



1st Civil Society Consultation Workshop on Open Government Partnership (OGP) in Afghanistan

April 12, 2017

Park Star Hotel, Kabul

1. Introduction.

Open Government Partnership is a multilateral initiative which aims to provide a platform for global reformers to make their government more responsive, transparent and fiscally sustainable. This initiative was established on the sidelines of UN generally assembly in 2011 by eight participating countries (Brazil, Indonesia, Norway, the Philippines, South Africa, the United Kingdom and the United States). This participation has now grown from 8 to more than 75 countries worldwide. The basic format for this partnership is that participating countries are committed to fighting corruption in their countries, throughout this process they are entitled to develop sets of commitments and embed them in a Package which is known as the National Action Plan.

IWA believes that OGP is a credible approach to improve transparency and fight rampant corruption in Afghanistan. Therefore, IWA started to advocate for Afghanistan's membership to this initiative as early as 2014. President Ashraf Ghani submitted Letter of Intent for joining Open Government Partnership in December 2016. Representatives from the address of government and Civil Society were present at OGP secretariat in Paris. Mr. Yama Yari, Director General of National Procurement Authority and Ahmadullah Mauj Head of Programs at Integrity Watch Afghanistan was present at the Summit to present the letter of Intent on behalf of Afghanistan's President.

Subsequently, after designating Afghanistan's membership in this Partnership IWA advocated for clenching to this membership by administering a series of meeting with Administrative office of President. Mr. Subhan Raouf deputy head of monitoring and evaluation, took responsibility from AOP to steer the process on behalf of government. IWA spearheaded and extended the participation of civil society to this process by engaging some umbrella organizations during the first stages of this process. Afghanistan Public Policy Research Organization (APPRO), Afghanistan Body for Relief and Rehabilitation (ACBAR), Equality for Peace and Development (EPD) and Afghanistan Women's Network (AWN) were asked to facilitate OGP implementation.

Therefore, to initiate debate between Government and Civil Society interactive meetings were administered between AOP and Civil Society. Meetings were held on 5th of March 2017. This meeting was chaired by Mr. Yama Yari and Subhan Raouf. Yama Yari commenced the meeting saying "Open Government Partnership is an important step for bringing reformative policies and action plans with cooperation of government and Civil Society." He further, emphasized on the importance of coalition of civil Society to make the process more participatory and consultative.

Mr. Afzali on behalf of Integrity Watch Afghanistan once again stressed on the importance of this membership and emphasized that the continuity of this process will result having a similar platform for Civil Society and government reformers to build and develop a National Action Plan. It was also decided a Civil Society Working Group should be assembled to facilitate the process of OGP awareness raising workshops. Thus, an

orientation workshop was held on 27th of March and 2nd April for the aforementioned organizations at IWA. A series of presentations were presented to raise awareness of this group. Consequently, meeting was administered on 2nd of April and was decided that CSOs present at the meeting should initiate a workshop for CSOs.

Workshop on 12th of April was organized to stay committed with OGP principles. The basic building blocks of OGP commitments are that throughout the different stages for building National Action Plans Public should be made aware of the process. So, therefore workshop was facilitated by IWA with close collaboration of APPRO, EPD, ACBAR, AWN – as well as consultation with Afghanistan NGOs Coordinating Body (ANCB), Afghanistan Civil Society Forum organization(ACSFo), Southern western Afghanistan & Baluchistan Association for Coordination(SWABAC), Human Rights & Civil Society Network(HRCSN) and Afghanistan Institute for Civil Society(AICS).

2. Objective of Workshop.

1st Civil Society Consultation Workshop on Open Government Partnership in Afghanistan aims to address two issues:

- Firstly, this workshop is held to raise CSOs awareness and knowledge in regard to OGP process. OGP extends across a set of diverse and comprehensive standards which the participating country is obliged to abide by these standards. Independent Reporting Mechanism is a process by which OGP assesses the extent to which information was disseminated to public throughout the co-creation process.
- Secondly, consultation and group work amongst CSOs. This involves taking into consideration feedback and suggestions by different CSOs. Developing a set of commitments is a formidable task which needs ownership and joint decision making between Public and Government officials. To facilitate initial discussion and proactive participation between CSOs, workshop looks to create discussion between CSOs on potential commitments which can be developed when coming together with government in the Multi-Stakeholder Platform.

We help increase efficacy of this process by increasing awareness, bringing stakeholders on a platform to discuss and consult on developing better reformative commitments.

