations. The sponsors shall be present in the General Assembly meeting to answer questions from the floor regarding the NGO(s) they have sponsored.

Submission of a detailed narrative description in English of the organisation, including background, projects currently implemented and planned projects, funding sources, statutes of operation, and organisational structure, is required.

2.2 ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

The Steering Committee of ACBAR may accept organisations as associate members which will have observer status but not voting power. Associate members can participate in meetings when invited, give presentations and share in discussions that are relevant to the aims of ACBAR. Associate membership is open from the following groups.

They will pay \$ 250 the first year if they have worked less than one year in Afghanistan and after one year, they

will pay the same fees as members.

National NGO Networks

Relevant organisations that support the objectives of ACBAR, which are registered with the Ministry of Economy and sign the Code of Conduct, but are not yet able to apply for full membership.

2.3 MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION PROCESS

Prospective members must submit to ACBAR an application form, which can be obtained from any ACBAR office. The application must be submitted to the Secretariat in the ACBAR Head Office in Kabul, which will then check that applications are properly and fully completed and that ACBAR membership criteria are met. Applicants with incomplete applications will be informed by the Secretariat. The Secretariat will forward the completed applications to the Steering Committee for review and forwarding to the General Assembly. Applications should be approved by a simple majority of the General Assembly or per majority per email. The decision of ACBAR shall be made known in writing to the applicant.

All applications should be submitted using the most recent version of the standard ACBAR application together with relevant documents through the Secretariat. The application letter should state the aims, objectives, projects and activities of the applicant and proof of their registration (or process) must be attached.

On receipt of the application, the Secretariat undertakes a short verification process based on the information contained in the form.

The application letter, relevant documents including MOU, registration certificates and any additional information gathered by the Secretariat will be submitted to the Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee may then make an initial decision to forward the application to the General Assembly, request further information, or reject the application if it feels that the basic criteria are not fulfilled. Applicants may re-apply once criteria are fulfilled.

The General Assembly will consider the application. The applicant NGO may make short presentation to introduce itself and its work to other members of ACBAR and answer any questions put by members.

After the presentation and question-answer session, the applicant NGO representative(s) shall leave the room while members vote on the application for membership. A majority vote will confirm membership. Failed applicants can make another application after six months.

2.4 MEMBERSHIP AND REGISTRATION FEE

All newly registering members shall pay 50 USD or its equivalent in Afghani as registration fee.

Members shall pay annual membership fee of 0.01% of their annual budget to a maximum of 5,000 USD.

Membership fees will be collected on an annual basis and must be paid no later than the end of June each year.

Notwithstanding (c) above in special circumstances a member organisation in good standing may request the Steering Committee to approve staggered payments within a specified time frame.

Once the General Assembly approves membership of a new applicant, registration and membership fees must be paid in full within two weeks.

2.5 COMMITMENT TO COORDINATION, INFORMATION SHARING, TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY:

All members shall commit themselves to coordination, information-sharing, transparency and accountability

By June 30 of each year members shall submit a copy of their annual report to the Ministry of Economy and a summary of financial information along with an overview of their activities to the ACBAR Secretariat including Informing ACBAR and the government if it ceases operations in Afghanistan

2.6 MEMBERSHIP OF ACBAR IS TERMINATED:

When a membership organisation ceases operations in Afghanistan

When a member organisation notifies ACBAR in writing of its intention to withdraw (there will be no refund of the membership fee).

If a member organisation is two or more years in arrears of payment of the annual membership fee. After a warning letter from the Director, membership will then be automatically terminated;

If a member organisation has been undertaking activities contrary to the aims and values of ACBAR, or is acting in contravention to its Guidelines and Code of Conduct.

The Steering Committee would verify the information, and if satisfied suspend the organisation until the next General Assembly where a final decision will be made on its expulsion.

A no-objection of voting members present at the General Assembly which is considering the matter would suffice to eject the member. A member expelled in this manner may re-apply for membership only after twelve months following expulsion.

