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Afghanistan

13 YEARS
OF HIGH-QUALITY
RESEARCH

The A to Z Guide to Assistance in Afghanistan

2015
Thirteenth Edition

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IMPORTANT NOTE: The information presented in this guide relies on the voluntary contributions of ministries and agencies of the Afghan government, embassies, development agencies, and other organisations representing donor countries, national and international NGOs, and other institutions. While AREU makes a sincere effort to provide the most accurate and current information possible with each edition produced, details evolve and change continuously. Users of this guide are encouraged to submit updates, additions, corrections and suggestions to publications@areu.org.af.

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Funding for this publication is provided by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

Provincial Profiles (maps and data): World Bank; Central Statistics Organization

Maps: Afghan Geodesy and Cartography Head Office; United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

Photos: AREU

Cover photograph: Afghan soldiers march beneath the newly erected large Afghan flag on Wazir Akbar Khan hilltop in Kabul.

Tab photographs - A to Z: An elderly Afghan man sits in his shop selling watermelons in central Kabul. Government: People's representatives gather during the 2013 Loya Jirga in Kabul to discuss long term relationships between Afghanistan and the United States, including the Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA). Provincial Profiles: A market in Jalalabad. Contacts: Afghan artists stage a scene from a street show condemning Taliban attacks during a demonstration by civil society activists in Kabul. Documents: A shopkeeper sits in his carpet shop in a market in Kabul. Index: A farmer in northern Afghanistan sifts wheat.

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About the Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit

The Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU) is an independent research institute based in Kabul. AREU's mission is to inform and influence policy and practice through conducting high-quality, policy-relevant research and actively disseminating the results, and to promote a culture of research and learning. To achieve this, AREU engages with policymakers, civil society, researchers, and students to promote their use of AREU's research and its library, to strengthen their research capacity, and to create opportunities for analysis, reflection, and debate.

AREU conducts research on a wide variety of topics and produces dozens of research publications each year, ranging from policy-focused briefing papers to comprehensive issues and synthesis reports. Many are translated into Dari and Pashto.

AREU was established in 2002 by the assistance community working in Afghanistan and has a board of directors with representation from donors, the United Nations and other multilateral agencies, and non-governmental organisations.

About the A to Z Guide to Assistance in Afghanistan

Updated each year, the A to Z Guide to Assistance in Afghanistan aims to enhance general understanding of the array of actors, structures, and government processes related to aid and reconstruction efforts in the country. The Guide provides: a wide-ranging glossary of assistance terms and actors, an overview of Afghanistan's system of government, political provincial briefs, key primary documents, and an extensive contacts directory that includes government agencies, NGOs, donors, and international actors. Where not otherwise specified, all dollar amounts are US\$. The Guide is also published in Dari and Pashto.

When the first edition of the A to Z Guide was published in 2002, the goal then—as it is now—was “to provide a guide to the terms, structures, mechanisms and coordinating bodies critical to the Afghanistan relief and reconstruction effort to help ensure a shared vocabulary and common understanding.” Over the years the Guide has increased in scope and size but has always followed the same successful model.

AREU Publications 2014

These and all other AREU publications are available for download from www.areu.org.af, and most are available in hard copy from the AREU office in Kabul (# indicates that a publication or a summary is available in Dari, and * in Pashto).

- Public Lecture and Open Discussion: "The Afghan National Army: Sustainability Challenges beyond Financial Aspects," by Antonio Giustozzi
- The social life of the onion: the informal regulation of the onion market in Nangarhar, Afghanistan, by Giulia Minoia, Adam Pain and Wamiqullah Mumtaz
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Government Initiatives and Programmes

Afghan Geodesy and Cartography Head Office (AGCHO)

www.agcho.gov.af

The Afghan Geodesy and Cartography Head Office (AGCHO) is the government agency responsible for all official mapping and related activities in Afghanistan. Reporting directly to the President, AGCHO has approximately 700 staff and regional offices in 16 provinces.

The office's primary responsibility is to prepare, print, produce and distribute topographic, geographic, administrative, thematic, panoramic, kilometric distance, geological, physical and pictorial maps as well as photographs, photo maps, photo plans, satellite images, national atlases and other geodesic services.

AGCHO consists of four technical and professional departments, namely Cartography, Photogrammetry, Geodesy and Metadata Departments. It also has several support departments including Plan and Policy, Human Resource, Finance and Administration and Documentation and Communication Departments.

Since 2001 there have been renewed efforts to modernise the agency. The office is equipped with modern digital and technical tools such as computers, printers, scanners and the most modern printing machinery. The equipment serves to meet the needs of customers by printing maps, magazines, newspapers, brochures, posters and more, with high quality and in a timely manner. The sub-department of Customer Services renders maps of various scales and geographic information such as village lists and other geography-related data to domestic and foreign customers.

For many years, AGCHO has been able to meet the needs of state and non-state institutions and organisations for geodesic surveys and topographic maps, thereby playing a prominent role in the progress and development of the country.

Afghan Local Police (ALP)

The Afghan Local Police (ALP), founded by Presidential Decree in August 2010, and led by the Ministry of Interior (Mol), is deployed in selected districts to foster security and defend rural communities in areas where there is either missing space between (ANA) and or National Police (ANP). The ALP is not authorised to enforce laws and is therefore intended as a defensive force.

Districts selected to take part in the programme nominate around 300 men to receive uniforms, AK-47s and training from US Special Forces. Recruits are vetted and approved by district-level Shuras (councils) and the Afghan National Directorate of Security (NDS). The Shuras responsible for vetting recruits are those created by the Independent Directorate of Local Governance's Afghanistan Social Outreach Program.

As of December 2014, the ALP had 27,000 members. The US Department of Defense (DOD) largely funds the ALP; NATO supports the program through provision of funding, training, equipment and technical assistance to the Mol.

Afghan National Army (ANA)

The Afghan National Army (ANA) was established as a branch of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) in accordance with a decree issued by President Karzai on 1 December 2002. The duties of the ANA are:

- To safeguard national sovereignty and territorial integrity;
- To defend independence and national honour;
- To defend borders and combat internal threats;
- To eliminate terrorist forces and scatter and imprison illegal armed groups;
- To manage security threats and emergencies in co-operation with the Afghan National Police.

The ANA consists of 195,000 members from various ethnic groups, of which 1,300 are women. The ANA has seven corps, three independent divisions, four independent regiments, National Military Academy, ANA Officer Academy, Air Force University, Officer Candidate School (OCS) training centres and professional schools.

1. 201st Corps 'Silab' in Gambari, Laghman province;
2. 203rd Corps 'Tondar' in Gardez, Paktia province;
3. 205th Corps 'Atal' in Kandahar province;
4. 207th Corps 'Zafar' in Herat province;
5. 209th Corps 'Shahin' in Balkh province;
6. 215th Corps 'Maiwand' in Helmand province;
7. Air Force Corps in Kabul province.

The regiments of infantry corps are operational in all of the country's 34 provinces.

The Air Force Corps 'Badr', which was established in 2007, consists of three regiments, Air Force University and Air Force School. The three regiments are located in Shindand, Kandahar and Kabul. The corps currently has 96 aircraft, one infantry division, one special operations division, one military police division, one quick reaction regiment, one engineering regiment and one support division. It is based in Kabul.

The National Military Academy was established as a credible and professional institution within the ANA in 2004. The first batch of professional officers graduated in 2009 and graduations continue to take place on an annual basis. In the ANA, each officer can serve up to 25 years.

Army recruitment centers are operational in all of the country's 34 provinces. Around 6,000 people are recruited on a monthly basis. They are then employed in training centers and divided to serve in various ANA units following the completion of professional training. Soldiers are contracted for three years and lieutenants for five years. They can renew their contracts optionally and voluntarily.

Afghan National Police (ANP)

www.moi.gov.af

The Afghan National Police (ANP) is the Afghan government's overarching police institution and operates under the authority of the Ministry of Interior (MoI). The ANP's role spans a wide spectrum of security activities, including law enforcement, maintenance of order, criminal investigation, border security, counter-narcotics, and counter-terrorism.

As of December 2014 the ANP had a combined strength of 157,000 officers, of which 2,200 are female, who together support the following forces: 1) National Police, or Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP) responsible for most day-to-day policing; 2) Afghan National Civil Order Police, a highly trained and specially equipped quick-reaction force aimed at dealing with civil disorder, looting, hostage taking and riots; 3) Afghan Border Police, engaged in law enforcement at international borders; 4) Other units, including personnel assigned to the MoI, the Criminal Investigation Division, and the Counter-Narcotics Police, with some providing training, intelligence, and support to the fire department.

Since 2005 the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (CSTC-A) has led police reform efforts by the US, along with the training and development of the ANA. In addition to the main ANP training facility in Kabul, regional training facilities have been established in Gardez, Herat, Kandahar, Khost, Mazar-i-Sharif, and Wardak.

The main laws governing the ANP are the 2005 Police Law and the 2004 Interim Criminal Procedure Code. These laws are based on Articles 56, 75 (3), and 134 of the Constitution. The chain of command is: 1) Minister of Interior; 2) Deputy Minister for Security Affairs; 3) Regional Commanders; 4) Provincial Chiefs of Police; and 5) District Chiefs of Police.

Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC)

www.aihrc.org.af

In 2002, the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) was established under Article 58 of the Afghan Constitution, which reads:

"The State, for the purpose of monitoring the observation of human rights in Afghanistan, and their promotion and protection, shall establish the Independent Human Rights Commission of Afghanistan. Everyone in case of violation of his/her human rights can report or complain to this Commission. The Commission can refer the cases of violation of the human rights of the persons to the legal authorities, and assist them in defending their rights. The structure and mode of function of this Commission will be regulated by law."

The Law on the Structure, Duties and Mandate of the AIHRC was adopted by the Cabinet and endorsed by the President in May 2005 (published in Official gazette no. 855). Under the Law (Article 4), the AIHRC is mandated to protect and promote rights and freedoms enshrined in the Afghan Constitution and international human rights instruments to which Afghanistan is a party. Article 6 of the Law requires the Afghan government, civil society organisations (CSOs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and all Afghan citizens to "cooperate with the Commission in achieving the objectives set up by this Law."

The AIHRC is led by nine Commissioners with service terms of five years who are appointed by the President. As of December 2014, the AIHRC is chaired by Dr Sima Samar with Mr Mohammad Farid Hamidi as the Deputy Chair. The President is required to appoint Commissioners who reflect the gender, ethnic, religious and linguistic diversity of Afghanistan, and who represent academic institutions and CSOs.

Staff

Currently, around 700 employees work for the AIHRC at the HQ in Kabul and in 14 regional and provincial offices scattered around the country. The gender breakdown of AIHRC's staff is 34% female and 66% male. The AIHRC seeks to increase women's employment within the organisation.

Regional and Provincial Offices

To ensure nationwide coverage of services, the AIHRC has eight regional offices in: Herat, Kandahar, Paktia, Bamiyan, Nangarhar, Kabul, Kunduz and Balkh; and six provincial offices: Ghor, Daykundi, Helmand, Uruzgan, Faryab and Badakhshan.

Areas of Expertise, Experience and Involvement

The AIHRC uses strategic platforms to achieve its mission. Areas of interventions are prioritised in accordance to need and feasibility and translated in strategic plans. In 2014 the AIHRC adopted its third Strategic Plan (2014-2018) after the former Strategic Plan (2009-2013) ended successfully. The AIHRC new Strategic Plan (2014 – 2018) sets forth the following as the areas of activities:

- **Leadership:** to exercise its leadership role on human rights in the country.
- **Promotion of Human Rights:** to help the public, the government and civil society understand, apply, observe and respect human rights.
- **Empowerment:** to strengthen and endeavour toward a dynamic, modern, efficient and effective management system and programs, to promote excellent organisational culture and to enhance the capacities and capabilities of the AIHRC's staff for promotion, protection and monitoring of human rights.
- **Protection and Monitoring of Human Rights:** to protect, monitor, advocate, and hold the State, public and private institutions and individuals accountable to respect, fulfill, and protect human rights in country.

Management systems are in place in order to ensure effective and efficient implementation of the AIHRC's programs and transparent administrative and financial performance. Increased efforts have been made to integrate results-based management principles and approaches into the overall management of the AIHRC. The AIHRC's governance body and secretariat strive to incorporate human rights values into its daily management practices and during all stages of program implementation.

Afghanistan Investment Support Agency (AISA)

www.aisa.org.af

The Afghanistan Investment Support Agency (AISA) was set up as a “one-stop-shop for investors” by the Afghan government in 2003, and is responsible for the registration, licensing, and promotion of all new investments in Afghanistan. AISA's vision is to become a world-class investment promotion and support agency by ensuring a business-friendly environment for private sector development, hence furthering robust and sustainable economic growth in Afghanistan.

Regional and Provincial Offices

AISA is headquartered in Kabul with regional offices in Herat, Kandahar, Mazar-i-Sharif, Kunduz, Khost, Helmand, Paktia, Andkhoy and Nangarhar.

Areas of Expertise, Experience and Involvement

AISA services include: individual client investment support, visa facilitation, organising domestic or foreign conferences and exhibitions, as well as providing opportunities for “matchmaking” between companies and investors. Since 2008 AISA has published an investors' directory, both online and as an annually updated hard copy, thus providing a listing of foreign and local companies operating in Afghanistan. Additionally, www.directory.asia.org.af allows visitors to search and verify businesses by name and license number.

AISA's Research, Planning and Policy Department analyses private sector development issues, develops private sector strategies, completes sector-specific studies on business and investment opportunities, and engages in hands-on policy advocacy for relevant sectors with the National Assembly and Afghan government agencies. Also, within AISA there is an Industrial Parks Development Department which is currently responsible for managing USAID-funded industrial parks in Kabul, Mazar-i-Sharif, Kandahar, Nangarhar and Herat.

Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme (APRP)

The Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Program (APRP) is an internationally funded, Afghan-led initiative that encourages insurgents to renounce violence via honourable means, live within the laws of Afghanistan, and peacefully return to their communities as a productive part of Afghan society. APRP is not just a programme but rather a political and social process intended to bring about just, lasting and sustainable peace to Afghanistan. The programme's aim is therefore to promote peace through various political, social and economic initiatives at national, regional and international levels.

The government strategy for peace has three pillars: a) strengthening security and civilian institutions to promote peace and reintegration, b) facilitating political conditions for, and support to, the Afghan people to establish an enduring and just peace, and c) enhancing national, regional and international support and consensus to foster peace and stability.

These efforts are divided between two broad categories which operate simultaneously:

1. Strategic reconciliation: the strategic and political level focuses on the leadership of the insurgency and includes addressing the problem of sanctuaries, constructing measures for the removal of names from the UN sanctions list, ensuring the severance of links with al-Qaeda, and securing political accommodation and potential exile to a third country.

2. Peace and reintegration at tactical and operational levels: this focuses on the reintegration of foot soldiers, small groups and local leaders who form the bulk of the insurgency. It includes: promoting confidence-building measures, reintegrating ex-combatants, providing support for demobilisation, removing names from target/black lists, arranging local security guarantees and longer-term processes of vocational training.

The peace and reintegration component of the APRP has been further subdivided into three stages:

- Activities for social outreach, grievance resolution, confidence building, negotiations involving government and NGOs, and the mobilisation of local shuras to reach out to communities that demonstrate intent to join the peace process.
- A 90-day demobilisation process whereby a combatant disarming is registered in the Reintegration Tracking and Monitoring Database managed by the Joint Secretariat, provided with an identification card guaranteeing freedom of movement and given amnesty.
- A delivery of a “menu of options” designed to “consolidate peace and support community recovery” through improvement of basic service access, civic education, literacy, technical and vocational training, and employment.

Considering the above strategic vision, APRP encourages regional and international cooperation and provides a mechanism for reconciling senior and mid- to low-level Taliban to renounce violence and terrorism. The Joint Secretariat (JS) of the High Peace Council (HPC) works with Provincial Peace Councils (PPCs) and Provincial Joint Secretariat Teams (PJSTs) in 33 of 34 provinces to execute the programme at the provincial level. Successful execution of the APRP not only paves the ground for constructive political dialogue but also improves the security environment by bringing fighters and weapons in from the battlefield. In addition, the programme promotes grievance resolution within communities, which keeps reintegrated individuals from returning to the insurgency. APRP strengthens governance by using provincial and district structures to deliver projects to communities and, as a result, increases the legitimacy of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA). Additionally, APRP-funded Community Recovery projects provide benefit to former insurgents and their communities in the form of small infrastructure grants, “cash for work,” vocational training, and agriculture development programmes, all of which contribute to economic sustainability.

APRP policy is developed at the national level through the HPC and JS. The HPC advises the Afghan president on matters of APRP policy, directs the JS, and provides outreach to execute the programme. The HPC organisation is led by a Chairman and is comprised of 70 representative leaders; elders, politicians, and scholars, civil society representatives, including women.

At the executive level, the JS coordinates all strands of the APRP, enabling technical implementation and financial support to the provincial and district levels of the programme. The JS regularly works with participating security ministries (Ministry of Defence, Ministry of the Interior, and the National Directorate of Security) in support of the security lines of operation within the programme.

PPCs and PJSTs execute the APRP at the provincial level. The PPCs coordinate among provincial representatives from GIROA ministries and religious and tribal elders in support of the APRP. Each PJST has a staff of five to handle unit management, outreach support, demobilisation, community recovery and development, and administration and finance.

At the programmatic level, HPC/APR has so far been able to reintegrate more than 9500 ex-combatants and collected more than 9000 arms and weapons. Through its Community Recovery initiatives, the programme delivered more than 2000 projects. These projects have been implemented through two different schemes: line ministries (Ministry of Public Works, Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs, and Disabled, Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, Independent Directorate of Local Governance, Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock) and Small Grants Programme.

Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF)

www.artf.af

The ARTF was established in 2002 to provide a coordinated financing mechanism for the Government of Afghanistan's budget and national investment projects. Twelve years later, the ARTF is the largest single source of on-budget financing for Afghanistan's development. It is also the World Bank's largest single recipient multi-donor trust fund.

The ARTF is now one of the most important delivery mechanisms for channelling aid to the government's core budget, not only for salaries and operating costs but also for priority development programs aimed at achieving the country's national development targets. The Afghan government encourages donors to channel funding through the ARTF rather than through NGOs or other actors, because it sees the ARTF as a way of increasing Afghan ownership of the reconstruction process, facilitating the tracking and coordination of aid and increasing transparency. When donating funds to the ARTF, donors are able to specify a preference for supporting a particular government project or program; such preferences are limited to 50 per cent of an agency's annual contribution.

The ARTF is supported by 33 donors and administered by the World Bank. As of November 22, 2014 a total of \$8 billion had been contributed and \$6 billion disbursed. ARTF funding priorities are outlined in the ARTF Financing Strategy, which is developed in close consultation with government and endorsed by donors.

The ARTF governance structure has three levels:

1. A Steering Committee representing all donors (co-chaired by the Minister of Finance and the World Bank) meets quarterly for broad consultations.
2. Planning is guided by various working groups including the Strategy Group, the Gender Working Group and the Incentive Program Working Group.
3. A Management Committee (chaired by the World Bank – members include Islamic Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, United Nations Development Program and Ministry of Finance) reviews technical proposals and makes decisions on particular allocations.

The ARTF's position as an important hub through which donors can channel funding for the government's budget and investment programmes has led to the ARTF being seen as an essential platform for discussions on important issues within the development sphere.

ARTF allocations are made through two sections or "windows": the Investment Window and the Recurrent Cost Window. The Investment Window provides financing for national priority programs (NPPs) within key sectors. The Recurrent Cost Window contains two parts: baseline recurrent

cost financing and the Incentive Program (IP), an incentive-oriented program that supports the formulation and implementation of new policies aiming at improved financial sustainability.

The Incentive Program consists of three methods:

- Revenue Matching Grant: Incentivises improved revenue performance
- Structural Reform Scheme: Supports formulation and implementation of reform-oriented actions within Public Financial Management; Governance and civil service reform; Investment Climate and Trade Facilitation; and Sub-National Finance
- The Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Facility: Incentivises increased spending for O&M and improved fiscal flows to provinces.

Monitoring Arrangements: ARTF-financed investment projects are prepared and supervised in the same manner as International Development Assistance (IDA) and therefore benefit from the Bank's solid fiscal responsibility framework. Additional controls include an ARTF Monitoring Agent (accounting firm), which reviews the entire civilian operating budget for eligibility under the Recurrent Cost Window; and the ARTF Supervisory Agent (NGO), which monitors performance under key investment projects (community-driven development, rural roads, education and irrigation). This is done through smart phones, satellite imagery and innovative technology.