3. Participants of Workshop.

Participants of the forum was chosen by a mechanism which was developed and implemented by a series of discussion through meetings with Core Group. An impartial approach was chosen where a series of Umbrella Organizations were mapped, like we approached ACBAR, AWN, APPRO, EPD, ACSFo, SWABAC, ANCB and NAI to send a list of proposed of organization which they think should participate. Further, a list of organizations with a representative to attend the event was prepared. So, more than 85 organizations were invited to workshop with a representative to attend. Approaching Umbrella Organizations helped us to map a set of diverse organizations who have advocated for OGP standards. Finally, more than 40 organizations (please see annex(2)

for the full list of participants) accepted the invitation and introduced a representative on behalf of their organizations. Besides, some organization's senior management also accepted our call and confirmed participation.

4. Minutes from Workshop.

I. Opening

Keynote Speaker 1

Workshop was commenced by Sayed Ikram Afzali, he started by appreciating the presence of guests at workshop and answering IWA's call for attending present workshop which is the first of its kind. He went on to say "Although Afghanistan gained membership in December of 2016, however Integrity Watch Afghanistan's endeavor had started in 2014 when I speaking on behalf of my organization at OGP annual conference in Bali, Indonesia. It was in Bali when I got the inspiration that Afghanistan should join this membership." Moreover, he included how much important is OGP for Afghanistan- it is a platform where government and civil society co-create reforming commitments;



"the most important aspect of OGP is developing the National Action Plan, which is an operational plan for a period of 2 years. Government is committed to implementing commitments covering various scopes of Openness in government operations." Subsequently he emphasized on the openness of OGP, he stressed that "We contemplated on translating Open Government Partnership terminologies and we thought of translating Open not just as transparent but to make it more inclusive, we interpreted as Open. Open because government should be not only tackling corruption but making government institutions more open to public and civil society". Because the co-ownership of this process demands government and civil society to structure, built and monitor objectives of OGP. Therefore, Open Government Partnership provides a joint platform for all scattered efforts taken to make Afghanistan more transparent and corruption resilient.

Furthermore, he thanked Yama Yari, director general of National Procurement Authority who on behalf of government lobbied for Afghanistan's participation in this initiative and stated "it was because of his endeavor that Afghanistan has gained membership". In addition, he thanked also Mr. Subhan Raouf who was engaged in this process before membership of Afghanistan. Subhan Raouf on behalf of government has previously presented government desires in developing NAP which consists of all pillars of open government. Besides, in addition he stated "one Civil Society Organization cannot take

lead of this partnership. IWA organized today's Consultation workshop to make CSOs aware of OGP. We should collectively work together to push the government in developing more ambitious and concrete commitments and I welcome other CSOs present today to create workshop like today".

Importance of OGP is outlined by active participation of stakeholders from Civil Society, OGP's driven at different stages by civil society. IWA facilitated Awareness raising workshop, however IWA hopes to cooperate with other CSO who would wish to facilitate workshop. "IWA is engaged in this process from beginning and we wish to assist other CSOs in organizing such workshop. Today numerous Civil Society of Networks are present and it is our collective duty to push government in bringing Transparency and government." "We should not be scattered and divided to undermine Afghanistan's participation in OGP, instead cooperation and coordination should be boosted amongst OGP to pressure government on mending cracks in road to recovery". He finished his speech by reassuring that I hope government makes the most out of OGP and formulates reforming commitments. I hope commitments are consistent with OGP principles- at last, I hope pledges made in regard to OGP are not piled up beside unfulfilled promises.

Keynote speaker 2

Consequently, Dr. Hafizullah Fayaz on behalf of the Government, expressed governments desire in staying committed to OGP values. He started his speech by mentioning government from the address of Administrative Office of President lobbied and advocated for Afghanistan's participation in OGP. "we looked into how to engaging Civil Society, and it was tireless endeavor of Yama Yari and Subhan Raouf that President of Afghanistan his excellency Ashraf Ghani got convinced to send a formal letter of desire for participation in OGP". Dr. Hafiz further acknowledged active participation of Civil Society in this forum, whereby this collaboration between government and civil society will increase efficacy of commitments.