The concerned member organisation will have the right to present its case to the General Assembly

If its status as a signatory of the Code of Conduct is revoked.

CHAPTER 3 RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF MEMBERS

3.1 EACH MEMBER ORGANISATION HAS THE RIGHT to ask ACBAR for advice and assistance in matters concerning relief and development activities and advocacy issues. Members are also entitled to receive circulars, annual reports and other documents as provided by ACBAR.

3. 2 ANY MEMBER HAS THE RIGHT to put forward comments to ACBAR on matters concerning activities, development and management of ACBAR.

3.3 EACH MEMBER ORGANISATION WILL HAVE one vote at the General Assembly and Director's meetings.

CHAPTER 4 FUNCTIONS OF ACBAR COMPONENTS

4.1 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The General Assembly is the governing body of ACBAR. The General Assembly has the power to overrule any decisions made by the Steering Committee or any Sub-Committee.

4.1.1 Date and Attendance at Meetings of the General Assembly

General Assembly meetings are open to all ACBAR members and shall be held as follows:

- ACBAR Annual General Assembly takes place in March or April annually
- ACBAR Mid-term General Assembly takes place in October or September annually

Representatives of government, diplomatic and international assistance community can be invited.

4.1.2 General Assembly Meeting Procedures

Each member organisation may have a total of two representatives at meetings of the General Assembly but with only one voting representative.

Each member organisation will sign up on arrival and designate the voting member for the day's meeting. The designated voting member will also be the only person who can put forward motions on behalf of the member organisation. A voting card will be given to member organisations and the voting cards will be returned at the end of the meeting.

Voting will be conducted by the raising of voting cards or by a secret ballot if requested by any member and approved by a majority of members present

The Agenda and papers for the Annual and Bi-Annual General Assembly must be sent to members two weeks in advance of the meeting and for the Extra-ordinary General Assembly meeting within three working days.

A General Assembly quorum shall consist of half of the current members plus one. Motions will be carried by a simple majority vote of members present (or a two-thirds majority of members present as specified in sections of this document).

No proxy votes are permitted.

All meetings are to be conducted according to generally accepted rules of order.

Meetings and written communications of ACBAR are in English. Minutes of the General Assembly are also translated into Dari.

4.1.3 Annual General Assembly Agenda

Report on ACBAR activities for the previous year.

Acceptance of the audited financial report;

Approval of the annual financial narrative reports;

Election of the Steering Committee;

Final approval of the Plans, Priorities and Budget for the forthcoming year;

4.1.3 Election Procedures for the Steering Committee

Supervision and Nominations

Elections will be supervised and carried out by an Election Committee of three: two Members elected at the Mid-Term General Assembly and the ACBAR Director who will also count the votes.

The Election Committee will be responsible for checking and confirming the nominations. This includes: obtaining written letter of acceptance from each nominee, checking the validity of the ballots and counting the ballots.

Members will be asked for nominations for Steering Committee and the Chairperson some 4-6 weeks in advance of the Annual General Assembly; and a closing time for acceptance of nominations is the day before

the date of the General Assembly.

Nominations may be made by email or by letter. Members can either:

Nominate themselves

Nominate another member

In self-nomination/endorsement of their nomination, candidates accept that should they be elected they are committing to delivering against the role/responsibilities as a member of the Steering Committee

Election Procedures

Elections to the Steering Committee will be held at the Annual General Assembly which will elect the Chairperson, 11 Permanent Members and four Alternate Members of the Steering Committee.

The Chairperson will be directly elected by the General Assembly and as per accepted practice will be the head of an Afghanistan NGO.

The General Assembly will then elect the remaining members to constitute the remainder of the Steering Committee.

Members will submit two secret paper ballots, one with votes for Afghan NGOs and another for international NGOs.

Membership of the Steering Committee will then be determined by:

The first seven members of the Steering Committee will be those individuals with the highest number of votes.