Afghanistan's Renewable Energy Sector

www.red-mew.gov.af

The strategic goal of Afghanistan's energy sector is to provide energy services to the whole population of Afghanistan. The Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS) has set the target of providing access to electricity to the rural population by 2020 and providing high quality services to all rural areas by 2050. The strategic goal of the related Afghan power sector is to provide power to the population throughout Afghanistan by 2032. Currently 28% of Afghan households are connected to power supply systems. The connection rate in provinces differs widely ranging from zero in rural areas to nearly 100% in urban areas. To achieve the goal of providing power for all of Afghanistan, a large investment effort in all sub-area infrastructures is needed for generation expansion, transmission reinforcement and development.

The Renewable Energy Department (RED) is the main department responsible for all renewable energy project related work in Afghanistan. The RED works closely with other line ministries and departments so that renewable energy projects in Afghanistan proceed in accordance with the Afghanistan National Energy Policy and the Energy Strategy of the Ministry of Energy and Water. The vision of the Renewable Energy Department is "to provide access to energy services that are efficient, affordable and environmentally sustainable for all people and all economic sectors in Afghanistan."

In Afghanistan, the renewable energy resources that offer the greatest opportunity are hydro, solar, wind, biomass and geothermal sources, but all remain largely untapped. A reliable and cost-effective power supply of sufficient quality and quantity is an important aspect for the sustainable development of Afghanistan for the following reasons:

- Improved access to energy
- Increased security of supply
- Equitably improved socio-economic conditions for people
- Reduced negative environmental effects
- Rapid implementation
- Access to funding and market mechanisms

Currently, no renewable energy sources contribute to the national grid in Afghanistan: all existing renewable energy source projects are off-grid as mini grid and stand-alone except a 3 kW solar PV grid-tie system in the RED building which has recently been installed as a pilot project. Renewable energy systems can be integrated into the national energy system in three different configurations, namely:

- Centralised energy systems with energy conversion in megawatt-scale power stations or bio-energy refineries.
- Decentralised energy or mini grid systems with energy conversion at a smaller scale for decentralised electricity networks or biofuel/gas distribution systems.
- Stand-alone systems at watt- and kilowatt-scale for direct conversion of renewable energy into hot water, lighting, cooking, etc.

In the past 13 years about 5,200 renewable energy projects producing around 50 MW of electricity were implemented in different parts of Afghanistan, mostly micro hydro power (MHP) and solar projects such as 15 wind monitoring towers erected in several provinces to test the wind potential in Afghanistan.

Recently the Renewable Energy Department has developed a website and database containing all relevant information on renewable energy in Afghanistan, such as maps, suppliers and information on projects. The department has also created a renewable energy magazine with two quarterly issues printed so far. The magazine provides easily accessible information as well as a place for local renewable energy manufacturers, suppliers and service providers to promote and advertise their businesses.

The Renewable Energy Department helped establish the Renewable Energy Union, composed of renewable energy products manufacturers, suppliers and service providers from all around the country, to coordinate and promote energy saving solutions while having a voice in the future of the sector. The Renewable Energy Department, in collaboration with development agencies and international organisations, regularly organises workshops, conferences and training courses focusing on awareness raising and knowledge sharing in the field of renewable energy and energy efficiency.

In December 2012, the Renewable Energy Department in association with MRRD and with financial support of GIZ Energy programme established the Rural Energy Coordination Committee (RECC) and its Technical Working Group (RECC-TWG) to collaborate on a range of products and challenges that will standardise the implementation system for rural energy systems, and benefit the rural population in Afghanistan to improve their living conditions.

Afghanistan Rural Enterprise Development Program (AREDP)

www.aredp-mrrd.gov.af

The Afghanistan Rural Enterprise Development Program (AREDP) is a national government-led and multi-donor funded programme aiming to jumpstart and facilitate private sector growth in rural Afghanistan. The programme aims at strengthening the private sector by establishing an integrated value chain using top-down knowledge-based interventions, bottom-up community enterprise development, and by addressing credit and capital needs.

Estimated at \$88 million, the AREDP is managed through the AREDP Program Management Office within the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development. The programme was officially initiated in June 2010. AREDP is national in scope and operation and builds on other development initiatives of the GfRoA, donors, private sector MFIs, national and international stakeholders.

Regional and Provincial Offices

AREDP is based in Kabul and is currently operational in Parwan, Bamiyan, Nangarhar, Herat, Balkh and Kandahar.

Areas of Expertise, Experience and Involvement

AREDP seeks to increase employment, the income of rural residents (men and women), and the sustainability of targeted local enterprises. The key principals of the AREDP are supporting market orientation, sustainable businesses, improving coordination, building partnerships, facilitating client decisions, sharing best practices and vertical integration. AREDP has two programme components and one functional or support component.

- **Community Based Enterprise Development:** this aims at creating Savings Groups, Enterprise Groups, and Village Savings and Loans Associations, which are assisted and trained to build their own financial capacities, increase the value of trading, ensure production is oriented toward identified market opportunities and create credit access.
- **Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) Development:** this aims at supporting the emergence of a stronger SME sector with improved trading links to the rural economy and adequate access to financial services. The project identifies key value chains, “choke points” and skill gaps in each province, and enables SMEs to gain access to the technical support necessary for market development.
- **Project Management Support:** this aims at planning, managing, supervising and monitoring the implementation of all programme activities, as well as providing research and technical support services.

Basic Package of Health Services (BPHS)

The Afghan Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) in 2003 launched the Basic Package of Health Services (BPHS) in collaboration with the World Bank, USAID and the European Commission as major funders. The BPHS has two objectives:

- To provide a standardised package of health services, which forms the core of service delivery in all primary healthcare facilities.
- To promote a redistribution of health services by providing equitable access based on population density.

The BPHS provides basic services at low cost and addresses the main causes of morbidity and mortality, with emphasis on conditions that affect women and children. In line with Afghanistan's Millennium Development Goals, the BPHS aims to provide health services to all citizens, especially in remote, rural and disadvantaged communities. In agreement with its major donors, MoPH has contracted the delivery of BPHS to NGOs in 31 out of 34 provinces and to its own Provincial Health Offices in the three remaining provinces.

Six levels of facility offer the defined package:

- Health posts
- Health sub-centres
- Mobile health teams
- Basic health centres
- Comprehensive health centres
- District hospitals

The BPHS also provides standards for staffing and infrastructure reconstruction and rehabilitation for these facilities, and has introduced primary eye care, private psychosocial counselling and physiotherapy as a result of a 2010 revision of the BPHS.

Calendars in Afghanistan

Three calendar systems are used in Afghanistan:

- The Hijrah-i-Shamsi (solar Islamic) calendar is Afghanistan's official calendar, in use officially since 1922 and re-established in the current Constitution (month names differ from the Iranian or Persian forms). In 2015 the Afghan year begins on 1 Hamal 1394 (21 March 2015).
- The Hijrah-i-Qamari (lunar Islamic) calendar, used for religious events and holidays.
- The Gregorian calendar, or Miladi (solar Christian), used in international relations.

The website www.nongnu.org/afghancalendar provides downloadable versions of Afghanistan's official calendars. To convert dates between Qamari and Gregorian years (or to Persian dates using Iranian names) see:

www.fourmilab.ch/documents/calendar

www.iranchamber.com/calendar/converter/iranian_calendar_converter.php

Central Statistics Organization (CSO)

www.cso.gov.af

Established in 1973, the Central Statistics Organization (CSO) was declared an independent body by Presidential Decree in March 2006. The CSO is the central government agency responsible for the collection and dissemination of official statistics. The CSO collects and analyses data from other government entities on population and demographics, national accounts, price indexes and external trade. This is used for monitoring economic, financial and structural policies, as well as other activities.

Staff

CSO has 774 employees; 668 male and 106 female.

Regional and Provincial Offices

The CSO is headquartered in Kabul with sub-offices in all 34 provinces.

Areas of Expertise, Experience, and Involvement

The work of the CSO is grouped into ten major departments: economic statistics, demographic and social statistics, national accounts, operations, publication and dissemination, strategic planning and donor relations, administration, internal evaluation and audit, staff training centre, and a secretariat.

According to Article 8 of the Statistics Law (2006 Official Gazette no. 874), the CSO has the following duties and responsibilities:

- To collect, compile, analyse and publish statistical information relating to the commercial, industrial, financial, social, economic, environmental and general activities and condition of the people
- To collaborate with Ministries and administrations of the state in the collection, compilation and publication of statistical information, including statistics derived from their activities
- To prevent duplication of the information collected by Ministries and governmental administrations or by other non-state agencies
- To promote and develop integrated social and economic statistics throughout the country and to coordinate unified plans for their integration
- To develop and prescribe appropriate classifications and standards for use by line Ministries and other state administrations
- To progressively develop and maintain appropriate databases containing statistical information and to facilitate access to the databases for all users, except for confidential information as provided for in law
- To decide on the manner in which data for statistical purposes is collected, how it is compiled, and when and how reports and official statistics are published

The CSO produces:

- The Afghanistan Statistical Yearbook

- The Consumer Price Index Yearbook
- The Afghanistan Trade Statistical Yearbook (a publication focused on foreign trade)
- The Estimated Population of Afghanistan (with data on gender and rural-urban residence at the provincial and local levels)
- A quarterly volume on foreign trade statistics
- The monthly Consumer Price Index (CPI) and daily updates consumer price indexes in Kabul and Jalalabad

Current and future projects: conduct the nationwide census, conduct socio-economic and demographic surveys in the provinces, create a CSO database and complete a survey on living conditions for the years 2014 and 2015.

The CSO reports directly to the President and is advised by the National Statistics Committee and the National Census Committee (established temporarily to conduct the national census). Both committees include representatives from various ministries and from the private sector. CSO publications are generally printed in Dari, Pashto and English, with information updates regularly reported on the CSO website. All organisations planning to conduct statistical research in Afghanistan are required by law to coordinate their activities with the CSO.

Clusters and National Priority Programmes (NPPs)

The Government of Afghanistan (GoA) proposed a realignment of ministries into “clusters” at the 2010 London Conference to prioritise the implementation of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS). This was related to themes discussed at the conference regarding national stability, job creation and economic growth, as well as representative and accountable governance.

The government held ministerial-level meetings and consultations to develop clusters and their associated National Priority Programmes (NPPs) and then presented a work plan for various cluster groups at the 2010 Kabul Conference. The rationale for clusters and NPPs includes: enhanced monitoring and evaluation and an integrated approach to budget policy forming.

As of December 2012, following a number of revisions, 22 NPPs were organised into six clusters:

- Security: Peace and Reintegration.
- Governance: economic and financial reforms, National Transparency and Accountability Programme, Efficient and Effective Government, Local Governance, Law and Justice for All, Human Rights and Civic Responsibilities.
- Human Resource Development: facilitation of sustainable decent work through skills development, education for all, expanding opportunities for higher education, capacity development to accelerate the National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA) implementation and Human Resources for Health.
- Agriculture and Rural Development: National Water and Natural Resource Development Programme, National Comprehensive Agriculture Production and Market Development Programme, National Rural Access Programme and Strengthening Local Institutions.

- Infrastructure Development: National Regional Resource Corridor Initiative, National Extractive Industry Excellence Programme, National Energy Supply Programme and National Urban Delivery Programme.
- Private Sector Development: Integrated Trade and Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) Support Facility and E-Afghanistan.

Counter-Narcotics (MCN)

www.mcn.gov.af

The politically and economically destabilising effects of poppy cultivation in Afghanistan have been recognised by both the Government of Afghanistan (GoA) and the international community. In recent years the Ministry of Counter-Narcotics (MCN) has intensified its counter-narcotics (CN) efforts, encouraging the national and international development ministries to strengthen and diversify licit rural livelihoods. The MCN also supports a variety of ministries and initiatives, including the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs, the Ministry of Interior, the National Directorate of Security, the Counter-Narcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA) and the Afghan National Police (ANP) in their efforts to pursue traffickers and eradicate opium crops where farmers have viable alternatives.

However, “Opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan reached a sobering record high in 2013. According to the 2013 Afghanistan Opium Survey, cultivation amounted to some 209,000 hectares, outstripping the earlier record in 2007 of 193,000 hectares, representing a 36% increase over 2012. Moreover, two provinces that had previously been declared poppy-free, Faryab and Balkh in Northern Afghanistan lost this status. All in all, opium production in 2013 went up to some 5,500 tonnes, a 49% increase over 2012” (UNODC 2013).¹

Experience, Areas of Expertise and Involvement:

Recognising counter-narcotics as a crosscutting issue, the MCN oversees policy, strategy, implementation and coordination of all counter narcotics related activities. The Ministry works closely with several partners, including the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Agriculture Irrigation and Livestock, the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Finance, and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, UK, USA and other international partners as defined in the Afghanistan National Development Strategy and the 2006 National Drug Control Strategy. There are two institutions designed to enforce CN legislation, both of which fall under the Deputy Minister of Interior for Counter-Narcotics: the Counter-Narcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA) and the Afghan Special Narcotics Force. The 2,500-troop strong CNPA is the primary agency responsible for coordinating counter narcotics law enforcement, as well as detecting and investigating significant drug-trafficking offences. International bodies, such as the National Interdiction Unit and the Sensitive Investigation Unit, advised by the US Drug Enforcement Agency, mentor various central units of the CNPA. The Afghan Special Narcotics Force carries out interdiction operations throughout Afghanistan, working closely with the CNPA. Counter-narcotics training is also provided to the ANP, including the Border Police.

1 UNODC (2013) ‘Afghanistan Opium Survey 2013

Consultative Loya Jirga

In 2013 President Hamid Karzai convened a Consultative Loya Jirga (Grand Council), to consult with elders and heads of tribes, civil society organisations (CSOs) and members of Parliament (MPs) about the proposed Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) with the United States which would legalise its future military presence in Afghanistan. The agreement had been negotiated for over a year, which occasionally turned into public mudslinging between the respective governments.

Convening jirgas is a longstanding tradition within the Afghan political context. However, using them at the national level is relatively new.

“The Loya Jirga developed as a state institution, but it harked back to large jirgas that Pushtun tribes had held in earlier centuries, when these tribes constituted both the main military force and, in effect, [were] the electors of the king. During periods of turmoil when Afghans recognised no legitimate ruler, such jirgas had taken key national decisions. Drawing on these precedents, Zahir Shah’s followers had developed a proposal for an Emergency Loya Jirga (ELJ) as a first step to reconstituting state power.”²

Barfield argues, that in the recent political history of Afghanistan, the leaders have used jirgas as a political tool, claiming that jirgas are only convened when the president needs public approval for his policies. The invitees were usually supportive of the policy.³

The jirga held on 22 November 2013 was, however, slightly different. Unlike the previous ones, the 2,500 invitees, subdivided into 50 committees, debated the Strategic Agreement for three days with the outcome being that all 50 committees unanimously voted to sign the agreement, stating that it would be beneficial for the Afghan people to have a close and friendly relationship with the United States. Small amendments such as restricting US troops from conducting house searches were suggested, all of which were adopted in the final draft.

The Loya Jirga strongly advised President Karzai to sign the document before the end of 2013, as had been suggested by US officials. President Karzai, however, overruled the proposed date and stated that the agreement would have to be signed by the next Afghan President to be elected in April 2014. It was eventually signed by the new Afghan President Ashraf Ghani on 30 September 2014.

Development Assistance Database (DAD)

www.dadafghanistan.gov.af/

With the support of UNDP, the Ministry of Finance established the Development Assistance Database (DAD) in June 2002. This web-based database aims to provide up-to-date information on all projects that fall within the national development budget, as well as some extra-budgetary projects. The database stores detailed information about the location of development projects, who is financing them and which organisations are involved in their implementation. The DAD relies on the provision of data from development project funders and implementers, including government organisations, development partners and UN agencies. The database is available in English and Dari.

² Rubin, B. (2004) *Crafting a Constitution For Afghanistan*, page 7.

³ Barfield, T. (2009) *A Cultural and Political History*, 295.

The DAD was originally designed to track the flow of aid and record the progress of development and humanitarian projects around the country. It still serves this purpose; however, as the government of Afghanistan works towards developing a more robust budget, the DAD is also used as a budget formulation database. In June 2012, the DAD was upgraded to a sixth version and some of the modules, such as data entry forms, were simplified to ensure the system is more user-friendly and works faster on the web.

Elections - 2014

Afghanistan held its third nationwide Presidential and Provincial Council elections on 5 April 2014, with a runoff election two months later between the two leading candidates, Dr Abdullah Abdullah and Dr Ashraf Ghani. Following a lengthy post-election period of electoral dispute and uncertainty, Ghani was declared the winner on 21 September 2014, after a power-sharing deal was agreed on by both candidates. This resulted in the formation of a National Unity Government (NUG) that included Abdullah in the newly created position of Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Abdullah led the initial election but could not secure the required 50%+1 vote margin, thus necessitating a runoff election against Ghani, who had the next highest amount of votes. However, preliminary results of the second election on June 14 placed Ghani firmly in the lead, prompting Abdullah to level accusations of fraud and conspiracy. This in turn led to several months of impasse as Abdullah refused to accept the results. An audit was ordered but both parties could not agree on the details until US Secretary of State John Kerry flew in to broker a deal for a complete audit of all votes cast to be carried out under the supervision of the United Nations (UN). A week later the two sides still had not been able to decide on criteria for the audit, so the UN stepped in to implement their own.

After a second visit by Kerry, both candidates reaffirmed their commitment to the results and to the creation of a national unity government but a few weeks later Abdullah pulled out of the process, citing fraud and lack of input. Despite this the audit continued, albeit minus representatives from either camp to ensure fairness. Eventually, after much negotiating, criteria were decided on and the audit was completed. On 21 September, more than five months after the initial votes were cast, Ghani was declared the winner and a power-sharing agreement signed by both parties. President Ghani was officially sworn into office on 29 September 2014, with Abdullah in the position of CEO, similar to that of a prime minister.

For many Afghan citizens, going to the voting centers was a repeat experience of previous elections in 2004 and 2009; however, turnout was higher for this round of voting than in previous years with slightly more than seven million votes cast compared to over four million in the 2009 presidential election. This election was also much more meaningful as this was the first time in the history of Afghanistan that power was transferred through peaceful and democratic means from one elected president to the next. Former President Hamid Karzai was not able to seek re-election for a third consecutive term, having already completed the maximum two terms in office as per Article 62 of the Constitution.

Despite an increase in violence during the period leading up to the initial election, millions of Afghans turned out at the polls as an act of defiance against the Taliban. The weeks before the first round of voting were punctuated by two attacks on Independent Election Commission (IEC) offices in Kabul, among other high profile events. Violence spiked on the day of the election but despite fears, there were no major attacks in cities and little disruption to the election process itself.

Regardless of mixed efforts from national and international agencies, manipulation of electoral structures and processes has not been eradicated fully. Following both polls there were accounts of fraud by multiple parties. Ultimately slightly more than 800,000 votes were invalidated but despite claims to the contrary there was no evidence of the kind of widespread fraud on a massive scale necessary to influence the results.

Another element that affected the election was the growing number of young voters in Afghanistan, as the population's composition has shifted with around fifty percent of Afghans estimated to be under the age of 20. However, political representation in elections is dominated by older individuals as persons running for presidency cannot be under 40 years of age, as set out in the Constitution.

Eleven candidates, including former government officials, competed to become the new president of Afghanistan, with some having closer ties to President Karzai and some coming from the opposition front. Female representation was limited to only one woman running to be a second vice-president.

Candidates for offices in Provincial Councils were also on the ballot and were just as significant for Afghans living in the provinces. Through this election voters chose their local representatives who then work closely with the provincial administration. One person is elected to represent the province in the Upper House of the parliament for a term of four years. Each Provincial Council consists of 7 to 31 seats based on the population of the province, and of those seats at least one quarter is reserved for women.

Government Media and Information Centre (GMIC)

www.gmic.gov.af

The Government Media and Information Centre (GMIC) was founded by Presidential decree in 2007 as an Afghan-led entity to respond to the information needs of the Afghan public, media and other national and international stakeholders. The GMIC aims to build trust among the Afghan public and other stakeholders through: the provision of timely and accurate information, continuous and consistent dissemination, facilitation of coordination and information sharing among acting agencies in the Afghan government and independent media and capacity building for government information and communication portals.

