

ACBAR



STATUTES OF OPERATION

*Revised by the ACBAR General Assembly on
24 October 2017*

Explanation of Important Terms in ACBAR Statutes

- **Mandatory criteria for membership:** these are requirements that NGO members must follow.
- **Simple majority vote:** majority of those present in the meeting (50 + 1 of member organizations present)
- **Two thirds majority vote:** a two thirds majority of those present in the room must be obtained for certain decisions such as approving changes in the Statutes or closing of ACBAR as an organization.
- **Quorum:** For the General Assembly this is half of the current membership organizations plus 1 - in the room at the time of the vote – so that any decisions taken by the Assembly are officially binding
- **Secret ballot:** members will vote with an individual voting slip and put it in a ballot box
- **Extraordinary meeting of the General Assembly:** a meeting requested by members for a specific reason – there should be more than half of the current member organizations + 1 to request the meeting.

As amended by a majority vote of ACBAR members at the General Assembly which took place at the offices of the Mine Detection Centre (MDC) on 24 October 2017, Kabul, Afghanistan.

INTRODUCTION

1. Name

This body shall be known as the "Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief and Development" (ACBAR).

2. Prologue

ACBAR was created in Peshawar in August 1988 as a membership organisation, in response to the demands from non-governmental organisations involved in humanitarian work in Afghanistan and the Afghan refugees in present at the time in Pakistan. During the years of war, while Afghanistan was a non-functioning state, ACBAR served to coordinate humanitarian assistance for the Afghan people. This was done in cooperation with other key stakeholders such as UN Agencies and donors. Since 2001, ACBAR shifted focus to concentrate on facilitating the coordination of its members, advocacy efforts, dissemination of information, and the promotion of ethical standards, vis à vis the Code of Conduct and the Core Humanitarian Standards (CHS), amongst its members.

3. Vision

Effective NGOs, Stronger Communities

4. Mission

To provide an efficient platform for members to carry out effective humanitarian and development activities in Afghanistan

5. Core Values

The Code of Conduct (CoC) is a set of shared norms, principles and values that aim to guide the conduct of NGOs in Afghanistan. Below are ACBAR's general principles as promoted by the CoC:

- ✓ We are committed to comply strictly with international humanitarian principles, human rights, and humanitarian laws.
- ✓ Our work is based on the principle of "DO NO HARM" which focuses on responding to emergencies, chronic needs, reducing the impact of disasters and climate change, 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 resources, and to legal authorities.
- ✓ We are transparent in 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 mission 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. The ACBAR Mandate

- a. 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 the people of Afghanistan.
- b. All member organisations agree to provide humanitarian and/or development assistance to the Afghan people regardless of ethnic background, political affiliation, or religious belief, according to the Code of Conduct of NGOs.
- c. Member organisations are independent, neutral, non-partisan, non-proselytising and do not participate in military activities.
- d. Enhance/strengthen linkages and coordination with the Government and other partners in humanitarian and development sectors.
- e. Support Government and humanitarian partners in emergency monitoring and response, according to needs.
- f. Influence policies and practices on the basis of humanitarian and development principles and standards.
- g. Promote good practice and standards and adherence to principles.
- h. Enable joint approaches and responses and shared-learning and information.
- i. 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.

CHAPTER 1 – ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

ACBAR is comprised of three components:

- A. The General Assembly
- B. The Steering Committee
- C. The Secretariat

1.1 The General Assembly

- a. The General Assembly consists of all the members of ACBAR represented by their Country Directors, Country Representatives, Chiefs-of-Mission or their formal delegates who are authorised to make decisions on their behalf.
- b. The General Assembly shall meet twice a year – during the annual General Assembly in March or April and the Mid-Term General Assembly, held in September or October.
- c. The General Assembly is the highest decision-making organ of ACBAR and will approve the annual budget, the annual report, and the annual plan.
- d. Only the most senior management team member of the organisation in country (Country Director/Representative, Deputy Country Director/Representative, or a member of Senior Management), can stand for a position on the Steering Committee. In running for any position, candidates should expect to be present at Steering Committee meetings over the coming 12-month period.
- e. Should the number of elected members of the Steering Committee fall below 14, the Mid-Term General Assembly may elect replacement members for the remaining term of office.
- f. Extraordinary meetings can be requested by at least 50%+1 of its members, along with the agreement of the Steering Committee. Members must be notified at least 48 hours in advance by e-mail that the extraordinary meeting will be taking place.