The remaining four members will be those who received the next four highest number of votes; unless that would result in less than four national or four international NGOs represented;

In the case that ii occurs, the individuals required to restore balance to the committee will be selected based on number of votes.

Selection of the four Alternate Members will follow the same system, but Alternate Members must include at least one national and one international representative.

Term of Office

The term of the Chairperson will be 12 months, and each elected Chairperson will be limited to two consecutive terms of office (but can stand again for election if the term is not consecutive).

The term of the Steering Committee shall likewise be 12 months. No term limits apply to Steering Committee membership.

4.1.4 Mid-Term General Assembly Agenda

Report on ACBAR activities to date.

Financial Report to date;

Election of the Election Committee for the next General Assembly

Election to any vacant positions on the Steering Committee

Approval of the external auditor

4.2 STEERING COMMITTEE AND OFFICE BEARERS

4.2.1 Functions and responsibilities of the Steering Committee and Office Bearers

The Steering Committee will monitor, inform, guide, direct and assist in the work of ACBAR and is accountable to the membership for all ACBAR activities.

The Steering Committee will hold regular monthly meetings.

The Steering Committee shall monitor the performance and product of the Secretariat, the Director, Working Groups and Taskforces established by ACBAR.

The Steering Committee will participate in strategic planning, programme development and fundraising to benefit ACBAR.

The Steering Committee will assess members and external needs and environments and based on these make recommendations for approval on structure, funding, advocacy and policy issues to ensure relevant, effective and long term strategic planning.

The Steering Committee will represent ACBAR as required and ensure that information is fed-back in a timely manner to members via the Secretariat and that appropriate action is taken as required.

On ACBAR's behalf, Steering Committee members maintain constructive relationships with government ministries and departments, UN agencies, donors, NGOs and any relevant bodies in order to strengthen coordination and collaboration.

The Steering Committee has the right to establish sub-Committees dealing with specific issues where there is a demand for such and to dissolve the sub-Committees, upon completion of its tasks.

Any three members of the Steering Committee may call for an emergency meeting of the Steering Committee which must be called by the Chairperson within three days of receiving such a requisition.

Steering Committee members may participate in Steering Committee meetings through Skype or videoconferencing as required.

The Steering Committee shall exercise overall supervision of the Secretariat in respect of:

Ensuring that the Director fulfils the terms of his/ her job description

Strategic planning, program development, and fundraising

Providing feedback on the Director's assessment of the needs/interests of members and the external environment

The development of new programs and fundraising so that ACBAR is adequately resourced.

Ensuring that information from subcommittee meetings is fed back to the Steering Committee, Director, and the ACBAR membership, and that appropriate action on recommendations is taken as required.

4.2.2 Resignation/Termination of Steering Committee Membership

Steering Committee membership is discontinued under the following circumstances:

If so decided at a meeting of the General Assembly by a simple majority vote.

If the membership of the organisation in ACBAR has been terminated

If a member of the Steering Committee fails to attend, without due and properly explained reason, two

meetings of the Steering Committee.

The person elected does not want to continue as a Steering Committee member and resigns.

4.2.3 Functions and Responsibilities of ACBAR Chairperson

The Chairperson, with the Director, serves as the face of ACBAR for the humanitarian and development community in Afghanistan and globally, represents ACBAR at functions and meetings with the GoIRA, UN, donors and other parties with which ACBAR engages and provides feedback.

Chairs the monthly Steering Committee Meetings.

Has overall responsibility for programmatic supervision of the Secretariat, and with the Steering Committee provides strategic leadership.

Monitors and advises the Secretariat Coordinator and Safety and Security Director on duties undertaken.

Seeks member input in maintaining an effective and responsive Secretariat.

Manages utilisation of the ACBAR funds.

Is authorised to approve payment up to USD 2,000 for ACBAR related activities without prior approval of the Steering Committee. More than this amount for incidental activities requires approval by the Steering Committee

Sign all binding documents of ACBAR which have been approved by the Steering Committee or General Assembly.