The GMIC's four programme departments serve the goals of the centre:

- The Capacity Building Department (CBD) is building communications capacity in Afghan government communications offices and develops and conducts educational activities linked to the needs of the Afghan government
- The Media Relations Department (MRD) works to develop and implement a comprehensive communication and coordination system in which information producing and distributing entities take an active part and enhance the flow of information to and from the Afghan public and other stakeholders
- The media monitoring area analyses print and electronic media, and provides news and analysis of important national and international events affecting Afghanistan to senior government officials

- The Public Outreach Department (POD) is the awareness-raising unit within GMIC's structure. POD aims at developing a nationwide information collection and dissemination network through which the Afghan public and other audiences are informed about the progress of the Government of Afghanistan (GoA).

Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission (IARCSC)

www.iarcsc.gov.af

In May 2002, an independent Civil Service Commission was established as required by the Bonn Agreement; it was set up to lead the Government of Afghanistan (GoA) process for public administration reform. Its responsibilities were subsequently amended and extended by two Presidential decrees in June 2003, and the Commission was renamed the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission (IARCSC).

The Commission's work is aimed at building a public administration in Afghanistan that is:

- a legitimate, non-political, stable, service-oriented and accountable civil service in the framework of good governance, having the ability to use public resources more effectively and efficiently for basic services delivery, enhancement of revenues and supporting the development of the private sector for national economic and social development.
- able to provide leadership, strategic direction and expertise in the management of the civil service and to support the development of a strong, effective and efficient system of public administration.

Regional and Provincial Offices

The commission currently has seven regional offices, 34 provincial offices and 27 training centres.

Areas of Expertise, Experience and Involvement

The Commission is composed of the following units:

- Civil Service and Management Department
- Administrative Reform Secretariat (ARS)
- Civil Service Institute
- Independent Appointments Board
- Independent Appeals Board

Currently the commission is implementing a large capacity building project in coordination with MoF called Capacity Building for Results Facility (CBRF), which is a multi-donor funded project administrated by the World Bank. The IARCSC's other main donor during the past year was USAID.

Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG)

www.idlg.gov.af

The Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG) was established on 30 August 2007 pursuant to a decree by the President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. IDLG was created with the mandate of transferring civilian responsibilities of the Ministry of Interior to an independent entity. Furthermore, in accordance with the Presidential decree the responsibility of supporting the Provincial Councils was delegated to IDLG, making it the only entity responsible for local governance.

IDLG prepared its Strategic Framework in October 2007 and prepared and presented its strategic work plan in March 2008.

The strategic plan has divided the responsibilities of IDLG into four major sections: policy development, institutional development (including public administrations reform, capacity building, improving infrastructure, supporting municipalities, reducing corruption and drawing roadmaps and administrative boundaries), comprehensive governance activities (including support for governance development, the fight against opium in the provinces, increasing participation of people in government affairs and conducting relationships with elected entities), and a supporting unit for facilitation in effective implementation of national programmes in the subnational level.

IDLG has been established with the objective of a positive change in the people's life through the provision of good governance at the subnational level. Accordingly, the mandate of this office is the provision of good subnational governance and consolidating peace and stability and putting efforts in a balanced development and economic growth in the country.

The National Priority Programme for Local Governance (NPPLG) has four key components, each with several sub-components and indicators. This plan was endorsed by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and international development partners in 2012 as the only credible and comprehensive document for subnational governance for a period of three years (2012 - 2014). All priorities and activities for local governance and commitments of the international community have been envisioned in accordance with this plan, with IDLG taking the lead. IDLG has recently conducted a strategic review of their strategy, structure and main functions, to allow for a more comprehensive subnational governance reform agenda for 2015.

As a result of IDLG efforts with strong support of its national programmes funded by the international development partners, the national priority programme for local governance has been implemented with more than 65% progress so far.

Subnational Governance Policy Implementation Framework: information and awareness campaigns have been conducted in national and local levels to raise the level of understanding and awareness in regard to the implementation framework of sub-national governance policy in cooperation and participation of the relevant ministries and administrations led by the IDLG.

Legislative Reform: the Local Administration law has been prepared and endorsed by the Ministry of Justice and the Legislative Committee of the Cabinet and has been sent to Parliament for approval. The law for Provincial Councils has been revised and after endorsement by relevant entities and the cabinet, it has been approved by Parliament. The new law on municipalities has been prepared and is under revision by the Legislative Committee of the Council of the Cabinet.

Reform in Subnational Finance and Planning: IDLG has supported and played a significant role in the formulation of the provincial budgeting policy prepared by the Ministry of Finance. Meanwhile, a policy on local planning mechanisms is being drafted by IDLG with support from the Ministries of Finance, Economy and Rural Rehabilitation and Development and will be submitted to the Cabinet for approval purposes.

Infrastructures and Facilities for Provinces and Districts: One of its programmes, called the Afghanistan Local Government Facility Development Programme (ALGFDP), has contracted 254 projects since its establishment, out of which 167 are completed so far. These projects are mainly administrative and residential buildings for provinces, districts and provincial councils of various provinces, including several large and small infrastructure projects that have been completed for the Islamic Cultural Center in Ghazni province. The projects are mainly comprised of provincial and district administration complexes, provincial conference halls, provincial guest houses. This programme has also supplied vehicles and office equipment to provincial and district governors' offices.

Public Administration Reform: a total of 18 deputy provincial governors have been recruited through a merit-based process, bringing the total number of deputy provincial governors to 32. In 2013 126 district governors were recruited through this process. Therefore, a total of 234 district governors were recruited and 15 district governor positions have been advertised. Twenty directors for the central departments and provinces have been recruited and the pay and grading system has been launched in 11 municipalities of the country. The progress of implementation of pay and grading system in the centre and provinces reached 88%, in accordance with the approved structure of IDLG.

Support to Cross-Cutting and National Issues: The IDLG's Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme (APRP) has facilitated and coordinated peace and reintegration activities in the centre, provinces and districts. IDLG's APRP functions as a bridge between the IDLG and the secretariat of the High Peace Council to ensure long term support of provincial governors, district governors, and local entities for peace and stability. A framework for devolution of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) has been developed and a working committee has been established to dissolve the PRTs with the cooperation of the relevant ministries. IDLG cooperated and traveled with the Transition Coordination Commission to various provinces to assess the transition process and also supported and facilitated the fourth and fifth rounds of transition process in the provinces.

IDLG's Programmes Portfolio Management: The IDLG's Directorate of Coordination and Local Programmes Development facilitates and manages IDLG's programmes funded by various donors to strengthen local governance: Afghanistan Subnational Governance Programme (ASGP), Afghanistan Local Government Facility Development Programme (ALGFDP), Strengthening Provincial Administration and Delivery (SPAD), Regional Media Information Centers (RMICs), Stability in Key Areas (SIKA) and Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme (APRP). In addition, the Directorate of Coordination and Local Programmes Development provides support to the UN agencies, international organisations, national and research organisations to implement varied projects and programmes by providing technical support and connecting them with officials in provinces and districts.

Subnational Governance Forum: The IDLG's Directorate of Coordination and Local Programmes

Development facilitates a quarterly subnational governance forum where government agencies functioning in the area of local governance meet with the international community to make decisions, coordinate and share information on important governance issues. UNAMA serves as co-chair and all the organisations and institutions with a direct or indirect stake on issues of subnational governance can participate.

Mineral and Hydrocarbon Resources

A 2010 geological survey conducted by the Pentagon estimated the value of Afghanistan's mineral reserves deposits at \$1 trillion, while other estimates have reached as high as \$3 trillion. Afghanistan has two presently known world-class mineral deposits—the copper deposit at Aynak and iron ore at Hajigak. Afghanistan also has potential for gold and gemstones. In the mining sector there are no large commercial scale mines, although some smaller state-owned coal mines do constitute the highest payer of taxes among government enterprises nationwide. The Ministry of Mines and Petroleum (MoMP) has estimated that by 2024 mineral extraction will be supplying between 42-45% of Afghanistan's GDP.

In 2009 the Government of Afghanistan (GoA) signed the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), a global voluntary standard designed to increase transparency in revenue flows between mining, oil and gas companies, and the government, which monitors and publicises the revenues which the GoA receives from companies and the payments companies make to the government. GoA has made efforts since the signing to adopt these standards in the Afghan mining sector and in October 2012 published details of over 200 mining and hydrocarbon contracts on the Ministry's website. The government has also published two documents on mineral resources: The Hydrocarbon and Mineral Sectors Vision, and the National Extractive Industries Excellence Programme. These outline a strategy for a dynamic, transparent mining sector that will help stabilise the Afghan economy, reduce reliance on international aid and have wide-ranging positive downstream effects on the Afghan people.

Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India signed the TAPI Gas Pipeline Agreement in 2010. It is estimated to be one of Afghanistan's largest development projects and will transport 33 billion cubic metres of natural gas per year from Turkmenistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan ending in India. About 735 km of the 1,753 long pipeline will go through Afghanistan.

The World Bank is currently running the Second Sustainable Development of Natural Resources Project, a five-year \$52 million project due to run until June 2016. In 2012 the MoMP launched the Afghan Compressed Natural Gas industry to provide Afghan consumers with cheaper and cleaner domestically-produced alternatives to petrol and diesel for vehicles and power generation.

Foremost among a number of major contracts, two tenders have been granted to foreign companies to begin extraction in Afghanistan. In 2008, mining rights for the Aynak copper deposit were negotiated with a consortium led by the Metallurgical Corps of China (MCC). As part of their bid, MCC agreed to:

- Build a copper smelting plant.
- Produce 250,000 tons of copper per year.
- Construct 900km of rail infrastructure.

- Develop a 400 megawatt coal-fired power plant.
- Pay royalties to the GoA.

In 2011, tenders for the Hajigak iron ore deposits were granted to Kilo Goldmines of Canada and to a consortium led by the Steel Authority of India (SAI). SAI stated that they planned to invest \$11 billion in Afghanistan to develop extraction, build a steel plant, a power plant and construct rail infrastructure.

The Qarazaghan gold mine in Baghlan province was contracted out in January 2011 to a joint venture of Afghan Krystal Natural Resources (AKNR) and Central Asian Resources (CENTAR). The investment for the 10-year exploration and exploitation contract amounts to \$50 million.

In December 2011, the GoA continued its drive to expand the mineral exploitation sector, opening the tender process for four large copper and gold concessions in the provinces of Herat, Sar-i-Pul, Ghazni and Badakhshan, and signing its first international oil production agreement in several decades. In an agreement with the China National Petroleum Corps and Watan Group allowing the development of oil deposits in the Amu Darya Basin, in the provinces of Sar-i-Pul and Faryab.

In October 2013, MoMP signed a multi-year oil exploration and production contract with an international consortium of energy companies for two deposits of the Afghan-Tajik oil and gas basin in Northern Afghanistan. In December 2013 the MoMP conducted a competitive bidding process for a chromite concession located in the Char Asyab district of Kabul province.

National Budget

www.budgetmof.gov.af

Each year the government of Afghanistan (GoA) produces a national budget, which is an estimate of the cost of providing services for that year and specifies how these services are to be paid for. The Afghanistan Fiscal Year (FY) starts by 01 Jaddi and ends on 30 Qaws of each Solar year (22 Dec – 21 Dec of Gregorian year).

The national budget for the 1394 (2015) fiscal year is AFs 458.751 billion, the equivalent of approximately \$8.048 billion, which is 7% higher than FY 1393's beginning budget. The national budget is funded from three sources: domestic revenue, donor assistance and loans. For FY 1394, out of the total budget \$2.323 billion (29%) was funded by domestic revenues and \$5.652 billion (70%) by donor assistance, leaving a deficit of 1%.

Expenditures are classified according to its purpose. The ordinary budget is the money spent on the day-to-day running costs of the government such as the salaries of civil servants, teachers, national army and policemen; the running costs of offices and other operational premises; and the purchase of equipment and machinery such as computers and vehicles. Most of these expenditures are funded from taxation and other domestic sources/revenues. The total operating budget for FY 1394 is \$4.838 billion.

Alongside the ordinary budget is the country's internal or "core" development budget, managed by the Ministry of Finance (MoF) according to the government's own accounting procedures. This money is spent by the government on expanding and improving service provision. Most of these expenditures are in the form of development projects, i.e. building new schools and universities, constructing new roads, installing new water supply and sanitation schemes, supporting and developing agriculture and enhancing the capacity of human resources. The total core development

budget for FY 1394 is \$3.210 billion.

National Solidarity Programme (NSP)

www.nspafghanistan.org

The National Solidarity Programme (NSP), currently in its 11th year and third phase (NSP III), is recognized as the largest development initiative in Afghanistan and the second-largest Community Driven Development programme in the world. The programme aims to build local governance and provide basic infrastructure in all rural communities in the country. In the face of transition, the objective of NSP III is to build, strengthen and maintain Community Development Councils (CDCs), as effective institutions for local governance and socio-economic development.

The NSP aims to achieve its objectives through four core elements:

- Establish CDCs through democratic elections.
- Build the capacity of elected CDCs to handle basic governance functions and address community development needs.
- Provide block grants to CDCs for community-prioritised infrastructure subprojects that fall under the public goods or productive infrastructure categories.
- Promote links between the CDCs (as elected community representatives) and other governance and development actors at various levels.

The Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) implements the NSP through a project implementation unit involving headquarters and 34 provincial management units. The NSP considers CDCs as its primary implementers. CDC establishment, capacity building, and technical assistance have been outsourced to over 30 national and international firms serving as the NSP's Facilitating Partners (FPs).

The NSP has been implemented in three phases:

Phase I (2003-2007): contracted FPs to cover 17,300 communities with a first round of block grants.

Phase II (2007-2011): contracted FPs to cover another 5,880 communities with a first round of block grants.

Phase III (2010-2016): contracted FPs to cover another 13,909 communities with a first round of block grants and another 11,844 existing communities with a second round of block grants.

The subprojects financed in the NSP are mostly rural infrastructure and may broadly be classified under the following sectors:

- Transport 23,214
- Water and Sanitation 20,811
- Irrigation 18,578
- Power 8,174
- Education 6,711

- **Miscellaneous 8,432**

By September 2016, the NSP aims to have worked with a total of 37,089 communities with a first round of block grants and a total of 11,844 communities with a second round of block grants. This will then include the establishment of 37,089 CDCs and the financing of around 90,000 subprojects for a total block grant of \$1.78 billion. The NSP estimates that this will then cover around 90 percent of all rural communities in the country.

The NSP total budget is \$2.5 billion for the period from May 2003 to September 2016. It receives funding from four primary sources; the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF), the World Bank's International Development Association (IDA), the Japanese Social Development Fund (JSDF), whose funds are managed by the World Bank and bilateral donors. The donors include Australia, Belgium, Canada, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Finland, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the USA and the European Union/Commission.

Water Resources

The majority of Afghans rely on subsistence farming for survival, conservation of water resources is vital. Rural communities rely on sufficient precipitation to irrigate crops.

Annually, Afghanistan receives around 2,775 cubic meters of water per capita, comfortably above the 1,700 cubic meters per capita threshold considered necessary to satisfy a population's water needs. However, this significant quantity of water is not uniformly distributed across the country. For instance, the Northern river basin contains only 3% of the country's water volume, giving an average of 676 cubic meters per capita for the region—close to the water scarcity threshold of 500 cubic meters per capita.

The lack of water storage capacity makes Afghanistan highly vulnerable to inter- and intra-annual variations in water availability. The construction of dams started in 1950 but Afghanistan was never able to complete the work due to the instability caused by decades of conflict. In general, the country's water infrastructure remains highly underdeveloped; the majority of the country's 12 reservoirs were constructed between 1920 and 1940 and currently Afghanistan has one of the lowest water storage capacities in the world. According to the most recent figures, Afghanistan also has the world's lowest average access to sanitary water; in 2007 this figure was 26.8 percent.

Population and economic growth, as well as improving living standards will drive up the volume of water needed in the country—it is projected that by 2025 the volume of available water per capita will have declined by 36 percent relative to the quantity available in 2004. This has particularly worrying implications for expanding urban areas—it is estimated that by 2050 Kabul will require six times the volume of water it currently uses. Without accompanying economic modernisation, this trend could pose a significant long-term threat to food security throughout the country.

With the water sector seen as a key part of achieving Afghanistan's Millennium Development Goals, a Water Sector Strategy was created under the infrastructure pillar of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS). Water also features prominently in other sector strategies such as agriculture, energy, the environment, and rural and urban development. With regards to

water governance, efforts have mainly focused on developing policies and strategies such as the Water Sector Strategy 2008 and the Water Law 2009 (Official gazette no. 980). The Strategy's short-term goals, such as extending access to sanitary water to 90 percent of villages were due to be completed in 2010. Medium term goals, such as the reform and development of legal and governance structures in the water sector were to be completed by 2013. And long term goals, such as the rehabilitation of existing water infrastructure and the construction of new infrastructure are to be completed by 2023 and beyond.

Non-Governmental Organisations and Civil Society

Afghan Civil Society Forum-organization (ACSFo)

www.acsf.af

The Afghanistan Civil Society Forum-organisation (ACSFo)—formerly ACSF—is a network of Afghan civil society actors and groups. It provides a platform for dialogue and aims to develop and strengthen the role of civil society in political decision-making processes. ACSFo was founded at the Afghan Civil Society Conference held in parallel with the Bonn Conference in 2001. ACSFo was initially supported by the Swiss Peace Foundation and has been an independent local entity since January 2006. Its vision is a democratic, dynamic and vibrant society based upon the values of civil society. ACSFo's mission is to facilitate the process of civic education, good citizenship and state building through capacity building, civic education and coordination. ACSFo's goal is to foster the development of a diverse, inclusive and united civil society.

ACSFo has 342 members, including 172 organisational and 170 individual members; there are also 322 partners for capacity building, civic education and advocacy, research, coordination and peace building.

Regional and Provincial Offices

ACSFo has a main library and a resource center in the Kabul head office and maintains civic education resource centres in the following regional offices: Bamiyan, Samangan, Ghor, Kunduz, Mazar-i-Sharif, Jalalabad, Parwan, Kandahar and Gardez.

Areas of Expertise, Experience and Involvement

From 2002-05, ACSFo supported the implementation of the Bonn Agreement and conducted educational, media and advocacy activities on the constitution-making process, as well as carrying out civic education and registration campaigns for the 2004 presidential and 2005 Parliamentary elections. Since 2005 ACSFo has modified its approach, moving away from public outreach towards support for institution building.

In 2011 ACSFo facilitated and organised the APRP conference in Afghanistan. The aim of the conference was to gather civil society activists, local community representatives and other relevant stakeholders in order to discuss the issue of peace and re-integration in Afghanistan.

ACSFo also initiated and passed the first ever law in the history of Afghanistan for the disabled. The disability law is now recognised as the only tool for advocating the rights of disabled.

Afghan Development Association (ADA)

www.ada.org.af

The Afghan Development Association (ADA) is a non-government, non-profit and non-political organisation. It promotes and provides development and humanitarian related services to the people of Afghanistan. ADA is one of Afghanistan's largest NGOs focusing on promoting long-term sustainable development. Through training and development programmes, ADA empowers participants to become agents of change. Additionally ADA works with partners to carry out local activities and research, providing insight into consultation processes and multi-stakeholder dialogues.

ADA has long standing relationships with target communities and is working in geographic regions where insecurity has kept most other development organisations away. Its programmes aim to enable communities to become increasingly self-reliant and economically stable.

Staff

ADA has 745 paid staff, including 85 female staff.

Regional and Provincial Offices

Nangarhar, Laghman, Parwan, Kapisa, Panjshair, Paktika, Faryab, Kunduz, Takhar, Zabul, Kandahar, and Uruzgan Provinces.

Areas of Expertise, Experience and Involvement

ADA seeks new and effective ways to maximise its impact by utilising the resources and ideas of all those who can make a difference. ADA has implemented a total of 255 projects since 2002 and is currently implementing 14 projects. ADA's experience and expertise areas are:

- Agriculture and Rural Development
- Capacity Building and Training (vocational training, income generation, micro credit and business competitiveness)
- Education (child and youth protection and development, formal and informal education)
- Environmental Protection (climate change mitigation and climate change adaptation)
- Advocacy and Social Research
- Surveying and Agricultural Engineering
- Peace Building and Conflict Resolution
- Gender and Human Rights
- Good Governance, Counter Narcotics and Anti-Corruption
- Emergency and Community Based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM)

Afghan Midwives Association (AMA)

www.afghanmidwives.org

The Afghan Midwives Association (AMA) was formed in May 2005 with the support of the USAID-funded ACCESS and Health Services Support Projects. The AMA is the technical body for midwifery education, professional development and policies that enable every midwife in Afghanistan so midwives can practice the highest level of care for the mothers and newborn of the country.

The Association's mission is for the midwifery profession to be recognised as an autonomous and distinct profession in the country and to strengthen the capacity of midwives and advocate for work and policy-conducive environment so that midwives can provide high quality midwifery services according to the International Confederation of Midwives code of ethics and core competencies to women, newborns and families in Afghanistan.