1.2 The Steering Committee

- a. Steering Committee members monitor, inform, guide, direct and assist in the functioning of ACBAR and the Secretariat. This body will have 15 members (including the Chair) and consist of representatives from at least four Afghan NGO members and four INGO members.
- b. Steering Committee meetings will convene on a monthly basis. Ad hoc meetings may be called as required.
- c. The Chairperson of ACBAR will chair the meetings of the Steering Committee. In the absence of the Chairperson the Deputy Chair will chair the meeting.
- d. The quorum for Steering Committee meetings is eight (8) persons.

1.3 The Secretariat

- a. The ACBAR Secretariat was established to deliver ACBAR services on behalf of the membership, to whom it is accountable, through both the Steering Committee and the Chairperson.

CHAPTER 2 – MEMBERSHIP

2.1 Members and membership

ACBAR shall be composed of members who are willing to abide by, and follow, the Code of Conduct for NGOs engaged in Afghanistan, the ACBAR Statutes, and any additional membership criteria as decided by the General Assembly.

2.2 Mandatory criteria for all members

- a. Members must be non-government, not-for-profit, non-partisan, non-political, neutral and non-proselytising organisations that are providing humanitarian or development assistance in Afghanistan.
- b. Members shall accept and sign the Code of Conduct for NGOs engaged in Afghanistan, which is attached at the end of this document.
- c. Members must show conclusively that they have been fully operational in Afghanistan as an NGO (as defined by Afghan NGO legislation) for a minimum of twelve months.
- d. A member must provide documentary evidence of registration and timely reporting to the Government of Afghanistan.
- e. Existing members must pay annual membership fees that are calculated based on the organisation's previous year's expenditures (as per their annual audit). Membership fees must be paid no later than the end of June each year. If membership fees are not paid by the mid-term General Assembly, then the organisation's ACBAR membership will lapse and the organisation will be required to repeat the entire membership process.
- f. Prospective members must be sponsored by either the Director or Deputy Director of two existing member organisations. If one, or both, senior-level sponsors of the prospective member are not present to support the candidate organisation at the General Assembly, then the membership of this prospective organisation is postponed until the next General Assembly meeting.
- g. Each prospective candidate is required to submit a detailed narrative description of the organisation, in English, including background, copy of annual budget, audit report, projects currently implemented, planned projects, funding sources, statutes of operation, and organisational structure.

2.3 Associate membership

The Steering Committee of ACBAR may accept organisations, which will have observer status but no voting power, as Associate members. 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 to the following groups:

- a. NGOs that have worked less than one year in Afghanistan will be required to pay \$250 during the first year, after which, they will then pay the same fees as members.
- b. National NGO Networks are free of cost, like AWN, ANCB and SWABAC.
- c. Organisations that support the objectives of ACBAR that are registered with the Ministry of Economy and have signed the Code of Conduct, but cannot apply for membership due to restrictions in their mandate, such as ICRC, INSO and MSF.

2.4 Membership registration process

Prospective members must submit an application form to ACBAR, which can be obtained from any ACBAR office or from the ACBAR website. Applications must be submitted to the Secretariat in the ACBAR Head Office in Kabul, which will then confirm that all applications

are properly completed and that the minimum ACBAR membership criteria are met. Applicants with incomplete applications will be informed by the Secretariat. The Secretariat will forward completed applications for review by the Steering Committee, with onward forwarding to the General Assembly for elections. Membership applications will be approved by a simple majority of the General Assembly, as long as the quorum is met. The decision of ACBAR shall be made known in writing to the applicant, according to the below procedures:

- a. All applications should be submitted using the most recent version of the standard ACBAR application form, together with the requested relevant documents (as mentioned under Section 2.1) to the Secretariat. An application letter should state the aims, objectives, projects, and activities of the applicant organisation and proof of their registration (or process) must be attached.
- b. On receipt of the application, the Secretariat will complete a verification process of the organisation's information provided in the application form.
- c. The application letter, relevant documents (including MoUs, registration certificates, and any additional information gathered by the Secretariat) will be submitted to the Steering Committee for review.
- d. The Steering Committee may then make an initial decision to either forward the application to the General Assembly, request further information from the applicant organisation, or reject the organisation's application, if it feels that the basic criteria are not fulfilled. Applicants may then reapply once the criteria are fulfilled.
- e. The full pack of application documents from the candidate organisation will be sent to all ACBAR members, three weeks prior to the General Assembly.
- f. During the General Assembly, ACBAR members will have the opportunity to consider the prospective organisations' applications. The applicant NGO will briefly present itself and its work and answer any questions posed by the ACBAR members.
- g. The applicant NGO's sponsors must be present in the General Assembly meeting to support and answer questions from the floor regarding the NGO(s) they are sponsoring.
- h. After the presentation and a question-answer session, applicant NGO representative(s) will leave the room while members vote on their membership application. A simple majority vote by secret ballot will confirm membership. The applicant will be informed of its membership or rejection in writing the following day. Any failed applicants will be eligible to make another ACBAR application after a six-month period.
- i. If the applicant is a former member and re-applying for membership, they must clear any outstanding previous membership fees, before again seeking ACBAR membership.
- j. Once membership fees are paid, the organisation will receive its ACBAR certificate.

2.5 Membership and registration fees

- a. Prospective ACBAR members must pay a non-refundable \$50 USD registration fee, or its equivalent in Afghani, when submitting their membership application.
- b. Members pay an annual membership fee of 0.1% of their annual budget, with a maximum of \$5,000 USD.
- c. The minimum full membership fee is \$250 USD per year.
- d. Associate members pay \$250 USD per year.
- e. Membership fees will be collected on an annual basis and must be paid no later than the end of June each year.
- f. Notwithstanding (c) above, in special circumstances, a member organisation in good standing may request the Steering Committee to approve a staggered payment plan, within a specified time frame.
- g. Once the General Assembly approves the membership of a new applicant, the membership fee must be paid in full within two weeks.

2.6 Commitment to coordination, information sharing, transparency & accountability

- a. Members must commit to being part of coordination efforts, information-sharing, transparency and accountability. Members must provide data on activities to ACBAR.
- b. When members submit their annual reports to the Ministry of Economy, a copy of these should also be provided to the ACBAR Secretariat. All of this information is confidential and cannot be shared outside of the ACBAR Secretariat.
- c. Members must inform ACBAR and the government if they cease operating in Afghanistan.

2.7 ACBAR membership is terminated

- a. When a member organisation ceases operations in Afghanistan.
- b. When a member organisation notifies ACBAR in writing of its intention to withdraw its membership (there will be no refund of the membership fee).
- c. Even after receiving a warning letter from the Director, if a member organisation is in arrears of their annual membership fee by the mid-term General Assembly, their membership will be automatically terminated at the end of the year.
- d. 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 Codes of Conduct.
 - i. The Steering Committee will then verify the information and if suspicions are proven then the organisation is suspended until the next General Assembly, at which time a final decision will be made on the member organisation's expulsion.
 - ii. 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 if it has taken corrective measures.
 - iii. The concerned member organisation will have the right to present its case to the General Assembly.
- e. If its status as a signatory to the Codes of Conduct is revoked.
- f. Failing to attend two consecutive General Assemblies, without proper cause, may lead to an expulsion from ACBAR.

CHAPTER 3 – RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF MEMBERS

- 3.1** Member organisations have the right to ask ACBAR for advice in matters concerning relief, development and advocacy. Member organisations are also entitled to receive circulars, annual reports, and all other documents published by ACBAR.
- 3.2** Member organisations have the right to put forward comments and suggestions to ACBAR on anything concerning the activities, development, and management of ACBAR.
- 3.3** Active participation by member organisations in ACBAR meetings and activities is expected and encouraged.
- 3.4** Member organisations should incorporate ACBAR's General Principles of into their own policies and statutes.
- 3.5** The Director, Deputy Director, and/or another Senior Management level representative of member organisations must attend the General Assemblies. Failing to attend two consecutive General Assemblies, without proper cause, may lead to an expulsion from ACBAR of the member organisation.
- 3.6** Member organisations will have one vote each at General Assemblies.