"OGP is a new concept for Afghanistan- for better ownership of this process, a series of workshops are demanded to be organized for raising awareness of people. Therefore, we organized an array of awareness raising meetings with civil society and international organizations and further we will give orientation workshop to different government sectors who will be the responsible for implementation of commitments". Hafiz Fayaz also

admitted that government cannot alone steer and lead OGP, he stated that government will need CSOs assistance who “lobbied” and “structured awareness raising workshops”. Moreover, he assured today's agenda is only delivering preliminary knowledge to CSOs in regard to different aspects of OGP-especially developing NAP which requires in-depth knowledge of OGP principles. So, participants will gain a hands-on experience of Multi-stakeholder forum scenario which is the grand platform for developing NAP.

He added that the boundaries of this partnership is very broad and cannot be limited to representatives from government and CSOs present in this workshop. He also praised IWA's efforts in organizing this event, “IWA organized and established today's event using their own financial and technical resources in bringing together peers who operate in different fields and who have diverse missions”. He reassured that “Clenching to this membership and developing National Action Plan is challenging task which government and Civil Society should co-steer it.

Keynote speaker 3



Baryalai Omarzai also amongst key note speakers, on behalf of Afghanistan NGOs Coordination Body (ANCB)- first of all congratulated inclusion of Afghanistan in OGP to government and IWA. AOP from government and IWA from civil society have endeavored a lot for participation and finally Afghanistan has gained this participation at a vital stage. He assured ANCB along with its member CSOs will take part in Civil Society Workshops and will help IWA disseminate Information regarding OGP through their regional representatives which is

present throughout Afghanistan. “Gaining membership is the easy part, however maintain membership is the stage where we should work together and work proactively to stay in track with timeline”. It is because many countries had previously gained membership of OGP, but because of non-compliance to criteria set forward – this membership can be terminated.

An important aspect of his speech was that he asserted on the presence of government, civil society and the private sector for betterment of collaboration. He specifically mentioned “For OGP to ascend to desired destination; cooperation, coordination and collaboration between these stakeholders are vital”. Additionally, referring back to London Conference – he pointed out to 12 commitments which was signed between

government and civil society. Although this joint effort was signed off a year ago, yet it still hoisted over AOP's desk, neither government and nor civil society has benefited. For better results he pointed out on having orientation workshops in different regions throughout Afghanistan, Kabul is not enough and we cannot rely on Kabul only.

II. Presentations Session.

Following the speech by keynote speakers, workshop proceeded by formal introduction of "Open Government Partnership". Four presentations were presented by representatives from IWA, APPRO and ACBAR. Obaidullah Abdi on behalf of Integrity Watch presented basic Principles of OGP, Co-Creation model as suggested by OGP secretariat and other models which have been successfully implemented in Countries like Georgia, Philippines. Besides, examples of good practices from different countries which is necessary throughout different cycles of OGP was also embedded in presentation.



Ahmad Shaheer Anil, deputy director of APPRO supplemented Formal Introduction of OGP by presenting this process in the envisaged context of Afghanistan. Fundamental standards of OGP, he also mentioned how can we make more suitable changes to the structure to fit it in Afghanistan. he also stated to validate and increase effectiveness of building NAPs, a mechanism should be developed where

CSOs can participate by fulfilling at least 1 of 4 OGP values.

Wasay Hewadmal on behalf of ACBAR presented OGP experiences from Mongolia- the lessons which Afghanistan should learn from Mongolia who have successfully developed and implemented their first NAP. Mongolia developed their 2nd NAP in 2013, they embedded concrete and ambitious commitments and in 2013 Mongolia was also awarded with a Star rating from OGP summit held at OGP secretariat.

III. Consultation and Group Work.

Workshop had two phases and it was spread along two dimensions Awareness raising of local CSOs and Consultation. Naser Timory on behalf of IWA commenced Consultation and group work by giving information about developing potential Commitments. He gave away brief information on some NAPs which were developed in Ukraine and what to take away from them to CSOs. Moreover, he presented a dozen tentative commitments which he thinks CSOs should brainstorm and built something similar. Once

again he assured that it is a consultation workshop for CSOs to be prepared to draft commitments when the Multi-Stakeholder Platform is established for Co-creation.

Therefore 4 groups were assembled, with each group having a facilitator. Wasay Hewadmal facilitated group work amongst participants in Group A, Ahmad Shaheer Anil leading group B, Khalid Siddiqi from EPD leading group C while Robina Hamdard from AWN facilitated group work amongst participants in group D. In order to make the approach more practical in workshop, these groups were assigned to develop a set of commitments which they think is essential and can be included in NAP (Please see Annex for the full list of Commitments proposed by CSOs). Like aforementioned in presentations, groups should consolidate commitments which have a firm grip to OGP four fundamental principles; 1- Access to Information, 2- Fiscal Transparency and Public Officials Asset Disclosure, 3- Government accountability and 4- Use of E-governance to promote Transparency. However, again it is just a tentative consultation workshop to see various ideas and views of different in CSOs in developing potential commitments. In the end a representative from each group volunteered for presentation of tentative Commitments which improved the sense of ownership between participants.