The AMA began with only 15 members and formally joined the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) in November 2005. Since then, the AMA has grown to more than 3,000 professional midwives and student members from 34 provincial chapters.

Increasing donor support has steadily expanded the number of AMA-implemented activities to raise awareness for safe motherhood and to improve the quality of midwifery education and health service provision. The AMA is the biggest professional association advocating for safe motherhood and spearheading the formulation of a national regulatory body for midwifery and nursing to save the public by regulating the profession, setting educational standards as well as professional development of midwives.

The AMA is a member of key national and international forums. AMA is an active member of the Human Resource Development Task Force, National Reproductive Health Task Force, the Maternal Newborn Health committee, Afghanistan Midwifery & Nursing Education and Accreditation Board, Afghan Women's Network and Secretariat for National Nursing and Midwifery Steering Committee. Similarly, at regional and international level AMA is an active member of the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM), White Ribbon Alliance (WRA) for safe motherhood and female empowerment and a member of the Asia Midwifery Regional Resource Centre.

The AMA has had many great achievements in promoting the role of the midwife in Afghanistan since 2005, and the greatest of these achievements is evident in the face of every midwife proud to call herself a 'Qabilah.'

Afghan NGOs Coordination Bureau (ANCB)

www.ancb.org

The Afghan NGOs Coordination Bureau (ANCB) was founded in 1991 and aims to coordinate the activities of Afghan NGOs with the Afghan government, the UN, international organisations and donor agencies. ANCB facilitates workshops, seminars and partnerships to enhance the capacity of its 200 member organisations.

ANCB membership is restricted to Afghan NGOs. Applications are considered and approved by the 15-member Board of Directors elected for one year by the General Assembly.

ANCB Staff

ANCB has 20 employees; 4 are female as is 1 volunteer.

Regional and Provincial Offices

ANCB has headquarters in Kabul and satellite offices in Nangarhar and Maidan Wardak.

Areas of Expertise, Experience and Involvement

ANCB convenes monthly member meetings on topics such as health, education, agriculture, sanitation, reconstruction and government policy. It also arranges seminars and training courses aimed at building the technical capacity of member NGOs in needs assessments, management, finance, administrative development, human rights, democracy, legal awareness, and report and proposal writing.

Under the Afghanistan Civil Society Support Initiative (ACSSI) project ANCB runs a capacity building program for CSOs/NGOs in 10 provinces (Kabul, Nangarhar, Laghman, Kunar, Paktia, Paktika, Khost, Logar, Ghazni and Wardak).

The modules are: Anti-corruption/Advocacy, project management, finance/accounting and report and proposal writing.

ANCB provides Internet facilities for its members at the ANCB office and produces a directory of all its members.

ANCB is a member of the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), the World Civil Society Forum (CIVICUS) and the Affinity Group of National Associations. Membership fees provide ANCB's main source of funding.

Afghan Women's Network (AWN)

www.awn-af.net

The Afghan Women's Network is a non-partisan, non-profit network of women and women's NGOs working to empower Afghan women and ensure their equal participation in Afghan society. The members of the Network also recognize the value and role of children as the future of Afghanistan and as such regard the empowerment and protection of children as fundamental to their work. The Network seeks to enhance the effectiveness of its members by fostering partnerships and collaboration between members, undertaking advocacy and lobbying, and building their individual capacities.

After the United Nations fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China, which was attended by a group of Afghan women from various organizations and UN agencies, the idea of establishing a network to promote unity and cooperation among Afghan women was formed. Inspired by women's movements in different parts of the world, in 1995 the participants along with other Afghan women decided to establish the Afghan Women's Network (AWN).

The Afghan Women's Network envisions an Afghanistan in which all members – women, children, and men – participate equally. Furthermore, the members aspire to create an Afghan community which values, respects, and encourages the tremendous capacities of women and their contributions to Afghan culture and society.

The Afghan Women's Network (AWN) is a cornerstone of Afghanistan's fledgling women's movement, serving as a well-established network for the growing number of women's organisations operating in the country. AWN has had a strong presence in Kabul, Herat and Jalalabad while also working through local partners in several Afghan provinces. AWN fulfils the function of a network of organisations as well as undertaking its own projects addressing issues such as gender-based violence, youth empowerment and girls' education.

AWN is an umbrella organisation of around 112 NGO members and 5,000 individual members who are committed to supporting Afghan women. AWN's strategic priorities are:

- Women's inclusion in peace and security
- Women's political participation
- Social and legal protection for women

Regional and Provincial Offices

Currently, AWN has eight active offices throughout Afghanistan, including the head office in Kabul, and through these the Network supports the operation of member organisations in 28 provinces.

During 2014, through generous funding from donors, AWN expanded its activities by establishing several new offices at the regional level. AWN previously had regional offices in Herat and Jalalabad and has established new regional offices in Kunduz, Mazar-i-Sharif, Bamiyan, Kandahar and Paktia that also cover neighbouring provinces.

Areas of Expertise, Experience and Involvement

In 2012, the AWN supported two women delegates to participate in side events at the NATO Chicago Summit and developed a response to the communiqué. The AWN also introduced a female speaker to address the Tokyo Conference in July 2012. The AWN maintains a library and internet cafe for use by women's NGOs and the AWN's website allows member organisations to submit activity reports as well as access training and other resources online.

By monitoring the implementation of UNSCR 1325, AWN has been in a position to conduct evidence-based advocacy for women's inclusion in the peace process at the decision-making levels, nationally and internationally. Besides advocacy, AWN also engaged in capacity building activities with Afghanistan's High Peace Council members while also participating in the development of the National Action Plan (NAP) for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 in Afghanistan, which is due to be released by the end of 2014.

AWN believes that women's political participation is essential to building a democratic society. However, AWN is also aware that women's socio-economic empowerment is key to their increased political participation. To this end, the network has been contributing to the empowerment of women to overcome social and cultural barriers preventing them from participating equally in society.

During 2014, this support was mainly achieved through the facilitation of trainings, networking and lobbying activities. One of the key achievements of AWN in the field of women's political participation was its nationwide 'Our Vote Our Destiny' campaign, which is believed to have contributed to the high female voter turnout during the presidential and provincial council elections in April 2014.

AWN's Rapid Response Initiative (RRI) that provides legal and social protection services was first established in May 2012. RRI is mainly focused on providing legal aid through AWN's member organizations. The RRI also informs the advocacy efforts of AWN to improve women's access to their rights and to justice. The RRI unit has recorded and managed more than 906 emergency violence against women (VAW) cases since its inception. According to the procedure of RRI, all VAW cases that reach the unit are referred to those members that offer legal aid services, conduct advocacy at the national level, and follow up with cases that have been referred to the justice officials.

Afghanistan Analysts Network (AAN)

www.aan-afghanistan.com

The Afghanistan Analysts Network (AAN) is an independent non-profit policy research organisation. The organisational aim is to bring together the knowledge and experience of a large number of experts to better inform policy and increase understanding on Afghan realities. It is driven by engagement and curiosity and is committed to produce analysis on Afghanistan and the region which is independent, of a high quality and evidenced-based.

Since its founding in 2009 AAN's publications have informed and influenced the work of policymakers, journalists, academics and development workers. AAN's analysts are regularly asked to address conferences and provide briefings around the world and frequently appear as commentators in the media.

AAN has a permanent office in Kabul staffed with national and international researchers as well as a wider network of contributors with expertise in the fields of Afghan politics, governance, rule of law, security and regional affairs. AAN regularly publishes in-depth thematic reports, policy briefings, discussion papers and dispatches. All publications are available on the AAN website.

Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce & Industries (ACCI)

www.acci.org.af

Established in 1931 as the Commercial Arbitration Association by Afghan traders to integrate their business activities and defend their rights, the Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce & Industries (ACCI or "Chamber") is an independent organisation serving the advocacy and business facilitation needs of a burgeoning private sector economy.

The vision of the ACCI is to be the leading voice of a dynamic, competitive, and rapidly growing Afghan private sector. The ACCI seeks to accomplish this mission by providing leadership and services to foster an enabling private sector environment that generates employment and creates wealth for local and international businesses.

After being reformed and privatised in 2008, ACCI has more than 62,000 members with 93 business associations, unions, and cooperatives as well as 12 business councils and affiliates overseas.

The chamber law of 2009 ensured that the ACCI is an independent and democratic organisation regulated by the state. This approach allows for close co-operation between the public and private sectors and enables the creation of a self-regulated business sector throughout the country.

In order to achieve its vision and implement its mission, ACCI has adopted four strategic objectives in the next five years.

- Consolidate ACCI as the premier voice of business and economic development in Afghanistan.
- Win the confidence, support and participation of businesses in every sector of the economy and represent their interests in a reliable and sustainable manner, in accordance with their membership category.

- Attain a level of influence to shape the enabling environment for doing business in Afghanistan, across its borders, and to nurture public and private strategic partnerships in the interest of economic growth and employment creation.
- Enhance and sustain organisational, managerial, technical, and financial capacity of the chamber system by establishing clear roles and functions in its structure and operation at national, regional and provincial levels.

Staff

309 staff (21% female, 79% male).

Areas of Expertise, Experience and Involvement

ACCI provides the following services:

- Advocacy and Interest Representation
- Investment and Trade Promotion
- Business Development Services
- Legal Services and Arbitration
- Research and Surveys
- Issuance of Carnet TIR

Afghanistan 2015 Humanitarian Response Plan⁴

On 26 November 2014, the government of Afghanistan and the humanitarian community launched the 2015 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP).⁵ The Plan aims to provide principled life-saving food, health, nutrition, water and sanitation assistance to some 3.8 million most vulnerable Afghans; with a focus on insecure, under-served and hard to reach areas. The response will prioritise the most vulnerable, namely; conflict and natural disaster affected and displaced, acutely food insecure, malnourished children and pregnant and lactating women, refugees (Pakistani and Afghan returnee refugees), and Afghan returnees. To achieve this, the Afghanistan 2015 Humanitarian Response Plan requires \$405 million.

Three strategic priorities inform the 2015 HRP:

Strategic Priority 1: Reduce excess morbidity and mortality, including maternal and child, and acute malnutrition, through support to basic health care services in high vulnerability areas; provision of food and nutritional assistance; support to safe delivery services for pregnant women; and water, sanitation and hygiene activities.

Strategic Priority 2: Reduce conflict-related deaths and impairment and strengthen protection of civilians by supporting stabilisation and advanced trauma care facilities and referral mechanisms, and mine clearance action.

Strategic Priority 3: Timely response, including lifesaving assistance, to meet the needs of highly vulnerable internally displaced by conflict or natural disaster persons, as well as the needs of Pakistan refugees, Afghan refugee returnees and undocumented vulnerable returnees. This

⁴ Formerly known as the Common Humanitarian Action plan

⁵ The Afghanistan 2015 Humanitarian Response Plan can be found at: <http://bit.ly/15LWQX0>

priority will focus on effective preparedness and contingency planning for responding to conflict and natural disaster affected communities. It builds upon a resilience-focused approach, emphasising preparedness, early action and the goal of moving towards national ownership of response. The incorporation of specific outputs around preparedness and contingency planning will ensure a more proactive, preparatory approach that strengthens national risk analysis, capacity mapping and development of emergency response tools and coordination mechanisms, which ultimately enable rapid and effectively coordinated mobilisation of resources as and when required.

The humanitarian strategy revolves around five key elements:

- Advocating durable solutions
- Coordinating action
- Rigorous prioritisation
- Securing access
- Emergency preparedness

A cyclical humanitarian response is neither dignified for people in need nor cost-effective for donors. Addressing the fundamental fragilities that make Afghanistan one of the poorest countries in the world is critical to systematically reducing the burden of people in humanitarian need. Progress is needed in four key developmental areas to break the cycle of humanitarian dependence, including an effective and responsive health care system, durable solutions for internally displaced persons and refugee returnees, water management, and Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM).

Afghanistan Institute for Strategic Studies (AISS)

www.aiiss.af

Founded in October 2012, the Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies (AISS) is an independent non-profit institute dedicated to providing qualitative, non-partisan, and policy-oriented research, as well as publications, translation of books, professional training programmes and policy advocacy on Afghan governance for the government, Parliament, civil society and private sector. The AISS aims to provide an informed intellectual space for dialogue among and between stakeholders including Afghan, regional and international partners. Empowering and investing in Afghan youth is a crosscutting priority.

The AISS furthers its mission by:

- Generating research
- Entering partnership agreements with respected and like-minded research institutes
- Publishing books and journals
- Translating books and articles from English into Dari and Pashto, and vice versa
- Organising national and international seminars, conferences, workshops and briefings

- Offering executive leadership training programmes
- Integrating conventional, social media tools and networks in all its activities

Areas of Expertise, Experience and Involvement

- Democratic state-building process
- National security
- Sustainable economic development
- Regional cooperation/integration
- Strategic partnerships between Afghanistan and the US/West
- Islamic renaissance
- Khorasan of ideas (national/regional cultural integration/renewal)

Afghanistan Public Policy Research Organisation (APPRO)

www.appro.org.af

The Afghanistan Public Policy Research Organisation (APPRO) is an Afghanistan-based, non-profit, independent social research organisation with offices in Kabul, Mazar-i-Sharif, Herat, Kandahar, and Jalalabad. APPRO promotes social and policy learning to benefit development efforts in Afghanistan. To this end, APPRO seeks to fill gaps in the knowledge of existing policy-making processes and build on that knowledge through social scientific research to deliver evidence-based recommendations in a pragmatic and practical manner. This approach is aimed at generating critical, as well as constructive, dialogue on development.

Staff

APPRO has an Executive Director, a Director of Research, a Director of Communications, 5 Research Project Managers, a Finance and Administration Manager and a number of researchers and service staff. The total number of staff is 30; the gender ratio is approximately 35% female to 65% male.

Areas of Expertise, Experience and Involvement

APPRO works in three areas: Applied Research, Training, and Evaluations. Research areas are: Governance, Political Economy, Rights and Development, and Natural Resource and Environmental Management. Training is provided for a wide range of governmental ministries and non-government organizations on the policy process, monitoring and evaluation, applied research methods, budget tracking, and advocacy. Evaluations are carried out on demand by a number of national and international organisations with programs and projects in Afghanistan. The current portfolio of projects is roughly divided between gender related issues (50%), governance issues (30%), and socio-economic issues (20%). This trend is likely to continue in 2015.

Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief (ACBAR)

www.acbar.org

The Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief and Development (ACBAR) is an umbrella organisation that promotes transparency and accountability in addition to facilitating coordination among NGOs in Afghanistan. ACBAR was founded in 1988 by NGOs working with Afghan refugees in Pakistan and acts as a conduit for information among the UN, NGOs, donors and the Government of Afghanistan (GoA). Among its funders are Japan (Peace Winds Japan) and Tawanmandi and its NGO members. ACBAR has a membership of 128 national and international NGOs. All applicants are vetted and are required to sign the Afghanistan NGO Code of Conduct. The General Assembly of ACBAR members meets twice a year and the 16-member steering committee (12 full and 4 alternates) has monthly meetings in Kabul. The chair of the committee is always Afghan, while other members are representatives of both Afghan and international NGOs.

Regional and Provincial Offices

In addition to its main office in Kabul, ACBAR has sub-offices in Jalalabad and Mazar-i-Sharif.

Areas of Expertise, Experience and Involvement

ACBAR organises its work along four lines:

- The Information/Coordination team is responsible for disseminating information, organising meetings, keeping records of NGO activities across the country, maintaining an NGO Directory, and other communication initiatives.
- The Advocacy and Policy team facilitates the exchange of views and information among NGOs to help them “develop and sustain a joint, field-led voice on key issues as they develop.”
- The Code of Conduct officer is responsible for promoting and monitoring good governance practices among NGOs, and capacity-building among NGOs as well as line ministries/departments on laws relevant to NGOs, the code of conduct and ‘Sphere’ standards.
- The Civil Society and State Institutions Interaction team is responsible for working jointly with other NGO/Civil Society networks to structure and strengthen civil society organisations and to build relationships with the government and parliament.

ACBAR also assists in the nomination of NGO representatives to government-led inter-agency coordination mechanisms, and regularly advises NGOs on NGO laws and regulations, labour law, income tax law, human rights in conflict and women’s rights from Islamic perspectives. ACBAR represented the NGO community at the Afghanistan Development Forum in 2004, 2005 and 2007, and NGOs and civil society at the 2008 Paris Conference, the 2009 Hague Conference, the 2010 London Conference, the National Consultative Peace Jirga and Kabul Conference. ACBAR also facilitates the Civil Society Consultation Board, which interacts with the GoA and UNAMA.

The Centre for Conflict and Peace Studies (CAPS)

www.caps.af

Based in Kabul, the Centre for Conflict and Peace Studies (CAPS) was founded in 2006 as an independent research centre to conduct action-oriented research aimed at influencing policy makers in key areas including: governance, counter-narcotics, conflict resolution and peace building, with a primary focus on Afghanistan and the region.

CAPS is committed to offer and facilitate research, training and knowledge exchange on conflict, people, and cultures, as well as violent groups in Afghanistan and the region. CAPS aims to reduce the threat of political violence and seeks to assist in the development of a sustainable environment supportive of peace and stability. To this end, CAPS engages in research and policy analysis, education and training, and capacity building and knowledge expansion. The core focus of CAPS is on the research and analysis of security issues, which is subsequently disseminated to government officials, members of the international community, and other stakeholders through regular briefings and reporting. The Centre also organises regular conferences, workshops, seminars and briefings, as well as training courses on Afghan and regional history, culture, warfare and insurgency.

Civil Society and Human Rights Network (CSHRN)

www.cshrn.af

The Civil Society and Human Rights Network (CSHRN) was founded in 2004 by 25 Afghan organisations and aims to enhance respect for human rights in Afghanistan through the establishment of a strong human rights movement.

CSHRN's 124 member organisations work individually and collectively to advocate for human rights (including women's rights), freedom of speech, press freedom and the rule of law. Working to facilitate and maintain a dialogue with state institutions, the CSHRN organises debates between member organisations, state institutions and traditional leaders. CSHRN has an experienced pool of trainers who have developed a range of training manuals specifically tailored to the Afghan context, focusing on human rights, conflict transformation, transitional justice, women's rights, international human rights mechanisms, UNSCR 1325 and strategic planning. The CSHRN uses the media to educate and promote a human rights discourse with its own quarterly magazine, Angaara, and a weekly radio program, The Voice. CSHRN also features in Killid magazine and on local radios in Mazar-i-Sharif and Herat. Additionally, CSHRN carries out issue-based and policy-based advocacy projects. CSHRN's vision is a society based on democracy and the rule of law in accordance with human rights, and a society where all people are aware of their rights and able to claim them through the rule of law.

Staff

The total number staff working in the secretariat is 31, including 9 support staff. Of the 22 staff involved in administrative and managerial issues, 8 are female.

Regional and Provincial Offices

CSHRN is headquartered in Kabul, with provincial offices in Jalalabad, Mazar-i-Sharif, Bamiyan, Khost and Herat.

Areas of Expertise, Experience and Involvement

Member organisations constitute the CSHRN General Assembly, the overall policy and decision-making body of the network. A Steering Committee of eleven elected members ensures that CSHRN activities adhere to the agreed standards and strategy.

The current programme provides services for member and partner organisations under five strategic key result areas:

- Coordination services
- Capacity building (thematic and institutional capacity building programmes)
- Monitoring of human rights situation jointly with member organisations
- Public awareness programmes
- Issue based and policy based advocacy

For the transition period, CSHRN has developed Humanitarian Law Educational Manual and would like to work with the Red Cross to conduct joint training workshops for national security forces. The aim is to decrease civilian casualties during operations executed by national forces.

Cooperation for Peace and Unity (CPAU)

www.cpau.org.af

Cooperation for Peace and Unity (CPAU) is an Afghan non-governmental organisation that has worked in Afghanistan since 1996. CPAU works with peace and justice-related issues supporting local communities and the Afghan government throughout the country. CPAU's vision is to create a culture of peace and a world free of discrimination and violence of any nature, in which everyone has the right to basic needs, social justice, and dignity. CPAU's mission is to facilitate the process of peace-building and sustainable social development by mobilising and building capacities through a participatory approach that builds cooperation, trust and the transformation of conflict.

Regional and Provincial Offices

CPAU HQ is in Kabul with five sub-offices around the country, including an office and an FM radio station in Parwan province. CPAU has mobilised communities and is currently working in Badakshan, Takhar, Kunduz, Baghlan, Faryab, Jawzjan, Sar-i-Pul, Balkh, Kabul, Kapisa, Wardak and Ghazni.