4.2.4 Functions and Responsibilities of ACBAR Vice-Chairperson

Deputise for Chairperson as required

Function as Chairperson until elections are held if the Chairperson leaves office before the end of his/her term

Sign cheques and other documents in the event the treasurer and Chairperson are unavailable.

Carry out special assignments as requested by the Chairperson.

4.2.5 Functions and Responsibilities of ACBAR Treasurer

Mandatory signatory on cheques by email over the amount of US\$2,000

Ensuring the budget is adhered to

Tracking expenditure and income

Advising the Director in preparation of the annual budget.

Presenting the annual budget and audit report to the General Assembly.

Providing monthly financial reports to the Steering Committee.

Reviewing the annual audit and auditors' letter to management and preparing Action Plan on issues raised

Ensuring proper procurement procedures are followed

Approving all purchases over \$2,000.

4.3 ACBAR SECRETARIAT

4.3.1 Composition

The ACBAR Secretariat is comprised of the salaried staff of ACBAR, including the ACBAR Director.

The performance and structure of the Secretariat will be reviewed through an external evaluation every two years. Changes to the structure and function of the ACBAR Secretariat will take place in accordance with evaluation outcomes and long term strategic plans.

HR staffing additions/subtractions or changes in line management proposed require a simple majority vote from the Steering Committee.

The Secretariat is responsible to handle ACBAR finances including contributions and membership fees as per the regulations of the grant holding agency.

The Secretariat has oversight of expenditure against approved budget and provides regular updates of expenditure to the Steering Committee.

The Secretariat will ensure that donor reporting requirements are met.

The Secretariat will provide basic support to taskforces as agreed.

Secretariat staff will engage in representation as appointed/required and ensure feedback to the membership in a timely manner.

4.3.2 ACBAR Director

ACBAR shall employ a Director to manage the day-to-day activities of ACBAR in accordance with the Statutes his/her Job Description and in line with the strategic plan.

The ACBAR Director is accountable to the membership and reports to the Chairperson

The Director is responsible for and shall manage all ACBAR staff

The activities of the staff members of the Secretariat shall be governed by job descriptions which will be approved by the Steering Committee.

The ACBAR Director attends Steering Committee meetings without voting rights.

Annual work plans and budgets are prepared by the Director in collaboration with Secretariat staff for review and endorsement by the Steering Committee. After endorsement both will be presented to the Annual General Assembly.

The Steering Committee vests authority in the Director to take responsibility for all day-to-day operational aspects of the Secretariat.

The Director shall ensure that the minutes of all meetings such as the AHF, ADF and Steering Committee are distributed to members within three working days.

CHAPTER 5 FINANCE

The fiscal year of ACBAR is from the 1st January to 31st December.

During the fiscal year no revision may be made in the current year's approved budget without prior approval by the Steering Committee or the General Assembly. Within the budget, however, savings in one budget line

may be transferred to another budget line provided this is in accordance with donor regulations and endorsed by the Treasurer.

The signatories to all cheques and financial documents valued at shall be any two of the following; Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Treasurer, and Director where the signature of the Treasurer is normally mandatory unless there are special circumstances which should be reported to the Steering Committee.

If the transfer of savings in certain budgeted expenditure components would augment or decrease any other budgeted expenditure component by more than 15 per cent prior approval must be obtained from the Steering Committee.

The expenses of the ACBAR Secretariat shall be financed from yearly membership fees and/or from other funding sources. The Steering Committee will propose the minimum required membership fees and will present this amount for approval at a General Assembly meeting.

The Director and the Steering Committee are responsible for soliciting funds from as wide a base of donors as possible and to ensure neutrality of the organisation. The Chairperson and/or Vice-Chairperson should be informed beforehand and are expected themselves to be in close contact with donors.

The ACBAR Secretariat shall prepare monthly financial reports, which will meet the requirements of budgeting and cash accounting.