5. Closing Remarks.

Ms. Sheila Qayoumi who led and anchored workshop throughout different phases called on Ainudin Bahodury on behalf of Afghanistan Lawyers Union to address closing remarks for the workshop. Ainudin Bahodury praised IWA's effort for bringing together CSOs to boost process and designate CSOs engagement in OGP and further included IWA has always been committed to fostering transparency, accountability and monitoring. On addressing OGP he hinted "Four aforementioned values of OGP forms basis of "Political Stability" and "Economic Stability" of modern states. These four values are the core values in which CSOs in Afghanistan operate mainly and comprises corruption in government, civil society, education and military."



Further, he pointed out some shortcomings of Afghan Civil Society Organizations in the past 10 years – namely the perception in which most CSOs operate on the basis of projects and are functional only up till having sufficient financial niche and international tours. Whereas the country is in a catastrophic situations and “we as civil servants sometimes put benefits as a priority”, has resulted in failure of some CSOs. Major reason behind failure of government and civil society in tackling corruption has been that there was no genuine from civil society to force government in eradicating

corruption. “yes we as civil servant worked for our own benefits and forgot our real cause, our mission to fight corruption”, he said.

Subsequently he said, the “stride” which has been taken today namely referring to Open Government Partnership as “Open” is an improvisation to make government more “accountable”, to implement active participation of people. Furthermore, “I think OGP should employ more people in the process, people should be made aware” and pointed out how people were not made aware of economic instability in 2014 which resulted in fleeing of youth from Afghanistan. Yet if people would have been made aware, they would have looked for alternatives to cope with this problem and “the reason people had no earlier knowledge was because we did not have an open government”.

He also included “I admire the way Georgia built their OGP Forum, OGP demands process to flow in a participative manner, as is the case with Georgia. The OGP secretariat is led by Ministry of Justice, however there are two Co-Chairs one from Government address and the other from Civil Society Address”. He endorsed better participation of Civil Society throughout NAP cycle and collectively we should push government for earnest reforms. At last, he mentioned “I hope Afghanistan can make the most of this membership and efforts are not wasted”.

6. Annex (1) Commitments

Group A	
	Proposed Draft Commitments were presented by Mohammad Asif Safi on behalf of FLOW and group was facilitated by Abdul Wasay Hewadmal.
1	National Budget should be prepared according to citizens needs and public consultation should be also made before preparing Draft Budget Proposal.
2	Election system should be made digital and results shared through a website, where the total number of votes for each candidate should be displayed online.
3	Key decisions by government officials should be made through public consensus.
4	E-Tazkira or digital National ID cards should be distributed to Afghans
Group B	
	Proposed Commitments were presented by Negina Barai on behalf of IWA and group work was facilitated by Ahmad Shaheer Anil who had participated on behalf of APPRO.
1	Supporting and strengthening functions of Oversight Commission on Access to Information(OCAI). This includes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amending the current Access to Information Law because it has some cracks and loopholes for corrupt government agencies to conceal Information. • Inclusion of new regulations in regard to easing the process of Request for Information from government agencies. • Creation of Advocacy campaigns for implementation of ATI laws in different government institutions.
2	Formulation of Decentralization Policies and strengthening local government agencies. Further, access to government institutions to local people and local governments should be made more easy.
3	Dissemination of Information in regard to Beneficiaries of Government Contracts.
4	Creation of Oversight Law or formulizing Social Audit Law.
5	Developing incentive Policies in Education System. Further it includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender Equality in Senior and Mid-level appointments in Ministry of Education • Supporting students and teachers by providing allowances, especially to Female teachers and students.
6	Approval and Enactment of Anti-Corruption laws
7	Approval and regulating whistleblowers protection policies
8	Use of E-governance for promoting Transparency in country
Group C	
	Group was facilitated by Khalid Siddiqi who was representing Equality for Peace and Development(EPD), and EPD was present in every meeting and workshop.
1	Acknowledging village Councils, which outlines previously mentioned policies of Decentralization.
2	Encourage Women's participation in Peace in the form of "Women Empowerment Scheme" led by government.