CHAPTER 4 – FUNCTIONS OF ACBAR COMPONENTS

4.1 The General Assembly

The General Assembly is the governing body of ACBAR and has the power to overrule any decisions made by the Steering Committee or its Sub-Committees.

4.2 Dates and attendance at General Assembly meetings

- a. General Assembly meetings are open to all ACBAR members and shall be held as follows:
 - i. ACBAR annual General Assembly takes place annually in March or April.
 - ii. ACBAR mid-term General Assembly takes place annually in September or October.
- b. Invitations to attend the General Assembly can be extended as needed to representatives from the government, or the diplomatic and international assistance community.

4.3 Procedures for General Assembly meetings

- a. Each member organisation may have a total of two senior level representatives present at General Assembly meetings, but there is only one vote per organisation.
- b. Upon arrival, each member organisation will sign-in and designate their voting representative for General Assembly; who will also be the only person who can put forward motions on behalf of the member organisation. One set of voting cards will be given to each member organisation; these must be returned to ACBAR at the end of the meeting.
- c. Voting will be done by raising the respective voting card: a) Yes, for the motion (green card) or, b) No, against the motion (red card). Any member can request a secret ballot for voting if approved by a majority of members present.
- d. The annual and bi-annual General Assembly agenda and papers must be sent to members at least two weeks in advance of the meeting date. For extraordinary General Assembly meetings, this can within three working days.
- e. A General Assembly quorum consists 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 - as long as the quorum is met).
- f. The General Assembly will elect the ACBAR Chairperson and the Steering Committee by a simple majority vote. At least four members of the Steering Committee shall be from Afghan NGOs and at least four from INGOs.
- g. No proxy votes are permitted.
- h. All meetings are to be conducted according to the generally accepted rules of order.
- i. Meetings and written communications of ACBAR are in English. Minutes of the General Assembly are also translated into local language and disseminated to all member organisations.

4.4 Annual General Assembly agenda

During annual General Assembly meetings, the following topics will be part of the standard agenda. Member organisations may add any other business to the agenda.

- a. A report on ACBAR activities for the previous year.
- b. Approval of the audited financial report.
- c. Approval of the annual financial narrative reports.
- d. Elections of Steering Committee and new ACBAR members.
- e. Final approval of plans, priorities and the budget for the forthcoming year.

4.5 Election Procedures for the Steering Committee

4.5.1 Supervision and nominations

- a. Elections will be supervised and carried out by an Election Committee composed of following three individuals and who are responsible to count the votes: two (2) members elected during the Mid-Term General Assembly and the ACBAR Director. The Election Committee should be a mix of national and international organisations, and one member must be a female, if possible.
- b. The Election Committee will be responsible for checking and confirming nominations. This includes: a) obtaining written letters of acceptance from each nominee; b) checking the validity of the ballots; and, c) counting the ballots.
- c. Nominations for Steering Committee members and the Chairperson will be requested from members some 4–6 weeks prior to the annual General Assembly. Members are able to either nominate, through email or letter, either themselves or an individual from another member organisation. The deadline for the submission of nominations is the day before the date of the General Assembly meeting.

4.5.2 Election procedures

- a. Steering Committee elections are held at the annual General Assembly, at which time the Chairperson will also be elected. The Steering Committee is made up of 14 members.
- b. The Chairperson will be directly elected by the General Assembly and, as per accepted practice, must be the senior representative of a NNGO. To qualify as Chairperson, the candidate must have served as a member of the Steering Committee for at least one term within the previous five years.
- c. Members will cast a secret ballot, with separate lists for national and international NGOs.
- d. The Steering Committee election is determined by:
 - i. The first 14 members of the Steering Committee will be those individuals with the highest number of votes (minimum of four national NGOs and minimum four international NGOs).
 - ii. In the event of a tied vote for a member, a re-vote will take place.