CPAU has further conducted research projects in Uruzgan, Helmand, Kandahar, Nangahar, Kunar, Bamiyan, Daikundi, Herat, Farah, Ghor, Logar, Paktia, Paktika, Khost and Parwan. CPAU retains networks of contacts with persons of influence and local governance structures in all of the above. For a detailed overview of CPAUs areas of operation please visit: <http://cpau.org.af/project-history.html>.

Areas of Expertise, Experience and Involvement

CPAU incorporated its two-decade long experience of social change into media training, capacity building and educational programmes. Because of CPAU's media capacities and through their sister organisation, Twan Media Productions, the radius of CPAU's outreach throughout the country is extensive and sustainable. CPAU also runs its own FM radio stations with four different frequencies in eight provinces, and the network is expanding rapidly. Most of CPAU's peace-building programmes include a strong element of communications, advocacy and education. CPAU currently runs a national advocacy and awareness programme covering all 34 provinces of Afghanistan.

Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (CHA)

www.cha-net.org

Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (CHA) is a non-profit humanitarian organisation founded in 1987. Its strategic aims are to reduce poverty and vulnerability, ensure fair distribution of resources, facilitate reliable social and economic development, and ensure the basic rights of the citizens of Afghanistan. Its sister organisations are the Organisation for Human Resources Development (OHRD), Saba Media Organisation (SMO) and Watch on Basic Rights Organisation (WBRO). CHA's vision is to be an effective, reliable, inventive and pioneering organisation in the field of community development and vulnerability reduction.

Staff

Currently CHA has 1,942 Afghan technical and support staff working on various projects focused mainly in rural areas. Females make up 493 staff members (25%) with the remaining 1,431 male. CHA plans to increase female employment to 30% in the future.

Regional and Provincial Offices

CHA began its operations in just two districts of Farah Province, but soon expanded its activities into ten additional provinces: Kabul, Kandahar, Helmand, Nangarhar, Balkh, Herat, Ghor, Faryab, Parwan and Kapisa. CHA is one of the largest national NGOs in Afghanistan.

Areas of Expertise, Experience and Involvement

The organisation is currently active in six main strategic fields:

- Health and nutrition
- Education and cultural affairs
- Agriculture and livestock
- Community development and social protection
- Disaster risk reduction and emergency response
- Gender mainstreaming

CHA has been able to increase the size of its projects, coverage areas and the diversity of its activities as a partner of donors and the government of Afghanistan. Donors include Oxfam-Novib, Norwegian Church Aid, USAID, the EU, the World Bank, UNHCR, IOM, Caritas Germany, WFP, the

Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL), the FAO, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe, the Asia Society, the Ministry of Public Health and the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development.

Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES)

www.fes-afghanistan.org

The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) was founded in 1925 as a German non-profit organisation committed to the ideals of social democracy. It is the political legacy of Germany's first democratically elected president, Friedrich Ebert. To this day FES follows his mission to promote freedom, solidarity and social justice through the political process in Germany and abroad. FES has been working in Afghanistan in cooperation with local organisations and civil society since 2002.

FES encourages the promotion of democracy and support for building an active civil society, as well as the promotion of international cooperation, dialogue and partnership. It facilitates the exchange of experts and knowledge (national, regional, international), and contributes to capacity building in the realm of youth networks and organisational development.

FES' programs aim at strengthening democratic institutions from local to national level, increasing the political participation of youth, enhancing women's empowerment and gender equality, promoting free and professional media, social justice in the formal and informal economy and regional cooperation for peace and development.

FES Afghanistan is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development.

Regional and Provincial Offices

FES Afghanistan's office is located in Kabul.

Heinrich Böll Stiftung (hbs)

www.af.boell.org

The Heinrich Böll Stiftung (hbs) is part of the Green political movement that has developed worldwide as a response to the traditional politics of socialism, liberalism, and conservatism. The main tenets of the Heinrich Böll Stiftung are ecology and sustainability, democracy and human rights, self-determination and justice. The hbs places particular emphasis on gender democracy, meaning social emancipation and equal rights for women and men, and is also committed to equal rights for cultural and ethnic minorities and to the societal and political participation of immigrants. Finally, the Heinrich Böll Stiftung promotes non-violence and proactive peace policies.

The Heinrich Böll Stiftung is a catalyst for green visions and projects, a think tank for policy reform, and an international network. The hbs has 160 project partners in over 60 countries and currently maintains 29 international offices.

Since 2003 the Heinrich Böll Stiftung has been actively involved in post-conflict reconstruction in Afghanistan. The foundation promotes democratisation in Afghanistan through active citizenship, equal participation of men and women and through its environment programs. Moreover the hbs wants to contribute towards domestic and regional stability and security towards a sustainable development process through people's active participation.

Funding for hbs in Afghanistan comes from Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany (BMZ).

Staff

There are 12 people working at the hbs Afghanistan office; two are female.

Regional and Provincial Offices

The Heinrich Böll Stiftung (hbs) has a main office in Kabul but works closely with Afghan civil societies in Kabul, Balkh, Herat, Jawzjan, Sar-i-Pul, Bamiyan and Logar through civic education programmes, generation of discussion forums, creating dialogue platforms, coordination, cooperation and networking for social and political change.

Areas of Expertise, Experience, and Involvement

The Heinrich Böll Stiftung focuses on three main areas:

- Ecology, natural resource governance and sustainable development
- Foreign, Peace and Security Policies through promoting civil society and youth engagement
- Democratisation promoting gender democracy and women's rights.

Current hbs projects: raising awareness around mining sites, providing support to natural resources and monitoring networks, debating environment issues, empowering young afghan civil society actors, youth engagement in policy reform, Afghan youth and transition, family law advocacy, transitional justice, and research projects on energy (water & gas) issues focusing on energy as tool for regional stabilisation and regional cooperation.

Future projects will involve: implementation of environment related policies, sustainable use of natural resources, democratisation, women's political participation & youth, women in the peace process, transitional justice, and shared regional energy resources for stabilisation.

The Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (MEC)

www.mec.af

The MEC was created after the need for independent monitoring and evaluation of anti-corruption efforts was expressed at the London and Kabul international conferences. Following the London Conference, the Government of Afghanistan (GoA) invited the international community to form a joint Afghan-international monitoring and evaluation committee.

The MEC is independent of the GoA and the international community. MEC's terms of reference include the following mandates:

- To develop anti-corruption recommendations and benchmarks.
- To monitor and evaluate the efforts by government and the international community to fight corruption.
- To report to the President, Parliament, the people and international community.

Every six months, MEC submits a report of its assessments and findings of the agreed-upon benchmarks to the President, Parliament and people of Afghanistan through the media.

Areas of Expertise, Experience and Involvement

- Developing anti-corruption recommendations and benchmarks
- Monitoring and evaluation of implementation of recommendations
- Monitoring the implementation of anti-corruption related articles of Presidential Decree 45
- Vulnerability to corruption assessments (VCAs)
- Consultation and outreach
- In 2012 MEC conducted a public inquiry into the Kabul Bank crisis

Integrity Watch Afghanistan (IWA)

www.iwaweb.org

Integrity Watch Afghanistan (IWA) is an Afghan civil society organisation committed to increase transparency, accountability, and integrity in Afghanistan.

The mission of Integrity Watch is to put corruption under the spotlight through community monitoring, research, and advocacy. IWA mobilises and trains communities to monitor infrastructure projects, public services, courts, and extractive industries. Additionally, IWA develops community monitoring tools, provides policy-oriented research, facilitates policy dialogue, and advocates for integrity, transparency, and accountability in Afghanistan.

Integrity Watch was created in October 2005 and established itself as an independent civil society organisation in 2006.

Staff

Approximately 90 staff members and 700 volunteers, 82.5% male and 17.5% female.

Regional and Provincial Offices

IWA is headquartered in Kabul, with provincial programmatic outreach in Badakhshan, Balkh, Bamiyan, Herat, Kabul, Kapisa, Logar, Nangarhar, Parwan, Panjshair, Samangan, and Wardak.

Areas of Expertise, Experience and Involvement

IWA has four programme pillars:

- Community-Based Monitoring
- Public Service Monitoring
- Extractive Industries Monitoring.
- Community Trial Monitoring

Integrity Watch has two crosscutting units: the Research Unit and the Communications and Advocacy Unit. These are established to have an impact on policy-making at the macro level. These units update and expand existing knowledge on corruption, accountability, transparency and integrity through research on aid effectiveness, perceptions of corruption and experiences with corruption.

IWA is a member of various related groups:

- Network for Integrity in Reconstruction
- Global Movement for Budget Transparency, Accountability and Participation
- Task Force on Financial Integrity and Economic Development

International Crisis Group (ICG)

www.crisisgroup.org

The International Crisis Group is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organisation committed to preventing and resolving deadly conflict. Crisis Group was founded in 1995 as an international non-governmental organisation on the initiative of a group of well-known transatlantic figures who despaired at the international community's failure to anticipate and respond effectively to the tragedies in the early 1990s of Somalia, Rwanda and Bosnia. They were led by Morton Abramowitz (former US Ambassador to Turkey and Thailand, then President of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace), Mark Malloch-Brown (former head of the UN Development Programme, then UN Deputy Secretary-General and UK Minister), and its first Chairman, Senator George Mitchell. The idea was to create a new organisation unlike any other, with a highly professional staff acting as the world's eyes and ears for impending conflicts, and with a highly influential board that could mobilise effective action from the world's policymakers. The International Crisis Group is today generally regarded as the world's leading source of information, analysis and policy advice on preventing and resolving deadly conflict.

The biggest source of funding for Crisis Group is governments, which contribute 47% of funding. Institutional foundations make up 30% of donations, while individual and corporate donations account for 23%.

Staff

Crisis Group's analysts are drawn mostly from experienced former diplomats, journalists, academics and NGO staff, often leading world experts in their areas. Of 116 positions on 1 February 2014, 63 were based in the field in 26 locations. Others worked from the Brussels head office and other key regional offices. The organisation also has offices or representation in the following locations: Abuja, Bangkok, Beijing, Beirut, Bishkek, Bogotá, Cairo, Dakar, Gaza, Islamabad, Istanbul, Jerusalem, Johannesburg, Kabul, London, Mexico City, Nairobi, New York, Seoul, Tbilisi, Tripoli, Tunis and Washington, DC.

Areas of Expertise, Experience, and Involvement

Security, politics, governance.

1. Expert field research and analysis.

Crisis Group's credibility is founded on its field-based research. Our analysts are based in or near many of the world's trouble spots where there is concern about the possible outbreak of conflict, its escalation or recurrence. Their main task is to find out what is happening and why, identifying the underlying political, social and economic factors creating the conditions for conflict, as well as the more immediate causes of tension. They find the people who matter and discover what or

who influences them. And they consider the actual and potential role for other countries and inter-governmental bodies like the United Nations, European Union and African Union.

2. Practical, imaginative policy prescriptions.

Crisis Group's task is not merely to understand conflict but to prevent, contain and resolve it – which means identifying the levers that can be pulled and those who can pull them, whether political, legal, financial or ultimately, military. Some of these prescriptions require action by the national government or local actors; others require the commitment of other governments or international organisations. These policy prescriptions, along with our field-based research and analysis, are presented in succinct, timely and readable reports.

3. Effective, high-level advocacy.

Identifying the problem and the appropriate response is still only part of the story. All too often the missing ingredient is the “political will” to take the necessary action. Crisis Group's task is not to lament its absence but to work out how to mobilise it. That means persuading policymakers directly or through others who influence them, not least the media. That in turn means having the right arguments: moral, political, legal and financial. And it means having the ability to effectively deploy those arguments with people of the right credibility and capacity. Crisis Group's board is instrumental in giving us access at high levels of governments.

All of the research by Crisis Group is publicly available at www.crisisgroup.org. Download papers related to Afghanistan for free at <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/asia/south-asia/afghanistan.aspx>.

International NGO Safety Organisation (INSO)

www.ngosafety.org

The International NGO Safety Organisation (INSO) is a non-profit, non-governmental humanitarian organisation registered in the UK. INSO Afghanistan, formerly known as the Afghanistan NGO Safety Organisation (ANSO), provides free security/safety information and advice exclusively meeting the needs of the NGO community in Afghanistan. Funding for INSO comes from the European Commission, the Humanitarian Aid Office, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Regional and Provincial Offices

INSO Afghanistan is headquartered in Kabul and has regional offices in Mazar-i-Sharif, Herat, Jalalabad and Kandahar.

Areas of Expertise, Experience and Involvement

Non-profit NGOs registered with INSO have access to regularly scheduled services, which include:

- Daily threat warnings and security alerts, weekly incident listings, fortnightly and quarterly reports analysing and projecting security trends
- Weekly regional security meetings
- Monthly orientations for NGO staff

- Representation of NGOs in relations with national and international security agencies
- Training of guards and radio operators

Upon request, depending on available capacity, INSO may also provide other services including:

- Countrywide safety information for NGO movement
- Organisation-specific security advice
- Reviews of member NGOs' security plans and site security
- Security-related statistical data and analysis
- Crisis response services including liaison and referral assistance

International Psychosocial Organisation (IPSO)

www.ipscontext.org

The International Psychosocial Organisation (IPSO) is a non-profit humanitarian organisation founded in Germany in 2008 and registered with the Afghan Ministry of Education (MoE) in 2011. IPSO provides and supports psychosocial care services (both directly and indirectly) to the destitute or needy, without discrimination and irrespective of race, religion, creed or political affiliation.

Areas of Expertise, Experience and Involvement

Supporting the integration of mental health and psychosocial counselling services into the public health system of Afghanistan; the aim of the project is to strengthen the Afghan public health system by training health staff, psychological counsellors, doctors and nurses working in primary and secondary health care in selected clinics in all provinces. These activities align with the National Mental Health Strategy of the Afghan Ministry of Public Health and aim to address the significant mental health burden of the population.

Promotion of peace and stability in Afghanistan through cultural dialogue and psychosocial support: this project aims to make Afghan civil society more resilient by promoting social and cultural reflection, competence and “self-efficacy” (confidence in one’s own abilities) as important factors promoting peace and reconciliation. The project builds on two earlier initiatives—Mental Health in Northern Afghanistan, and Mental Health Training in all Afghan Provinces—and integrates lessons learned from them.

Leading Entrepreneurs for Afghanistan Development (LEAD)

Leading Entrepreneurs for Afghanistan Development (LEAD) was founded by a group of leading businesswomen in Afghanistan who felt the lack of an advocacy platform to serve their interests and their role in policy making.

LEAD’s vision is to be a platform for Afghan female entrepreneurs to have national and international recognition for their contribution to sustainable economic development in Afghanistan. The mission of LEAD is to meaningfully represent and support women’s concerns and interests in the economic sector.

LEAD objectives are:

Policy

- To ensure that women's perspectives are included in economic policies and regulations.
- To lobby policy makers for better conditions for women in the economic sector.

Capacity Building

- To provide and advocate for quality learning opportunities for women in business.

Information and Awareness

- To raise awareness about current regulations, laws, procedures and rights relating to women's participation in the private sector.
- To establish an information system containing accurate and up-to-date information on economic issues related to women.

Media

Until the constitutional revisions between 1964-1973 and the relative press freedom they brought, all media in Afghanistan was run by the state. Press freedom reached perhaps its lowest point under the rule of the Taliban, which prohibited all media except for Sharia radio promoting the Taliban version of Islam and state propaganda. The most obvious feature of the Afghan media environment currently (apart from its explosive growth after the departure of the Taliban government) is its complexity and variety. In this, Afghan media institutions match Afghan society by being just as highly fragmented by ethnic, religious, linguistic, political and other identities.

After the intervention by the international coalition and transition from Taliban rule to "democracy," the media sector experienced unprecedented growth: currently there are over 70 TV stations, 180 radio broadcasters and more than 400 press publications. However, the nature of Afghan use of media channels has remained much the same: after being exposed to decades of propaganda Afghans are well aware that all media represent vested interests disseminating content for a reason.

Tensions continue to arise between the norms prevalent in much of rural Afghanistan and those that are developing in urban centres, where much of the media production or broadcasting originates. The broadcast of programming sourced from outside Afghanistan also continues to raise issues of its acceptability or not to Afghan society. In addition, the Mass Media law of 2009 restricts the publication of any material against Islamic values or damaging to national security interests, but neither of these is made more precise.

Radio Television Afghanistan (RTA) is the only truly national broadcast system but is seen as the voice of the Kabul government rather than as a national broadcaster and attracts the smallest audience. The private media are dominated by five media groups which control radio or TV channels (some run both): (1) Ariana Television Network/ATN (Ariana, Ariana International and Ariana News TVs, Ariana FM and Ariana News radios), (2) the Moby Group (Tolo, Tolo News and Lemar TVs, Arman FM and Arakozia Radios), (3) Saba Media Organization (Saba TV and Nawa radio), (4) the Killid Group (more than eight local radio stations across the country), and (5) the Noor Television Network.

Radio continues to be the major media exposure of most Afghans, particularly those outside cities, with half the population listening to radio every day.

With low literacy amongst adults print media are of limited importance although they do capture the interest of the urban intelligentsia and politically aware.

According to the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, internet access is reportedly around 7% so it is not as important as radio for Afghan media interests.

Much of the media has been co-financed by the international community. Nai, a media interest group, suggests that about 20% of current media will be dissolved once the international community withdraws from Afghanistan. Recent studies also expect a significant contraction in media activity when international funding is reduced following the 2014 troop drawdown. The weakness of the overall Afghan economy cannot support the survival of all media platforms currently in existence.

Microfinance Investment Support Facility for Afghanistan (MISFA)

www.misfa.org.af

The Microfinance Investment Support Facility for Afghanistan (MISFA) was founded in 2003 at the invitation of the Afghan government. MISFA's purpose was to get donor coordination in place from the start and avoid the counter-productive efforts that have emerged in other post-conflict situations from conflicting donor objectives. It was established so the Government of Afghanistan (GoA) and international donors could channel technical assistance and funding to build microfinance in Afghanistan.

MISFA was the first facility of its kind pooling diverse donor funding mechanisms and converting them into streamlined, flexible support for microfinance institutions. MISFA is tailored to local priorities, and provides technical assistance and performance monitoring.

In March 2006, MISFA was registered as a limited liability non-profit company, MISFA Ltd., with the Ministry of Finance (MoF), as its sole shareholder. MISFA Ltd. is an independent umbrella organisation with a select group of implementing partners on the ground. In most cases, MISFA functions as either an exclusive or primary provider of funds to its partners.

MISFA's vision is to develop a sustainable, efficient and commercialised development finance sector through the stimulation of economic growth in Afghanistan.

Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA)

www.macca.org.af

The Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA), the world's largest mine action programme, was established in 1989 to make Afghanistan safe from the threat of mines and other explosive remnants of war (ERW). After the fall of the Taliban in 2002, the Government of Afghanistan entrusted interim responsibility for mine action to the United Nations. The Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan (MACCA), which works as a coordination body for MAPA, is a United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) project contracted through the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS).

MACCA is now working together with the Department of Mine Clearance (DMC) under the Afghan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA) to develop strategies as well as implement and monitor mine action activities and targets. Together, MACCA and the DMC coordinate nationwide mine action activities through seven MACCA regional offices located in Kabul, Herat, Kandahar, Mazar-i-Sharif, Kunduz, Gardez and Jalalabad. These regional offices, staffed entirely by Afghans, are responsible for regional coordination and oversight of mine action activities.

MAPA implementing partners are national and international NGOs that carry out activities such as mine clearance and survey, mine/ERW risk education, victim assistance, capacity building, advocacy, monitoring and training. In addition, MAPA works closely with the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled, the Ministry of Public Health and Ministry of Education to advocate on behalf of persons with disabilities, including landmine survivors.

At the end of September 2014 there were 4,236 identified hazards remaining in Afghanistan, covering 512 square kilometres and impacting 1,625 communities throughout the country.

During 1392 (March 2013 – April 2014), MAPA declared 314 villages free from all known mines and ERW, clearing or cancelling 1,457 hazardous areas and destroying more than 22,763 anti-personnel mines, 1,086 anti-tank mines, and 361,596 items of ERW.

During 1392, according to the MAPA records 451 Afghans were killed or injured by mines and ERW, representing a significant decrease from a quarterly average of 507 casualties recorded in 1380 (2001).