Copies of the monthly financial reports will be distributed to the Steering Committee members by the Director.

The Annual financial accounts of ACBAR must be audited every year by an outside auditing firm proposed by the Steering Committee and approved by the General Assembly.

CHAPTER 6 PUBLIC POLICY STATEMENTS

In undertaking advocacy work on behalf of its members, ACBAR may, from time to time, issue public statements or press releases, or hold press conferences or issue public comments.

Important public statements in writing on issues, which are not covered by guiding documents or previously discussed in Steering Committee, shall be approved by the Steering Committee in advance.

Where the statement is on a matter endorsed by the majority vote of ACBAR members, the Steering Committee, the Director and Chairperson are empowered to speak and issue statements as representative of all members of ACBAR

Such statements will note that this is a corporate initiative, rather than expressing the views of individual members. The spokespeople will be identified only as members, staff or executive officers of the ACBAR

After statements are made they should be circulated subsequently to the Steering Committee and ACBAR members.

Every member including Steering Committee members have the right to publicly announce his/her reservation(s).

CHAPTER 7 WORKING GROUPS

ACBAR may establish two types of Working Groups: ad hoc Task Forces which can be constituted as and when necessary to deal with specific short term issues or tasks; and Working Groups which are formed on the basis of its basic mandate and strategic objectives. The latter includes the Advocacy Working Group.

Working Groups and Task Forces can be formed either by the request of the General Assembly or by the decision of Steering Committee.

Task Forces can be formed to lobby and advocate on specific issues of humanitarian concern, to coordinate specific activities of the Forum, to manage specific projects on behalf of the Forum, to act as a platform, etc.

The Steering Committee will agree on precise work plan and TOR of the Working Group or Task Force and ensure follow up and monitor the implementation of the agreed work plan.

Working Groups formed on the basis of ACBAR's mandate will have at least one serving member of the Steering Committee and one staff member of the Secretariat to facilitate liaison and support to the Working Group.

The Working Group or Task Force will elect its own Chair and a person who reports to the Secretariat, General Assembly or Steering Committee depending on the need.

The Steering Committee and Secretariat shall review Working Groups and Task Forces every six months and may wind up or disband them if assigned task are completed or the relevance of the Group is no longer necessary

The Working Groups and Task Forces will determine the frequency of their meetings and report back to the Steering Committee on a regular basis.

Minutes from each Working Group meetings should be provided to the Director, who will include a summary in his/her monthly update to the Steering Committee.

CHAPTER 8 PROVINCIAL/REGIONAL COMMITTEES OR FOCAL POINTS

ACBAR may establish regional or provincial committees or regional or provincial focal points to enhance its work

Regional or Provincial Committees can be established by any group of ACBAR members after making a request to the Director who will obtain approval from the Steering Committee

Such Committees shall be open to all ACBAR members.

The role of these committees is to plan and co-ordinate activities in the region or province concerned in accordance with Statutes of Operation and other guiding documents approved by the General Assembly and/ or Steering Committee.

Each Regional or Provincial Committee shall elect a Chairperson and a four-person Advisory Committee by a majority vote of all members at an annual general meeting in the region or province.

The Regional or Provincial Committees will determine the frequency of their meetings and report back to the Director and the Steering Committee on monthly basis.