3	Initiating Stick and Carrot Policies of Social Audit, whereby citizens of every province and district be mobilized to track government contracts progress. Further, felons and shortfalls should be prosecuted. Progress can be tracked by Community Scorecard.
4	Developing a national website whereby the expenditure of every ministry can be tracked by this mechanism. After the aftermath of Financial Crisis in USA – National website was developed through which general public tracked expenditure of different Government and Private Institutions. As the US Federal Bank had injected more than USD 700 Billion in Economy.
5	Building and developing a structure to end the Culture of Impunity for high ranking government officials.
6	A mechanism should be built whereby the general public can be reported on the implementation of certain Enacted Laws. Today we see dozens of Reforming laws and policies have been approved, however there is no definitive mechanism to track progress.
Group D	
	This Group to be consistent with OGP policies and co-creation process had appointed a presenter and co-presenter. Sibghatullah Karimi from Construction Sector Transparency Initiative - CoST Afghanistan and Robina Hamdard on behalf of AWN presented their proposed commitments.
	Transparency
1	Fairness in government appointments and recruiting.
2	Impartiality in remuneration of government contracts in regard to Infrastructure Sector, Mining Sector, Security Sector Construction Projects. Progress of these projects should be tracked in accordance to Construction Sector Transparency Initiative(CoST) and Afghanistan Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative(AEITI).
3	Decentralization of Power
	Accountability
1	Private sector should be accountable to General Public. Whereas the case is with Private Companies, they should be made accountable to consumers.
2	Government should abide by international good practices. Government should be accountable to expenditure and revenue.
3	Mechanism should be built whereby the government are made accountable for the delivery of effective services.
	Use of Technology and E-governance
1	Developing an E-Portal where documents related to Procurement are published, additionally E-Portals should also be developed for procuring services in regard to Passport, Car license.
2	Normal distribution of E-Tazkira should proceed for all citizens.
	Public Participation
1	Better formalized structures should be built to increase participation of women in economic, political and social sectors. Also increasing leadership of women in government.

2	Local Council's proposal and recommendations should be taken into consideration by local government.
3	Building campaigns to advocate, access to public services for women. This means women's access to government services should be increased.

7. ANNEX (2) Participants

No	Organization	Name
1	Afghanistan NGOs Coordinating Body	Baryalai Omarzai
2	APPRO	Ahmad Shaheer Anil
3	WADAN	Mohammad Afzal
4	AABRAR	Dr. Abdul Baseer
5	FLOW	M.Asif Safi
6	OXFAM	Akram Zaki
7	AWSDC	Suliman
8	ANAF AE	Naseer Ahmad
9	OMED-Afghanistan	Ilyas Khan Tabassum
10	Equality for Peace & Development (EPD)	Sheila Qayoumi
11	ANCC/SWABAC	Samiullah Naseri
12	CARDaid	Shams
13	Rural Organization for Social Empowerment - ROSE	Qudratullah
14	D.A.O	Jalaludin
15	AREU	Mir Ahmad Joyenda
16	ACRU	Ab. Razaq
17	OLSFG	Amanullah Hotak
18	GIZ	Katayoon
19	Afghanistan Journalist Union	Lailuma Naseri
20	Afghanistan Institute for Civil Society	Aziz Tasal
21	APWO	S.R Sattar
22	AOP	Hafiz Fayaz
23	AOP	Wasima Saifi

24	WWDOA	Suraya
25	UNODC	Sohail Ghourwal
26	ACSFo	Hanifullah Wais
27	EPD	Khalid Siddiqi
28	IWA	Negina Barai
29	EPD	Sheila Qayumi
30	IWA	Ajmal Khaliqi
31	IWA	Sajed Shokoyan
32	IWA	Abdul Qayum Aria
33	Administrative office President	Abdul Rahim Karim
34	GIZ	Katayoon
35	IWA	Sayed Ikram Afzali
36	CoST- Afghanistan	Rafiullah Lodin
37	AJO	Lailuma Nasiri
38	CoST	Sebghatullah Karimi
39	Afghanistan Independent Bar Association	Zahra Kohi
40	WADAN	M.Afzal
41	BINA	Mirwais Alizai
42	ACBAR	Abdul Wasay Hewadmal
43	ACBAR	Abdul Hay
44	Dr. Fareed Asmand	AHDS
45	Ainudin Bahodury	AJSC
46	Qudratullah Amin	SDO
47	Mohammad Qayoum Ebrahimi	CSHRN
48	Wahidullah Azizi	IWA
49	Eng Asadullah Wafa	SWABAC