4.5.3 Terms of office

- a. The term of Chairperson will be 12 months and each elected Chairperson will be limited to two consecutive terms in office (but the individual can stand again for election if the term is not consecutive).
- b. Steering Committee members will likewise serve a term of 12 months. There are no term limits for how many times an individual can serve as a Steering Committee member.
- c. Only senior level representatives of a member organisation are eligible to be nominated for becoming Steering Committee member. The composition of the SC is to be inclusive.

4.6 Mid-term General Assembly agenda

During mid-term General Assembly meetings, the following topics will be part of the standard agenda. Member organisations may add any other business to the agenda.

- a. A report on ACBAR activities to date.
- b. A financial report to date.
- c. Election of the Election Committee members for the next General Assembly.
- d. Election to any vacant positions on the Steering Committee and new ACBAR members.
- e. Approval of the external auditor (as required).

4.7 Steering Committee and Office Bearers (Chair, Vice-Chair & Treasurer)

4.7.1 Functions & responsibilities of the Steering Committee & Office Bearers

- a. The Steering Committee oversees and supports the ACBAR Secretariat and is accountable to the members.
- b. The Steering Committee will hold regular monthly meetings.
- c. Any three members of the Steering Committee may call for an emergency meeting of the Steering Committee. An extraordinary meeting must be called by the Chairperson within three days of receiving such a request.
- d. Steering Committee members may participate in Steering Committee meetings through Skype or videoconferencing, as required.
- e. The Steering Committee shall monitor the performance of the Secretariat, the Director, and any Working Groups and Taskforces established by ACBAR.
- f. The Steering Committee will participate in strategic planning, programme development and fundraising events that benefit ACBAR.
- g. The Steering Committee will assess members and external needs and environments, and based on these, make recommendations for approval to structure, funding, advocacy and policy issues, so as to ensure ACBAR has relevant, effective, and long-term strategic planning.
- h. The Steering Committee will represent ACBAR as required and ensure that information is fed-back to members in a timely manner, via the Secretariat, and that appropriate actions are taking place, as required.
- i. 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.
- j. The Steering Committee has the right to establish sub-Committees dealing with specific issues, where there is a demand for such, and to dissolve sub-Committees upon completion of its tasks.
- k. The Steering Committee is responsible for addressing complaints from ACBAR staff (according to ACBAR's HR policy), member organisations, and Government counterparts.
- l. A whistle-blower policy for members/ACBAR staff/government counterparts
- m. The Steering Committee shall exercise overall supervision of the Secretariat in respect of:
 - i. Ensuring the Director fulfils the terms of his/her job description.
 - ii. Being involved in strategic planning, programme development, and fundraising.
 - iii. Providing feedback on the Director's assessment of the needs/interests of members and the external environment.
 - iv. The development of new programmes and fundraising opportunities, so that ACBAR is adequately resourced.
 - v. Ensuring that information from sub-committee meetings is fed back to the Steering Committee, Director, and the ACBAR membership, and that appropriate action on recommendations takes place as required.

4.7.2 Resignation/Termination/Continuation of Steering Committee membership

Steering Committee membership is discontinued under the following circumstances:

- a. By a simple majority vote at a General Assembly meeting.
- b. If the ACBAR membership of the organisation has been terminated.
- c. If a Steering Committee member fails to attend 50% of the scheduled Steering Committee meetings.
- d. The elected person resigns as a Steering Committee member.
- e. In the case of a Steering Committee member resigning from their organisation during their time as an elected member, if they should start employment with another ACBAR

member, and with the agreement of their new employer, the member may continue to sit on the Steering Committee until the end of their term as a member.