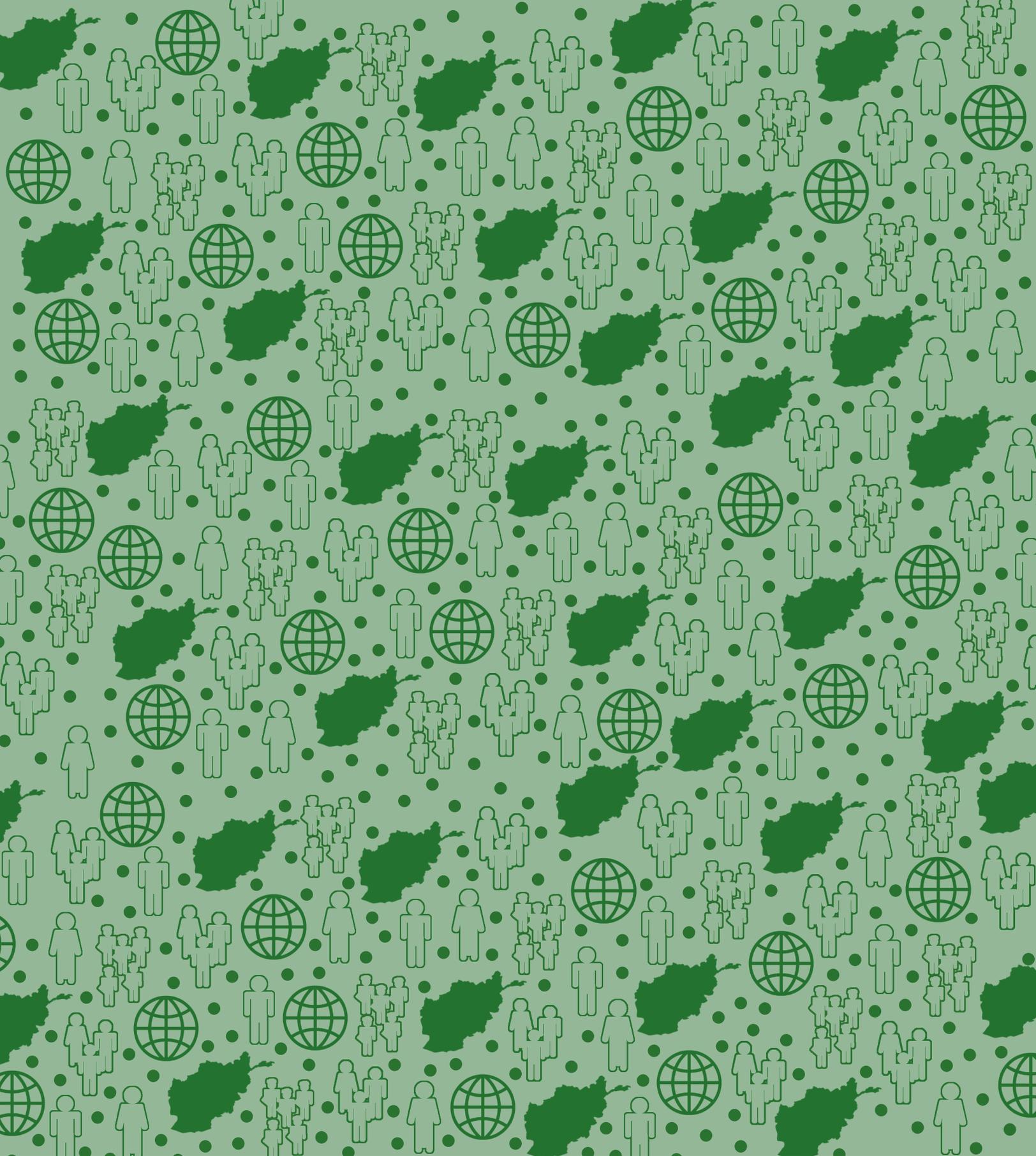
CHAPTER 9 AMENDMENTS TO THE STATUTES AND LIQUIDATION

Changes to the Statutes can be made by a two-thirds majority vote of the membership attending a General Assembly meetings as long as the quorum is met.

The Statutes of Operation become effective the day a two-thirds majority vote of members attending the General Assembly approves them.

In case ACBAR is dissolved, or is liquidated for any reason whatsoever, the General Assembly will determine how the funds of ACBAR will be liquidated in line with NGO legislation and donor regulations.

In order to dissolve ACBAR as an organization, the General Assembly is require to take this decision by a two-thirds majority vote at two consecutive General Assembly Meetings, of which the second will be extraordinary and must take place not later than two weeks after the first meeting.



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