However, the other challenge that has put civilian lives in danger is the use of pressure-plate improvised explosive devices (PP-IED) in Afghanistan. Under the terms of the Ottawa Treaty, victim-activated pressure-plate IEDs are considered anti-personnel mines. According to the UNAMA Midyear Report 2014 on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, between 1 January and 30 June 2014 UNAMA documented 308 civilian casualties (161 civilian deaths and 147 injured) from pressure-plate IEDs, representing a 33 percent increase from the same period in 2013.⁶

The most difficult issue has been securing funds. MAPA did not receive the full amount anticipated for 1392; USD 12.3 million was outstanding. If the decrease in funding continues over the next years, Afghanistan will not be able to meet its obligations under the Ottawa Conventions.

MAPA will continue to work to meet the goal of the Ottawa Convention to clear all anti-personnel mines in Afghanistan by 2023, to provide mine/ERW risk education and to assist mine/ERW survivors. However, MACCA considers it highly important that other hazards, such as explosive remnants of war, are not forgotten while the focus is on meeting Ottawa Convention obligations.

6 United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), 2014, Midyear Report on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, p. 4. Available online: http://unama.unmissions.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=m_XyrUQDKZg%3D&. Last accessed: 28 October 2014.

National Democratic Institute

www.ndi.org

The National Democratic Institute (NDI) is a non-profit, non-partisan, non-governmental organisation that has supported democratic institutions and practices in every region of the world for more than three decades. Since its founding in 1983, NDI and its local partners have worked to establish and strengthen political and civic organisations, safeguard elections, and promote citizen participation, openness and accountability in government.

NDI's purpose is to support and strengthen democratic institutions worldwide through citizen participation, openness and accountability in government. This work is supported by United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the British government through the Embassy and Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development of Canada (DFATD).

Staff

NDI has 175 employees in Afghanistan; 26 are female and 149 are male.

Regional and Provincial Offices

NDI has offices in Kabul, Nangarhar, Khost, Kandahar, Herat, Balkh, Kunduz and Bamiyan.

Areas of Expertise, Experience and Involvement

To establish and strengthen political and civic organisations, safeguard elections, and promote citizen participation, openness and accountability in government.

Currently, NDI is working in three areas:

- Strengthening Political Entities and Civil Society
- Promoting Effective Participation of Political Parties
- Political Promoting Women's Political Participation

Peace Training and Research Organization (PTRO)

www.ptro.org.af

The Peace Training and Research Organization (PTRO) is an Afghan NGO based in Kabul that focuses on peace, conflict, and justice issues and provides training in peace building and good governance. PTRO also conducts research for national and intergovernmental organisations as well as NGOs to inform and to provide a deeper understanding on policy relevant issues.

Staff

PTRO has 65 staff, including representatives in all provincial offices: approximately 15% are female.

Regional and Provincial Offices

PTRO's main office is in Kabul, and is supported by field offices in Badghis, Baghlan, Herat, Kunduz, Nangarhar, and Takhar.

Areas of Expertise, Experience and Involvement

PTRO is currently involved in a number of research and training projects throughout the country, including on-going work on the local effects of the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme (APRP), particularly for women in reintegration-affected communities. PTRO is also investigating the effects of the transition process (both security and governance aspects) on local areas in six contrasting provinces. These include assessing the impact of transition on all aspects of community life and sharpening the focus on its impact on local civil society organisations (CSOs).

Training efforts include conflict resolution and mediation workshops for local councils and community representatives in two northern provinces and sessions to increase engagement during the 2014 elections. In both the southeast and the north, PTRO is delivering training in the rule of law issues to both formal and informal justice representatives. They are heavily involved in support and training for women's groups in four provinces affected by reintegration, encouraging their participation in local decision-making affecting their own communities.

PTRO's work on community narratives during transition will continue, as will the research and training surrounding local communities and the APRP. This will be coupled with more extensive advocacy activities aimed at changing both local governance and national/international policy decisions.

A combined project with civil society groups in Pakistan will begin to look at aspects of human security, common problems and potential lessons to be learned within both countries.

There are a number of potential projects involving research and training on rule of law, evaluations of development interventions, support for civil society groups and advocacy around the needs of marginalised groups. PTRO has also carried out advocacy work with key stakeholders on issues related to women's roles in the reconciliation and reintegration process, children's rights, and the impact of development interventions.

Samuel Hall

www.samuelhall.org

Samuel Hall is a leader in quality field research, expert analysis and strategic consultancy for public and private sector organisations investing in present and post-conflict regions. Covering Asia, Africa and MENA, Samuel Hall brings evidence-based findings from the field to policy and decision makers with expertise in areas including monitoring and evaluations; strategy and impact assessments; and economic, migration, governance, rule of law, education and protection research. Samuel Hall was created to bridge the gap between the academic world of research and the practical ground of implementation in the humanitarian and development fields. Over the years the organisation has built an interdisciplinary team of researchers with impeccable academic backgrounds and first-hand experience of operating on the ground in challenging and demanding environments.

Staff members and associate experts are able to demonstrate:

- Academic qualifications - Ph.D. and Masters-level degrees from leading universities in North America, Europe and Asia (Harvard, Cornell, Oxford, LSE, UCL, King's College, Ecole Normale Supérieure, Sciences Po, IGIDR, etc.).

- Sector knowledge acquired through continuous partnerships with academic experts in Political Science, Economy, Justice, Health and Migration.
- Field experience acquired through more than five years of prolonged contact with stakeholders from national capitals to remote villages in conflict and post-conflict settings.

Samuel Hall works primarily with humanitarian and development partners, donors, private sector partners and academic institutions.

Southern and Western Afghanistan and Balochistan Association for Coordination (SWABAC)

The Southern and Western Afghanistan and Balochistan Association for Coordination (SWABAC) is a coordination body for Afghan and international NGOs working in southern Afghanistan. SWABAC's head office is located in Kandahar and was founded in 1988 by twelve NGOs engaged in relief and rehabilitation work with Afghan refugee villages in Balochistan and other communities in southern Afghanistan. Membership is open to government-registered NGOs working in southern Afghanistan who show a dedication to coordination, have proof of donor funding, have an organisational profile and are certified by five other NGOs. SWABAC currently has 45 members. SWABAC's vision is to see that the activities of NGOs and CSOs are coordinated, aligned, and effectively and efficiently undertaken based on the needs of communities.

Areas of Expertise, Experience and Involvement

SWABAC's activities fall within three major categories: coordination, advocacy and capacity building. SWABAC provides a forum for members to discuss their concerns about policy guidelines for delivering assistance, resource management and other operational issues, with the ultimate goal of improving coordination among the assistance community in southern Afghanistan.

SWABAC was involved in drafting the NGO Code of Conduct, and on behalf of its member NGOs and as a representative of the southern region SWABAC played a role in developing both the Agriculture and the Rural Development sections in the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS). SWABAC was a member of the Civil Society Consultation on Afghanistan at the International Afghanistan Conference in Bonn (2011) and played a pivotal role in introducing regional representatives there. SWABAC was also a member of the Civil Society Consultation Committee at the Tokyo Conference.

Currently SWABAC is implementing a multimedia project with the financial support of Internews and AusAid that will continue through 2015. SWABAC is planning to implement the same programme in other provinces in the region.

The Liaison Office (TLO)

www.tloafghanistan.org

The Liaison Office (TLO) is an Afghan non-governmental organization that emerged at the end of 2003 as a Swisspeace pilot project (supported by the Heinrich Böll Foundation) on good governance, following the request of community elders. The community elders had sought assistance in participating in the peace and reconstruction process in their respective communities across southeast Afghanistan.

Staff

TLO has around 110 staff in 5 field offices and the main office in Kabul.

Regional and Provincial Offices

TLO has worked in 25 provinces of Afghanistan and is currently active in 15 provinces.

Areas of Expertise, Experience and Involvement

TLO's five main areas of activity are: Action Research, Advocacy and Empowerment, Peace Building (Access to Justice, Do-No-Harm/Context Sensitivity), Protection Issues and Livelihood Improvement.

In the ten years since its founding, TLO has expanded its field of work from the southeast to the south (in 2005) and east (in 2008), mainly by conducting research and analysis, and facilitating a series of peace and stability jirgas. In 2009, TLO began working in the northern and central provinces and in 2011 started research and analysis work in western Afghanistan.

Afghan-International Initiatives and Programmes

Bonn Conference - 2011

Held a decade after the first Bonn Conference of 2001, this conference aimed to chart a new ten-year blueprint for engagement between Afghanistan and the international community during the “Transformation Decade” (2015-2024) following the conclusion of the Transition process. The conference was hosted by Germany, chaired by Afghanistan, and attended by 85 countries and 15 international organisations. The Conference concentrated on three key areas of engagement:

- The civil aspects of the process of transferring responsibility to the Government of Afghanistan by 2014.
- The long-term engagement of the international community in Afghanistan after 2014.
- The political process that is intended to lead to the long-term stabilisation of the country.

The conference concluded with the international community pledging its long-term commitment to Afghanistan, particularly with regards to security, agreeing to produce a clear plan for the future funding of the Afghan National Security Forces at NATO's May 2012 Chicago Summit, and reiterating its support for an inclusive peace process. It was agreed that the international community's role in Afghan governance would move from service delivery to building capacity and providing support. The Conference also called for a regional solution to terrorism in Afghanistan and for an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process, stating that a political solution would be an essential element of stability. The international community endorsed the development of Afghanistan's mineral resources but called for a strong regulatory framework to ensure benefits accrued to the Afghan people. In turn, the Afghan government promised to reinvigorate key development priorities such as anti-corruption and rule of law, honour its obligations to international human and gender rights mechanisms, and to continue the fight against drug cultivation.

Chicago NATO Summit - 2012

Held on 21 May 2012, the NATO Summit in Chicago renewed the firm commitment of both ISAF-contributing nations and the Government of Afghanistan to “a sovereign, secure, and democratic Afghanistan.” In line with the 2010 Lisbon Summit, leaders from NATO's 28 nations and the 22 partners of the ISAF coalition reaffirmed the commitment to conclude ISAF's mission in Afghanistan by 31 December 2014, and to continue close partnership beyond the end of the transition period.

With reference to the NATO-Afghanistan “Enduring Partnership,” signed at the 2010 Lisbon Summit, participants agreed that NATO-led ISAF forces would hand over the command of all combat missions to Afghan National Security Forces by mid-2013 and would complete full withdrawal from Afghanistan by the end of 2014. The Summit reaffirmed commitments made at the 2010 Kabul Conference, the Istanbul Process on regional security and cooperation initiated in 2011, and the 2011 Bonn Conference.

With the signing of the Chicago Summit Declaration on Afghanistan, NATO allies and ISAF partners also reaffirmed their strong commitment to support the training, equipping, financing and capability development of the ANSF beyond 2014, as decided at the 2011 Bonn Conference.

International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) / Resolute Support (RS)

www.rs.nato.int

The mission of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) was to assist the Government of Afghanistan (GoA) in establishing and maintaining a safe and secure environment in Afghanistan, with the full involvement of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). US General John F. Campbell served as the last commander of ISAF (COMISAF) from 26 August 2014 until ISAF's mission formally ended on 31 December 2014, when he took over command of ISAF's successor mission, Resolute Support.

ISAF was established by UN Security Council Resolution 1386 on 20 December 2001, as envisaged in Annex I of the Bonn Agreement and upon the invitation of the Afghan Interim Authority. It was a UN-authorized multinational force, not a UN peacekeeping force, and so the costs of maintaining ISAF were borne by its contributing nations rather than by the UN.

On 11 August 2003, at the request of the UN and GoA, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) took responsibility for ISAF, which was initially limited to Kabul, while the Coalition Forces oversaw security in the rest of Afghanistan. In October 2003 the UN Security Council authorised the expansion of the NATO mission beyond Kabul and the unification of both military forces under one central command.

In November 2009, after the NATO allies agreed to review ISAF upper command structure, a new intermediate headquarters was established to better streamline ISAF efforts. This separated strategic political-military from day-to-day functional operations. The new headquarters, located in Kabul, was called the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A) and ISAF Joint Command (IJC) HQ and commanded by a four-star General (COMISAF) and two subordinate three-star generals. The North Atlantic Council, NATO's decision-making body, provided political guidance to ISAF in consultation with non-NATO nations that contributed troops to ISAF.

Under the new command structure COMISAF focused on the more strategic political-military aspects of the ISAF mission, synchronising ISAF's operations with the work of Afghan and other international organisations in the country. COMISAF had two roles, as both the Commander of ISAF and of the US Forces in Afghanistan (COM USFOR-A), in addition to coordinating and de-conflicting ISAF operations with the US-led Operation Enduring Freedom. COMISAF had command responsibility over the IJC Commander, the Commander of the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A), and the NATO Special Operations Forces (SOF). The NTM-A carried out its training through Military Advisory Teams and Police Advisory Teams, which embedded mentors in the Afghan National Security Forces.

Upon the termination of ISAF at the end of 2014 it was replaced by a new and much smaller NATO-led mission called Resolute Support, beginning 1 January 2015. Resolute Support operates under the auspices of the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) and the Security and Defence Cooperation Agreement (more commonly known as the Bilateral Security Agreement, or BSA) signed by representatives from NATO, the US, and the new Afghan President Ashraf Ghani's government on 30 September 2014.

Mission Resolute Support operates on a much smaller scale, with only 12,000 total personnel compared with the 140,000 personnel ISAF had at the height of its mission. This new mission does not involve combat, with the exception of providing air support for Afghan forces through 2015, and is instead oriented around training, advising and assisting at government ministries and the higher command levels of the ANSF.

The Istanbul Process

The Istanbul Ministerial Process or Istanbul Process is designed to promote a stronger Afghanistan and “Heart of Asia” by promoting regional security and cooperation. The ‘Process’ includes ministerial meetings and follow-up conferences which can draw delegations from over 50 countries, including most Central Asian states and Afghanistan’s neighbours with a number of other countries outside the immediate region attending as observers or supporters.

Following the Istanbul Conference for Afghanistan: Security and Cooperation in the Heart of Asia on 2 November 2011, a 23-clause declaration of intent was released. This document sought to provide a platform to discuss regional issues, particularly encouraging security, political, and economic cooperation among Afghanistan and its neighbors. The ‘Process’ expands practical coordination between Afghanistan and its neighbors and regional partners in facing common threats, including particularly counterterrorism, counternarcotics, poverty, and extremism.

The second meeting was the ‘Heart of Asia’ Ministerial Conference in Kabul (14 June 2012) which also produced a declaration identifying confidence building and consultation priorities. The Third Ministerial Conference of the Istanbul Process was held in Almaty, Kazakhstan (26 April 2013), where participants highlighted the importance of their ongoing commitment to assist the Afghan nation during the transition process and withdrawal of the International Security Assistance Forces from Afghanistan. They adopted specific action plans for the confidence-building measures of the Istanbul Process.

The Fourth Ministerial Conference of the Istanbul Process was held in Beijing on 31 October 2014. Participants produced the ‘Beijing Declaration’ emphasising their goals of a stable Afghanistan as well as enhanced regional cooperation.

Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB)

The Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB) is a high-level governing body established in 2006 to provide overall strategic coordination of the implementation of the Afghanistan Compact. With the expiry of the Afghanistan Compact in 2011, the JCMB expanded its focus to include: (1) the provision of strategic and policy guidance on the implementation of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS); (2) monitoring of the Kabul Process; and (3) acting as the highest formal decision-making body linking the Afghan government and the international community. The JCMB also supports the monitoring of the implementation of the Tokyo Framework.

The JCMB is co-chaired by the UN Secretary-General’s Special Representative for Afghanistan and the Chair of the Afghan government’s cabinet-level Coordinating Committee (currently the Minister of Finance). This Coordinating Committee is responsible for oversight of the JCMB and the implementation of the ANDS. The JCMB consists of 28 representatives, 7 of whom are representatives of the Afghan government, with the remaining 21 representing the international

community. The international representatives are selected by taking into consideration contributions to development aid and troop numbers, as well as regional representation.

The work of the JCMB is now facilitated by three standing committees covering security, governance, human rights, rule of law, and economic and social development. These thematic groupings correspond to the pillars of the ANDS.

A special JCMB meeting was held on 29 January 2014 in Kabul under the co-chairmanship of the then Minister of Finance, Dr Omar Zakhilwal, and the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) of the United Nations for Afghanistan at the time, Mr Ján Kubiš. The meeting served to recognise the progress made on the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework (TMAF) since the last Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) in July 2013. Representatives from more than 50 countries and international organisations, all 11 candidates for Afghanistan's 2014 presidential election, ministers and representatives from civil society as well as the private sector attended the meeting.

Proceedings and papers of earlier JCMB meetings (numbers 1-7, 10-18) are available at: www.thekabulprocess.gov.af/index.php/jcmb/archive.

Kabul Conference and Kabul Process

The Kabul International Conference on Afghanistan took place on 20 July 2010. Initiated at the London Conference in January 2010, the “Kabul Process” was formalised at the Kabul Conference and serves as a framework for partnership and mutual accountability between the international community and the Government of Afghanistan (GoA) through the Decade of Transformation (2015-2024) with the common goal of a secure and stable Afghanistan with Afghan ownership, responsibility and sovereignty.

Co-chaired by President Karzai and the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, the Kabul Conference was the first of many international conferences on Afghanistan to be held in Afghanistan. Many international leaders and foreign ministers attended the conference. Emphasising Afghan leadership and ownership, its Communiqué stated that the Kabul Process was to be a reaffirmation of the GoA commitment to “improve security, governance and economic opportunity for its citizens.” It also reiterated the international community's commitment to “support the transition to Afghan leadership and its intention to provide security and economic assistance.”

The London Conference in January 2010 and the National Consultative Peace Jirga in June 2010 were key staging posts for establishing the terms, frameworks and plans agreed upon at the Kabul Conference. These include:

- Transferring security responsibilities from the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and Coalition Forces (CF) to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) by 2015.
- The development of the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme (APRP).
- A reprioritised and restructured Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS).

International participants endorsed the Inteqal (Transition) paper, namely the GoA's commitment to a phased exercise of security responsibility in all provinces by the end of 2014. To support this transition, the GoA pledged to progressively enhance the quality and quantity of the ANSF, while international participants reiterated their commitments to support the training, equipping and financing of the ANSF. Participants also endorsed the APRP and reiterated their commitment to

support the programme through the Peace and Reintegration Trust Fund. Within the framework of a prioritised ANDS, the GoA pledged to focus on reform of service delivery institutions, policy decisions and the implementation of National Priority Programmes (NPPs). Participants welcomed the GoA cluster approach, an inter-ministerial coordination mechanism intended to help prioritise and implement the ANDS. The GoA committed to further prioritise and strengthen the NPPs, including their implementation matrices for intended results and budgets.

In a bid to ensure effective management and accountability, the plans articulated measurable six- and twelve-month, as well as three- and five-year targets. In line with the London Conference Communiqué, participants restated their support for channelling at least 50% of development aid through the GoA's core budget within two years (2010-2012). International participants also expressed their readiness to progressively align their development assistance behind the NPPs with the goal of achieving 80% percent alignments within the next two years. To oversee the implementation of the prioritised ANDS, GoA and the international community stated their intent to meet at the ministerial level on an annual basis to review mutual progress on commitments and to consider new Afghan priorities as part of the Kabul Process. Participants agreed that the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB) would meet every four months (supported by standing committees and their sub-committees) to monitor and assess progress. Additionally, the Kabul Process was set to include annual meetings between the GoA, the international community and civil society (including service-providing organisations).

Since 2010, participants at conferences in Bonn (2011), Chicago (2012), Tokyo (2012) and London (2014) have reaffirmed their commitments to the framework set out at the Kabul Conference

Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA)

www.af.undp.org

The Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA) enables the international community to support efforts led by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to strengthen the country's law enforcement. LOTFA is a partnership administered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on behalf of the Ministry of Interior Affairs (MoIA).

Contributions from the donor governments are used to: pay the salaries of Afghan National Police personnel and Central Prison Department guards, build vital police infrastructure, sponsor capacity development, further institutional reform of the MoIA, support gender responsive policing and the empowerment of female police personnel and promote community-oriented policing.

LOTFA also supports the functional and operational capacity of Family Response Units and Gender and Human Rights Units and works with the MoIA and other partners to ensure safe and equal working environment for both male and female police officers.

Donors to LOTFA since the mechanism was created in 2002 are: Australia, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, the European Union, Finland, Germany, Italy, Poland, South Korea, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

London Conference on Afghanistan - 2014

The international community met in London on 4 December 2014 to reiterate their commitment toward building a stable future in Afghanistan and to hear from the new Afghan leaders, President Ashraf Ghani and CEO Abdullah Abdullah, on the government's plans to achieve that future.