4.7.3 Functions and responsibilities of the ACBAR Chairperson

- a. The Chairperson, with the Director, serves as the face of ACBAR for the humanitarian and development community, both in Afghanistan and globally. The Chairperson represents ACBAR at functions and meetings with the Government, UN, donors, and other parties with which ACBAR engages and provides feedback.
- b. The Chairperson leads the monthly Steering Committee meetings.
- c. Has overall responsibility of monitoring, advising, and supervising the Director and provides strategic leadership, in coordination with the Steering Committee.
- d. Seeks members' input in maintaining an effective and responsive Secretariat.
- e. Monitors the utilisation of ACBAR funds.
- f. Signs all binding ACBAR documents which have been approved by the Steering Committee and/or the General Assembly.

4.7.4 Functions and responsibilities of the ACBAR Vice-Chairperson

- a. Deputise for Chairperson as required.
- b. Function as Acting Chairperson until elections are held, if the Chairperson leaves office before the end of his/her term.
- c. Carry out special assignments as requested by the Chairperson.

4.7.5 Functions and responsibilities of the ACBAR Treasurer

- a. Ensure the budget is adhered to.
- b. Ensure that proper ACBAR procurement procedures are being correctly followed.
- c. Track expenditure and income.
- d. Advise the Director in preparation of the annual budget.
- e. Present the annual budget and audit report to the General Assembly.
- f. Provide monthly financial reports to the Steering Committee.
- g. Review the annual audit and auditors' management letters, while coordinating the development of an action plan to address any issues raised.

4.8 The ACBAR Secretariat

4.8.1 Composition of the Secretariat

- a. The ACBAR Secretariat is comprised of the salaried staff of ACBAR, including the ACBAR Director.
- b. 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.
- c. Substantial changes in staffing levels and organisational structure require a simple majority vote from the Steering Committee.
- d. The Secretariat is responsible to handle ACBAR finances, including contributions and membership fees, as per donor requirements.
- e. The Secretariat manages expenditures against approved budget and provides regular updates to the Steering Committee.
- f. The Secretariat will ensure that donor reporting requirements are met.
- g. The Secretariat will provide basic support to taskforces and working groups, as agreed.
- h. Secretariat staff will represent ACBAR as appointed/required and ensure feedback to the membership in a timely manner.

4.8.2 The ACBAR Director

- a. A Director will be employed to manage the day-to-day activities of ACBAR in accordance with the Statutes, the position's job description, and ACBAR's strategic plans.
- b. The Director is accountable to the membership and reports to the Chairperson.
- c. The Director is responsible for, and shall manage all ACBAR Secretariat staff.
- d. Secretariat staff members will all have dedicated job descriptions, which are approved by the Steering Committee.
- e. The Director is the secretary of the Steering Committee. The Director calls the meetings (including agenda and supporting documents) with at least one week's notice. While the Director is present during Steering Committee meetings, s/he does not have voting rights.
- f. The Director, in collaboration with Secretariat staff, prepares annual work plans and budgets for review and approval by the Steering Committee. These are then presented at the annual General Assembly.
- g. The Steering Committee confers authority to the Director to take responsibility for all of the day-to-day operational aspects of the Secretariat.
- h. The Director shall ensure that the minutes of all meetings, such as the AHF, ADF and Steering Committee, are distributed to members within five working days after the meetings have been held.

CHAPTER 5 – FINANCE

- 5.1** The fiscal year of ACBAR is from the 01 January to 31 December.
- 5.2** During the fiscal year, no revision may be made to 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.
- 5.3** If the transfer of savings in certain budgeted expenditure components would augment or decrease any other budgeted expenditure component by more than 15%, prior approval must be obtained from the Steering Committee.
- 5.4** The expenses of the ACBAR Secretariat shall be financed from yearly membership fees and/or from other funding sources.
- 5.5** The Steering Committee will propose the changes to the required membership fees and will present this amount for approval at a General Assembly meeting.
- 5.6** The Director and the Steering Committee are responsible for soliciting funds from as wide a donor-base as possible and to ensure the neutrality of the organisation.
- 5.7** The ACBAR Secretariat shall prepare monthly financial reports, which will meet the requirements of budgeting and cash accounting.
- 5.8** Copies of monthly financial reports will be distributed to Steering Committee members.
- 5.9** Annual ACBAR financial accounts must be audited every year by an external auditing firm approved by the General Assembly.
- 5.10** The audited report is approved by the General Assembly.

CHAPTER 6 – PUBLIC POLICY STATEMENTS

- 6.1** In undertaking advocacy work on behalf of its members, ACBAR may, from time to time, issue public statements, press releases, hold press conferences, or issue public comments.
- 6.2** Important written public statements on issues which are not covered by guiding documents, or which have not been discussed in Steering Committee, shall be approved by the Steering Committee in advance of publication.
- 6.3** When the statement ACBAR issues is on a matter that is endorsed by a majority vote of the members, the Steering Committee, the Director, and the Chairperson are then empowered to speak and issue comments as a representative of all ACBAR members.
- 6.4** Such statements will note that this is a corporate initiative, rather than expressing the views of individual members. Spokespersons will only be ACBAR members, staff or executive officers.
- 6.5** After statements are approved they will be then be circulated to the Steering Committee and all ACBAR members.
- 6.6** Every member, including those in the Steering Committee, has the right to publicly announce his/her reservation(s) to a public statement or comment made by ACBAR.

CHAPTER 7 – WORKING GROUPS

- 7.1** ACBAR may establish two types of groups: a) ad hoc task forces, which can be constituted as and when necessary to deal with specific short term issues or tasks; and, 2) working groups which are formed on the basis of its basic mandate and strategic objectives. The latter includes the Advocacy Working Group.
- 7.2** Working groups and task forces can be formed at the request of the General Assembly or by a decision of the Steering Committee.
- 7.3** Task forces can be formed to lobby and advocate on specific issues of humanitarian/development concern, to coordinate specific activities of the fora, to manage specific projects on behalf of the fora, to act as a platform, etc.
- 7.4** The Steering Committee will agree on the work plan and terms of reference of each created working group or task force and will ensure the follow-up and monitoring of the implementation of the agreed work plan.
- 7.5** Working groups formed on the basis of ACBAR's mandate will comprise of at least one serving member of the Steering Committee and one staff member of the Secretariat, in order to facilitate the support and liaison of the working group.
- 7.6** The working group or task force will elect its own chair and a person who reports to the Secretariat, General Assembly, and/or Steering Committee.
- 7.7** The Steering Committee and Secretariat shall review working groups and task forces every six months and may discontinue them if the assigned task is completed or the relevance of the group is no longer necessary.
- 7.8** The members of the working groups and task forces will determine the frequency of their meetings and report back to the Steering Committee on a regular basis.
- 7.9** Minutes from each working group meeting will be provided to the Director, who will include a summary in his/her monthly update to the Steering Committee.

CHAPTER 8 – PROVINCIAL/REGIONAL COMMITTEES

- 8.1** ACBAR may establish regular and ad hoc regional or provincial committees, or regional or provincial focal points, to enhance the scope and impact of its work.
- 8.2** Regional or provincial committees can be established by any group of ACBAR members after making a request to the Director, who will in turn obtain the approval of the Steering Committee. Such Committees are open to all ACBAR members.
- 8.3** The role of these committees is to plan and coordinate activities at the regional or provincial levels, in accordance with ACBAR policies and other guiding documents approved by the General Assembly and/or Steering Committee.
- 8.4** Each regional or provincial committee shall elect, by a majority vote of all members, a Chairperson and a three/four-person Advisory Committee at the annual general meetings that will take place in the region or province.
- 8.5** Regional or provincial committees will determine the frequency of their meetings and report back to the Director and the Steering Committee on a regular basis.

CHAPTER 9 – AMENDMENTS TO THE STATUTES AND LIQUIDATION

- 9.1** Changes to the Statutes of Operation can be made by a two-thirds majority vote of the quorum of the membership that is present at a General Assembly meeting.
- 9.2** The Statutes of Operation become effective the day a two-thirds majority vote of members attending the General Assembly approves them.
- 9.3** In the event that ACBAR is dissolved, or is liquidated for any reason whatsoever, the General Assembly will determine how the funds of ACBAR will be settled, in line with Afghan NGO legislation and donor regulations.
- 9.4** In order to dissolve ACBAR as an organisation, the General Assembly is required to make 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.

Kabul, Afghanistan