London marked the 12th international conference held on Afghanistan since the first Bonn conference in 2001. This conference built on commitments made at previous conferences, most notably the 2012 Tokyo conference that established the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework (TMAF) and the NATO summit held in Wales earlier in 2014.

Under the TMAF the Afghan government committed to various reforms with the London conference marking the first of a series of meetings meant to review those reforms. However, as a result of the delay to the formation of a new government caused by the drawn-out Afghan election process, the conference instead became a symbolic opportunity for the international community to renew their commitment to Afghanistan. In London the international community also confirmed its previous Tokyo pledge of \$16 billion dollars in aid to Afghanistan through 2015 and continued support through 2017.

Representatives from more than 50 countries as well from Afghan civil societies, NGOs, and multilateral organisations attended the one-day conference. The conference closed with a speech by Afghan President Ashraf Ghani, who outlined his efforts to reform the country by tackling corruption, maintaining national security, and fostering women's rights and civil rights throughout the country.

In London the Afghan government presented a paper outlining their plans for reform. The paper was based on the TMAF but went a step further to illustrate the Ghani administration's commitment to reform, particularly within government institutions. Emphasis at the conference was on showing support for three critical areas in particular: civil society, especially women's groups, economic stimulation and regional cooperation. Three smaller events associated with the main conference were held individually on these three points on 3 December 2014.

These smaller events examined the role that civil society, private industry, and regional economic cooperation would play in Afghanistan's future. The Ayenda (Future) conference was facilitated by the British and Irish Agencies Afghanistan Group (BAAG) to give a voice to Afghan civil society groups and took place the night before the main conference. It featured 200 attendees including representatives from civil society groups, UK and international foreign ministers, INGOs, and development experts. Of primary concern was the status of women and their inclusion in the new government.

Private sector reform and progress has been an important factor in the attempt to boost Afghanistan's economy, so a round table was held the evening before the conference to discuss ways to increase revenue and job creation, as well as encourage both domestic and international investment.

UK Foreign Secretary Phillip Hammond hosted a dinner on 3 December for important representatives from the region, including President Ghani, and other international delegates to discuss inter-regional cooperation and possibilities for trade and economic agreements.

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

In 2004, the government of Afghanistan endorsed the United Nations General Assembly's 2000 Millennium Declaration as well as the Millennium Development Goals, but aimed to achieve the MDGs by 2020 rather than 2015. The Afghan government adopted "Vision 2020" containing additional targets to take account of Afghanistan's specific constraints in areas such as gender equality and maternal health, and included a ninth Goal to recognise the importance of security as a precondition for achieving sustainable development in Afghanistan. Each of the MDGs below are reflected and incorporated into the three pillars of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS):

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development
9. Enhance security

The most recent MDG report on Afghanistan was released in 2012 detailing the government's progress in meeting these MDGs. The report noted that while progress in a few areas has been impressive, notably education and health, progress in other areas has been sadly lacking. Areas of particular deficiency are female literacy and political participation, sanitation, and access to safe drinking water.

South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)

www.mfa.gov.af

SAARC is a regional organisation founded in the 1980s. Before Afghanistan became a permanent member in 2007, the association consisted of seven members: Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, India, Pakistan, the Maldives and Nepal. The core values of SAARC are to promote peace and stability and build understanding among its people and expand welfare. The core principle of the association is respect for the national sovereignty and non-interference in national affairs.

Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO)

Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) is an intergovernmental regional organisation founded in 1985 by Iran, Pakistan and Turkey for the purpose of promoting economic, technical and cultural cooperation among member states. ECO is the successor organisation of the Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD). In 1992, the organisation was expanded to include seven new members, namely: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC)

The Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) programme is a partnership of 10 countries and 6 multilateral institutions working to promote development through cooperation, in order to accelerate economic growth and poverty reduction. By promoting and facilitating regional cooperation in the priority areas of transport, trade facilitation, trade policy and energy, CAREC wants to assist Central Asian and neighbouring countries to realise their potential in an increasingly integrated Eurasia. Membership currently consists of: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

The UN Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA)

SPECA was launched in 1998 to strengthen sub-regional cooperation in Central Asia and its integration into the world economy. The member countries of SPECA are: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) was founded in 2001 with China, the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan as permanent members. It is the successor of the Shanghai Five, founded in 1996. The main objective of the Shanghai Five was to provide a platform for resolving the centuries-old border disputes between China, Central Asian states and Russia. Initially Uzbekistan wasn't a member of the Shanghai Five, as it did not border China. Later, with the founding of SCO, Uzbekistan was included as the sixth permanent member and the objectives of the organisation were expanded from merely reconciling border disputes to greater social, economic and security cooperation. Recently SCO has granted Afghanistan, India, Iran, Mongolia and Pakistan the status of observers.

Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan - 2012

Co-chaired by the Japanese and Afghan governments, the Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan took place in July 2012. The 55 countries and 25 international organisations at the conference reassured Afghanistan about their long-term commitment to cooperation during Afghanistan's Transformation Decade (2015-2024).

The Conference built on agreements from previous international conferences, including the 2010 London Conference, the 2010 Kabul Conference, the 2011 Bonn Conference and the May 2012 NATO Chicago Summit and reiterated Afghanistan's full operational responsibility for national security by 2015.

The international community agreed to the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework (TMAF), which lays down the basis for renewed partnership with Afghanistan through mutual commitments and accountability. The participants put forward a strategic document, "Towards Self-Reliance," for the Transformation Decade in which development of the private sector, diversification of the economy, and improved access to education, health and governance were emphasised. It was agreed that achievements on these issues would ultimately serve as a "platform for self-reliance," prosperity, and peace and stability in Afghanistan. Donors at the Conference pledged to provide \$16 billion in development aid up to 2016.

United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)

www.unama.unmissions.org

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) is the United Nations (UN) political mission in Afghanistan. It was established in 2002 by the UN Security Council upon request by the fledgling Afghan government in order to support sustainable peace and development in Afghanistan.

The UN Security Council meets yearly to renew UNAMA's mandate for the following 12 months. Most recently it was renewed through 17 March 2015 by the UN Security Council when Resolution 2145 was adapted on 17 March 2014. The resolution recognises that there is no 'purely military solution' and calls for UNAMA to lead and coordinate civilian efforts assisting Afghanistan during the transition period.

Additionally, if requested by Afghan authorities, UNAMA has the particular task of supporting future elections while strengthening the electoral process and building capacity in the relevant Afghan institutions.

UNAMA is to support the outreach and reconciliation efforts of the Afghanistan Peace and Reconciliation Program (APRP), also by request of the Afghan government.

UNAMA is headed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan (SRSG), Nicholas 'Fink' Haysom, who is supported by a Deputy SRSG for Political Affairs and a Deputy SRSG for Relief, Recovery and Reconstruction.

Regional and Provincial Offices

UNAMA has eight regional offices (Bamiyan, Gardez, Herat, Jalalabad, Kabul, Kandahar, Kunduz, and Mazar-i-Sharif), and six provincial offices.

United Nations Country Team (UNCT)

The United Nations (UN) has been present in Afghanistan since the 1950s. It is an integrated UN mission covering political, development and humanitarian affairs. The UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) oversees political functions. The other UN agencies, funds and programmes work on development and humanitarian issues. Together with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund and affiliated members such as the Asian Development Bank and the International Organization for Migration, these are gathered under the umbrella of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT).

The UN is present in all 34 provinces through sub-offices and project representatives, and several agencies implement programmes at the local level through governmental and non-governmental organisations. In addition to the main UN offices in Kabul, the UN agencies, funds, and programmes have regional and field offices in areas of high priority. The combined effort of UN staff supports the following endeavours: peace-building, reconciliation and human rights promotion; empowerment of civil society; provision of basic social services; and support to humanitarian response and disaster mitigation.

Within the overall context of the UN's commitment to supporting the government's National Priority Programmes, achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, and provision of humanitarian

relief to the most vulnerable communities, the UN development and humanitarian agencies provide technical and policy support in their specialised areas of operation as per each agency's mandate.

UN development programmes are governed by the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), which is a programme-planning framework for all UN development agencies, and the Common Humanitarian Action Plan, which guides the humanitarian aspect of the UN's work in collaboration with the broader humanitarian community. The UNDAF 2014-19 is approved by the previous government and approved in principle subject to review with the current government. The Common Humanitarian Action Plan which covers humanitarian action of the UN and other humanitarian partners is developed and released annually.

Members of the UN Country Team in Afghanistan are:

Asian Development Bank (ADB)

Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO)

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

International Labour Organisation (ILO)

International Monetary Fund (IMF)

International Organisation for Migration (IOM)

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNOHCHR)

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)

UN Children's Fund (UNICEF)

UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

UN Department for Security and Safety (UNDSS)

UN Development Programme (UNDP)

UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

UN Environment Programme (UNEP)

UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT)

UN Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO)

UN Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)

UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS)

UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS)

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA)

UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

UN Population Fund (UNFPA)

World Bank (WB)

World Food Programme (WFP)

World Health Organisation (WHO)

Libraries

Afghanistan Centre at Kabul University (ACKU)

www.acku.edu.af

ACKU was established in 1989 in Peshawar as a semi-independent part of ACBAR (Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief). Envisioned by Louis Dupree as a central depository for reports and surveys generated by NGOs, bilateral humanitarian organisations and UN agencies, it was known then as ARIC (ACBAR Resource and Information Centre). The purpose was to facilitate coordination of humanitarian aid to Afghan refugees and to avoid duplication.

In 2005 ARIC was renamed ACKU (Afghanistan Centre at Kabul University) when it was registered with the Ministry of Economics in Kabul and transferred to the central library of Kabul University. In 2006 Kabul University allocated ACKU a plot at the centre of the campus on which to build a facility funded from the Afghan government development budget. The new premises were inaugurated by Ashraf Ghani on 27 March 2013. Funding for staff and operations were obtained from the Royal Norwegian Embassy and various foreign donors.

ACKU's motto is nation building through information sharing. The centre promotes research and information sharing through the dissemination of knowledge, and enhancement of the capacity of Kabul University and other private institutions in Afghanistan. ACKU's major focus is facilitating research using its collection of over 100,000 documents in Dari, Pashto, English and other European languages. ACKU is open to students of all universities in Afghanistan, policy makers and development planners, as well as researchers from abroad. The ACKU collections hold documents such as monographs, posters, newspapers, slides, CDs, fact sheets, periodicals and magazines. The newspaper collection includes the political history of many decades.

ACKU has sought to reach out to Afghans outside Kabul through the ACKU Box Library Extension (ABLE), which aims to encourage the culture of reading and to spread knowledge by providing reading material through these small lending libraries. ABLE libraries are placed in schools and communities for new literates across Afghanistan. Currently ACKU has established 232 libraries (190 in high schools and 42 in communities) within 34 provinces of Afghanistan. ABLE publishes easy-to-read books in the Dari and Pashto languages for new literates on various subjects such as agriculture, mother-child care, history, environment, health, home management and democracy. To date ABLE has published 299 books. In early 2014 ACKU successfully reached out to communities in Balkh province through the Support to the Police Reform, Literacy Unit which placed 30 box-libraries (7,500 ABLE publications) that are accessible to an estimated 1,800 police men and women.

The Communication (Outreach) and Research department of ACKU carries out or hosts activities including workshops, lectures, seminars, debates, film screenings, exhibitions and public talks. The primary goals of these activities are to develop research skills and to highlight ACKU's resources and the work of Afghan and international artists and scholars specialising on Afghanistan. ACKU publicises these events and workshops widely to encourage the participation of large numbers of Afghans and others through ACKU's web site and social media (<https://www.facebook.com/acku.edu.af>).

Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU) Library

www.areu.org.af

The Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU) has maintained a library of Afghanistan-specific research materials since 2002. In 2003 the Society of South Asian Studies, formerly the British Institute of Afghan Studies (BIAS), agreed to donate an estimated 3,000 library books and prints pertaining to Afghanistan and the region to the AREU Library. A condition of the donation was that the collection should remain in Afghanistan and be available for all researchers to use. The BIAS, established in Kabul in 1972, had undertaken a number of archaeological projects and supported British scholars conducting anthropological and ethnological fieldwork. In 1981 the Institute was closed down and the collection put into storage in the British Embassy.

Dr Andrew Wilder, director of AREU from 2002-05, agreed that AREU would re-house the collection, provide staff to catalogue it and provide funds to expand the holdings with financial support from UNAMA. The growing collection now includes Afghan government publications from all periods as well as donor and NGO materials published about Afghanistan, relevant publications from UN agencies, periodicals, maps, CDs and DVDs. Of particular note are the holdings of the Official Gazette (Rasmi Jaridah) and the Statistical Handbook of Afghanistan. The AREU library's main aim is not to compete with international collections but rather to gather and preserve relevant materials available both within Afghanistan and abroad for use by national and international researchers.

The AREU library currently has over 16,500 titles and maintains a fully searchable online database on the website. The focus of the collection is contemporary materials produced inside Afghanistan and materials in Dari and Pashto, with an emphasis on long-term research value. The library also aims to make available research produced overseas about the country and the region. Materials of all types (books, journal articles, maps, posters, CDs, DVDs, databases and more) are available for use inside the library. Photocopying facilities are available and the entire collection is listed online (see the "Library" page of AREU's website). The library also has over 77 gigabytes of accumulated soft-copy publications on Afghanistan, all of which are indexed and listed in the library database and made available for research use (where copyright laws permit).

The library is located in the AREU office and is open for researchers Sunday to Thursday from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. (during Ramadan 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.). It is closed on public holidays. All materials are available for use within the library, and photocopying is available. No materials can be borrowed.

Bernice Nachman Marlowe Library, American University of Afghanistan

www.auaflibrary.org

The Bernice Nachman Marlowe Library was established in 2008 with a gift from the Marlowe and Gibbs families in honor of Bernice Nachman Marlowe. Since then it has grown to become a fully functioning university library, supporting the academic needs of faculty and students at the American University of Afghanistan (AUAF).

The Marlowe Library has over 10,000 items, including subscriptions to 30+ print periodicals and three major databases for access to journals and books in electronic formats. A wide range of topics are included but special attention is given to those academic subjects offered at AUAF: business, English, information technology (IT) and political science.

The Marlowe Library offers a study space for students, including quiet study rooms and over 40 computers. Access to electronic journals and books is available through the databases.

The Marlowe Library is located on the Main Campus of AUAF. It is open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Sunday through Thursday, and 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Saturday. It is closed Friday.

The Marlowe Library will continue to expand its collection of print and electronic books and journals.

Darakht-e Danesh

www.darakhtdanesh.org

In October 2014, Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan (CW4WAfghan) launched Afghanistan's first collection of open educational resources (OERs). CW4WAfghan is a charitable organisation established in 1996, which runs educational programs in several provinces of Afghanistan and is currently funding this program. The Afghan OERs collection is called the Darakht-e Danesh ('Knowledge Tree') Library for Educators in Afghanistan. OERs are learning resources that are free, have no copyright or license restrictions and can be adapted and reused or repurposed. They include documents such as lesson plans, textbooks and other reading material, storybooks, experiments, games, exercises and activities for students, maps, graphs, diagrams and more.

Through CW4WAfghan's work training in-service teachers, the organisation saw a need to increase teachers' access to high quality educational materials in their own languages. Darakht-e Danesh contains over 1,200 resources in three languages: Dari, Pashto and English, in subjects found in the Afghan curriculum. Users register at on the website where they can then search the database to download or print the educational materials. Users can also upload their own materials to share with other users.

Hakim Naser Khusraw Balkhi Cultural Centre and Library

Hakim Naser Khusraw Balkhi Cultural Centre was established 1989 in Kabul by Alhaj Sayyed Mansur Naderi from his personal budget because of his interest in and enthusiasm for cultural growth and development. The Cultural Centre designs and implements its action plans in order to fulfil the following objectives:

- To encourage and support scientific and literary researchers and creators;
- To provide service in the field of cultural legislation, literature, art and social issues free of divisive leanings and tendencies;
- To strengthen the cultural sector and to remove obstacles facing literary and cultural development;
- To support and strengthen of the implementation of cultural programmes in accordance with the fundamentals of the Afghan society.

Purpose of Hakim Naser Khusraw Balkhi Cultural Centre:

- To produce realistic cultural and scientific information for the cultural sector and to publish scientific and cultural reports;
- To support the intellectuals and to involve all segments of the society in the reconstruction of culture and art;
- To print and distribute all works produced by Hakim Naser Khusraw and to publish works produced by researchers and writers on Hakim Naser Khusraw's ideas and thoughts, which are considered publishable by the Cultural Centre's board of leadership;
- To design and construct the Naser Khusraw Research Centre;
- To launch literary competitions at the end of each year and to award valuable prizes in the fields of poetry, fiction, research and other literary and artistic genres for the creators of such works;
- To establish cultural centres in other provinces and to establish public libraries in the capital and provinces.

The Cultural Centre began with the launch of a literary competition in the year 1367 [1988/89]. During the four years following the Centre's establishment researchers, writers, poets, artists and other creators of culture were annually invited to compete in the areas of literary research, philosophical research, poetry, criticism, fiction, painting, miniature and calligraphy.

In November 1991 the central library of the Hakim Naser Khusraw Balkhi Cultural Centre was established in Kabul but its operation was delayed because of the threats of the civil war. In the same year, the Cultural Centre's complex was founded in Sarsabzi Sqaure in the Taimani area of Kabul.

The Cultural Centre was moved to the city of Pul-i-Khumri in May 1992 due to escalation of civil war hostilities. After the move, the first measure taken was to revive the library of the Cultural Centre. Already some 25,000 books in various fields had been purchased from the Islamic Republic of Iran, along with special desks for study and research and modern furniture and equipment.

In December 1993 some 20,000 books in various fields were purchased, which increased the total number of books in the library to around 50,000. During the years 1995 – 1998 the Centre entered a better period of cultural activity. During this time over 11 books, including compilations and translations, were printed and widely circulated by the Centre's publishing department.

The Cultural Centre was affected by the war once again in the spring of 1998 when the library, containing 50,000 books in the fields of literature, history, religion, philosophy, art and other areas, was looted along with all of the Centre's other equipment and belongings. Additionally, during this period one of the Centre's long-time employees was killed and other staff and members were forced to leave the country.

The Hakim Naser Khusraw Balkhi Cultural Centre re-opened in 2002 and the first step was the re-establishment of the central library of the Cultural Centre that once had housed 50,000 books. In order to lay a foundation for the library again, 3,000 books on various subjects were purchased from Iran. Also, some 2,500 books that had been lost but had the Cultural Centre's stamp were returned to the library, due to efforts made by the Cultural Centre's members and interested people. Today there are some 5,500 books in the newly established library.

In 2004 a delegation from the Centre visited Iran and signed contracts with 48 Iranian publishing houses to import books from Iran to be placed in showrooms for sale. At the moment, the activity to sell books has continued and the volume of imports and sales will increase, depending on the existence of funding. There is also a plan to create mobile showrooms to sell books in the city of Kabul and other provinces through opening representative offices.

National Archives of Afghanistan (NAA)

Many of the collections at the National Archives of Afghanistan were once a part of the National Museum of Afghanistan, along with the Library of Manuscripts there. In 1939 an Independent Press Library of Afghanistan was established near the Arg, or Royal Palace, and many of the historical documents and manuscripts housed in the museum were transferred to this new library.

Upon the establishment of a new Kabul Public Library in 1966 the contents of the Press Library, along with the Library of Education, were brought together under one roof with the motto "Books for All." However, since the Kabul Public Library was used by all segments of the population, exposure and overuse of these documents led to damage and a new storage location was needed.

In 1973 the collection and preservation of historical documents and manuscripts became a priority of the government, which established the Kabul Public Library of Manuscripts registered as the Afghanistan National Archives within the Department of Public Libraries of the Ministry of Information and Culture. Its main holdings at the time included a limited number of manuscripts, documents and historical decrees. Volumes of the Holy Qur'an and Tafsir (Interpretations) written in calligraphy and a number of miniatures and golden frames that had previously been kept in the National Museum were included.

The building chosen to house the newly established National Archives was a century-old building belonging to the Ministry of Defense. Following the immense efforts made by the Head of Public Libraries and others, the building was obtained and transformed into Afghanistan's first National Archives. Renovation work on the building was completed in August 1978, when all manuscripts and historical documents were transferred from the Public Library.

The National Archives was recognised as a separate organ within the framework of the Cultural Department of the Ministry of Information and Culture, and gained a global reputation when it was registered with UNESCO.

Following the coup d'état of 1978, all manuscripts, photos and documents confiscated from the Royal Palace library, the Presidential offices of Mohammad Daoud Khan, and the royal family were transferred to the National Archives. Between 1978 and the collapse of Dr. Najibullah's government in 1992 the National Archives with its staff of 43 worked under the auspices of the Government Committee for Culture.

At the start of the Taliban regime, the National Archives was closed, and later reopened with a considerably reduced staff, especially in the inventory and indexing departments.

The National Archives were officially reopened by President Hamid Karzai on April 14, 2002. It is now recognised internationally alongside the National Archives of other countries. In addition to the collection held at the National Archives in Kabul, there are provincial archives in Herat, Ghazni, Daikundi, Laghman, Kapisa, Baghlan, Maidan Wardak and Sar-i-Pul. All operate under the auspices of the Ministry of Information and Culture. These provincial archives hold manuscripts, historical documents, and photos of famous local personalities, learned men, artists, calligraphers and painters.

The National Archives of Afghanistan preserves around 7,500 manuscripts and calligraphies and more than 100,000 historical documents. In addition to the historical collection there is a specialized print library that includes rare printed books, newspaper collections, printed catalogues for manuscripts and documents and other resources. Researchers from inside and outside Afghanistan use the Archives' historical collection and the print library is used by the staff and researchers.

The NAA offers the following services: prepares requested scans or photocopies of documents for researchers; makes accessible the original format of documents for researchers; exhibits old photos, documents, and manuscripts; facilitates visits to the permanent exhibition for all visitors; reproduces the collections to preserve them and make them accessible to the public.

The NAA is open to the public from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Saturday through Wednesday and is currently funded by the Embassy of the Czech Republic. In future the staff plans to extend the collection, digitise current and new collections, prepare more research facilities and connect with archives in other countries.

Public Libraries of Afghanistan

Libraries are the main educational resource centre for educating a nation and play an important role in bringing the public together for different events, to help in their education, and serve as a resource centre for students' research.

The Public Libraries in Afghanistan were established with the motto "Books for All" in 1966 when the existing Press and Education libraries were combined. During the last few decades the Public Libraries have rendered its services in a better way for the public and contain the major and famous published books of Afghanistan.

Fortunately, the library buildings were not too badly damaged during the civil war but in the past 12 years there has been less attention and consideration by the government and international organisations so as a result the libraries are in very poor condition.

The central library in Kabul has over 100,000 books and thousands of magazines and newspaper collections with more than 300,000 books throughout Afghanistan's library system, but most are in very poor condition.

The Public Library has 12 offices in Kabul Province and 82 offices throughout Afghanistan that are administered by 100 staff; out of which only 60 staff members are working in the Directorate of Public Libraries.

The libraries' achievements are:

More than 20,000 people come to Public Libraries on a monthly basis to see if they can find books.

The library had a mobile library van to cover areas that did not have a branch of the Public Libraries and as a result of this outreach an additional 2,000 people were able to make use of the library's services in different parts of Kabul.

The Central Library remains open six days a week from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.



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The Government of Afghanistan

Background

Following the collapse of the Taliban regime at the end of 2001, Afghan leaders signed the Bonn Agreement at a conference organised by the UN in Bonn, Germany. The Agreement appointed the Afghanistan Interim Administration (AIA) and designed a two-and-a-half-year timetable for the re-establishment of permanent government institutions with “a broad-based, gender sensitive, multiethnic and fully representative government” in Afghanistan. The Emergency Loya Jirga of June 2002 replaced the AIA with the Afghanistan Transitional Authority, and elected Hamid Karzai as the Head of State—and temporary Head of Government in the absence of a legislature—of the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan.

In line with the Bonn timetable, a new Constitution was debated and endorsed by a Constitutional Loya Jirga (14 December 2003 to 4 January 2004). The Constitution provided for an elected President, along with two nominated Vice Presidents, and a National Assembly comprising two houses; the lower Wolesi Jirga (House of the People) and the upper Meshrano Jirga (House of Elders). At the subnational level it provided for elected Provincial, District, Village and Municipal Councils, as well as Governors and Mayors appointed by the President.

In the election held on 9 October 2004, Hamid Karzai became the first elected President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan with 55 percent of the vote. He was sworn in on 7 December 2004, at which time the transitional state officially became the new Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. Legislative, Provincial and District Council elections were supposed to be held concurrently with the Presidential election but were postponed due to security and technical problems. Elections for the Wolesi Jirga and Provincial Councils were eventually held on 18 September 2005. A second set of Presidential and Provincial Council elections took place in 2009; it was a controversial process that ended with President Karzai assuming office for a second term. These were followed by a similarly problematic second set of elections for the Wolesi Jirga in September 2010.

The third round of presidential and provincial council elections took place in April 2014 and marked the first peaceful democratic transfer of power in Afghanistan’s history, as President Karzai had already served his constitutionally limited two terms in office. After a runoff election and extended period of electoral controversy, Dr Ashraf Ghani was declared President of Afghanistan with runner up Dr Abdullah Abdullah also joining the government in the newly created role of Chief Executive Officer.

The Executive

The Executive Branch of the central government of Afghanistan consists of the Office of the President, two vice presidents, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), two deputy CEOs, the Attorney General, the Cabinet of 26 ministers, as well as several independent bodies and other central government agencies.

The President is directly elected for a five-year period and can serve a maximum of two terms. Candidates for the presidency name their two vice presidential candidates at the time of nomination. The President is the Head of State, the Chair of the Cabinet and the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces.

The Office of the President consists of the Office of the President itself, the Security Council, the Press Office, and the Office of Administrative Affairs, which provides administrative, logistical, and financial support to the President, Vice Presidents, and advisors to the President.

A deal was brokered following the 2014 election creating the position of Chief Executive Officer for a period of two years, when a Loya Jirga will be convened to discuss amending the Constitution to create an executive prime minister position. The CEO advises the president, serves on the Cabinet, chairs the Council of Ministers, appoints officials and implements the president's and Cabinet's decisions.

The President nominates ministers, the Attorney General, the Governor of Da Afghanistan Bank (the Central Bank of Afghanistan), the members of the Supreme Court, the Head of the National Directorate of Security (NDS) and the President of the Red Crescent Society. Nominees are then subject to Parliamentary vote; if rejected by the National Assembly, they may not assume office. According to the Constitution, all other executive posts, including that of the Vice Presidents, the Mayor of Kabul, and the heads of various commissions are appointed by the President and do not require the approval of the National Assembly.

The Legislative

National Assembly

As provided for in the 2004 Constitution, the National Assembly—commonly referred to as the Parliament—consists of two houses: the lower Wolesi Jirga (House of the People) and the upper Meshrano Jirga (House of Elders). The National Assembly convened for the first time in December 2005, following the September 2005 Parliamentary elections.

Members of the National Assembly must be Afghan citizens, at least 25 on the date of candidacy for the Wolesi Jirga and at least 35 at the date of election or appointment to the Meshrano Jirga. It is not possible to be a member of both the Meshrano Jirga and Wolesi Jirga simultaneously. Members of the Wolesi Jirga are directly elected for five years by provincial constituencies. There are currently 249 seats in the Wolesi Jirga; the Constitution stipulates that the maximum number of seats is 250. Seats are distributed among the provinces according to population. The Constitution states that 20 percent of the seats should be allocated to women. Ten seats are reserved for the Kuchi (traditionally nomadic) population, three of which must go to women. The provision for Kuchi has been hotly contested among Parliamentarians since the 2005 elections.

The Meshrano Jirga has 102 members, selected by a mixture of presidential appointments (one-third) and indirect elections following popular elections for the Wolesi Jirga, and Provincial and District Councils (two-thirds). The Constitution stipulates that members of the Meshrano Jirga are elected and appointed as follows:

- From among the members of each Provincial Council, the respective council elects one person for a period of four years.
- From among the District Councils of each province, the respective councils elect one person for a period of three years.

The President appoints the remaining one-third of the members, including two representatives of the disabled and two representatives of Kuchi communities, for a period of five years. Of these presidential appointees, 50 percent must be women.

While the Constitution has provisions for District Council elections, these have not been held to date. A temporary solution was devised for the interim District Council: instead of one, each Provincial Council currently elects two of its members to the Meshrano Jirga (one for four years and a second for three years or until district elections are held), thereby maintaining the 2:1 ratio of elected to appointed seats.

The National Assembly convenes two ordinary sessions per year, and its term is nine months in the year. Sessions are open to the public unless secrecy is requested by the Chairman of the National Assembly or at least ten members, and is granted by the Assembly.

According to Article 90 of the Constitution, the National Assembly has the following authorities:

- Ratification, modification, or abrogation of laws and legislative decrees
- Approval of plans for economic, social, cultural, and technological development
- Approval of the state budget, and permission for obtaining and granting loans
- Creation, modification, and abrogation of administrative units

- Ratification of international treaties and agreements, or abrogation of the membership of Afghanistan to them and
- Other authorities specified in the Constitution

Policies and legislation can be initiated by the Office of the President, individual ministries, or the National Assembly, and become law after passing through both houses of the National Assembly and being endorsed by the President. Article 94 of the Constitution states that:

A law is what both Houses of the National Assembly approve and the President endorses unless this Constitution states otherwise; and

An item is considered endorsed and enforced after 15 days, or if the President rejects a bill within the 15 days, when the Wolesi Jirga re-approves it with a two-third majority vote.

Certain legislative documents (rules, directives and guidelines) can be decreed by individual ministers. A proposed bill or signed decree should be passed by the National Assembly within one month of its submission. There are 18 commissions in the Wolesi Jirga and 14 in the Meshrano Jirga.

The new Constitution entered into force in 2004 and many decrees and laws have been enacted according to its provisions. The department of the Ministry of Justice, responsible for drafting legislation, the Taqin, has drafted many laws that have replaced old legislation. Contradictory legislation enacted by various former regimes remains and harmonisation efforts continue.

- Law is what both Houses of the National Assembly approve and the President endorses unless this Constitution states otherwise; and
- With the passage of this period or in the case the Wolesi Jirga approves a particular case again with a two-third majority vote, the bill is considered endorsed and enforced.

Provincial Councils

The 34 Provincial Councils have between 9 and 29 members depending on the size of the province's population and are elected by a single provincial constituency. Candidates must reside in the province in which they stand for election and cannot stand simultaneously for both Wolesi Jirga and Provincial Council elections. The Electoral Law states that 20 percent of the seats in a Provincial Council are reserved for women. Two members from each Provincial Council serve in the Meshrano Jirga (this will decrease to one member per Provincial Council when District Councils are elected and formed). To date, two rounds of Provincial Council elections have taken place, in 2005 and 2009, following the constitutional requirement that they occur every five years. Accordingly, the next election for these provincial bodies is also scheduled to take place in 2014.

The 2007 Provincial Council Law is vague on the Councils' responsibilities and significant confusion remains about their exact role. While a mandate exists, it is ambiguous and does not allocate to them decision-making authority. Provincial Councils report directly to the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG). Thus far, Provincial Council activities have included: electing provincial representatives from their own membership to the Meshrano Jirga, participating in the development of the provinces and improvement of administrative affairs, and advising provincial administrations on issues such as development planning. Their role in a given province is often dependent on the relationship between the Council and the Provincial Governor.

District Councils

According to the Constitution, District Councils will have between five and fifteen members, depending on the size of the district's population and be elected every three years. Candidates must reside in the district in which they stand for election. When formed, they will elect one-third of the members of the Meshrano Jirga.

However, elections for the District Councils have not been held and it is unclear when they will take place. There are a number of reasons for this: first, district boundaries in some areas have not been confirmed; therefore it is impossible to calculate district populations, which is necessary to determine the seat allocation for each district (this problem is compounded by the lack of an up-to-date census for the country as a whole). Second, because of the lack of certainty about district boundaries, voters have been registered by province rather than by district which means that in order to conduct District Council elections, another registration process would be required.

Article 110 of the Constitution states that should a Loya Jirga (a grand assembly convened to discuss matters of supreme national interest or to change the Constitution) need to be held, it must be comprised of the National Assembly, and chairpersons of Provincial and District Councils. Regardless of the lack of district elections, several Loya Jirgas have been summoned since the ratification of the constitution in 2004.

In the absence of formally-elected District Councils, a number of extra-constitutional institutions have been created to provide some level of representation and improve governance at the district level. Managed by the IDLG, the Afghanistan Social Outreach Program (ASOP) has created hundreds of District Community Councils (DCCs) modelled on traditional shuras (councils), while the National Area-Based Development Programme (NABDP) under the Ministry for Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) has formed District Development Assemblies (DDAs).

Village Councils and Municipal Councils

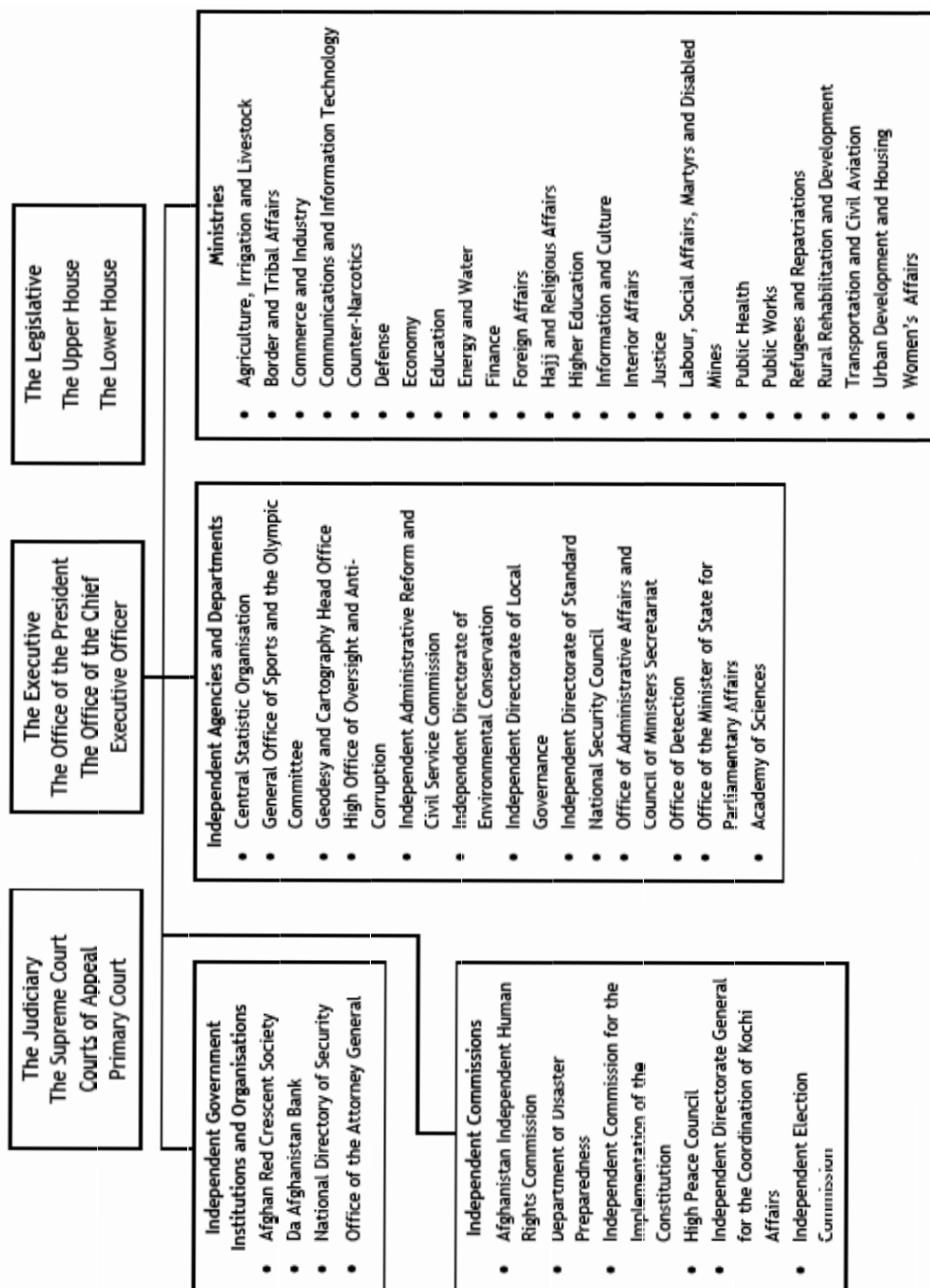
The Constitution also calls for the election of Village Councils, Municipal Councils and Mayors through free, general, secret and direct elections. Village Councils are to be elected for three years. The terms of Municipal Councils and Mayoral elections are not yet specified, and the mandates of Village and Municipal Councils are not elaborated in either the Constitution or the Electoral Law. Elections for these bodies are unlikely to be held in the next few years. Once again, the failure to constitute these bodies has resulted in extra-constitutional attempts to fill the gap.

In particular the Community Development Councils (CDC) of the National Solidarity Programme (NSP) effectively function as formal village governance bodies for many areas.

The Judiciary

The major permanent justice institutions in Afghanistan are the Supreme Court (Stera Mahkama), the Office of the Attorney General (Loya Saranwali) and the Ministry of Justice. The 2004 Constitution states: "The judicial branch is an independent organ of the state of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. The judicial branch consists of the Supreme Court, High Courts, Appeal Courts and Primary Courts, the structure and authorities of which are determined by law" (Article 116). In June 2005, a new law regulating the judiciary system was passed by Cabinet, which divided the courts into three tiers: the Supreme Court, the Courts of Appeal and the Primary Courts. Furthermore, when needed, it allows for travelling or mobile courts, however, those must

Structure of the Afghan Government



be approved by the President. Article 157 of the Constitution calls for the establishment of an Independent Commission for Supervision of the Implementation of the Constitution (ICSIC) to act as an overarching arbitrator.

The Office of the Attorney General is an independent body, part of the Executive branch, responsible for investigation and prosecution.

The reach of the formal justice system varies significantly across the country. A large proportion of disputes in Afghanistan are settled outside the formal court system—particularly, but not exclusively, in rural areas. Community-based justice mechanisms—shuras, jirgas, and jalasas (meetings)—often settle civil and sometimes criminal disputes using Islamic and customary tribal laws. The justice system is therefore composed of both formal and informal mechanisms that include civil, Islamic and customary tribal law. In instances where formal and informal mechanisms and actors engage with one another, common elements are most often found with respect to issues regarding land and property, but can diverge dramatically on criminal matters and the role and nature of punishment.

The Supreme Court

In accordance with the Constitution, the Supreme Court has nine members, each appointed by the President for a ten-year tenure, this requires Wolesi Jirga approval. Out of the nine members of the Supreme Court, the President appoints one as Chief Justice. The Supreme Court manages the personnel, budgets and policy decisions of the entire national, provincial and district court system.

The Supreme Court convenes regular sessions, at least once every 15 days, and additional sessions can be convened by request. The presence of at least six members is needed for a Supreme Court quorum and decisions are made by majority vote. The Supreme Court is divided into four sub-courts or departments (dewans)—General Criminal, Public/National Security, Civil and Public Rights and Commercial—each headed by a Supreme Court Justice.

The current Supreme Court members were sworn in on 5 August 2006.

Courts of Appeal

Courts of Appeal are operational in all provinces (although some provinces do not currently have the requisite number of judges to hear appeal cases). They comprise the Chief of the Court, other judicial members and heads of dewans. Courts of Appeal in more populous provinces have five dewans—General Criminal (which also deals with traffic violations), Public Security, Civil and Family, Public Rights, and Commercial. Those in less populous provinces have four dewans—City Primary Court, General Criminal, Civil and Public Security. Only the Court of Appeals in Kabul has a Juvenile Court, created to hear cases involving adolescents; however, in many provinces there are judges experienced or trained to deal with such cases. The Courts of Appeals oversee the rulings and decisions of the Primary Courts in their respective province and have the authority to correct, overturn, amend, confirm or repeal these rulings and decisions. They are also responsible for deliberating conflicts of judicial jurisdiction.

Primary Courts

At the district level, the City Primary Court (which is the primary court in the provincial capital) consists of five dewans—General Criminal, Civil, Public Rights, Public Security and Traffic. Primary Courts in all districts outside the provincial capitals have three dewans — General Criminal, Public

Security, and Civil and Public Rights. Many districts do not currently have functional primary courts, largely due to security concerns. Judges often hold primary court sessions in the provincial capitals.

Criminal cases are initiated by the Prosecutor's Office filing them with the Primary Court; civil rights cases are filed with an office in the Ministry of Justice. After that a series of judicial sessions may be held until a decision is reached by the Primary Court. Almost as a matter of customary practice, most cases determined by the Primary Courts are appealed to the Courts of Appeals. If appeals reach the Supreme Court, judges often send the cases back to the Primary Court for a new hearing.

The Public Sector

Structure

Afghanistan's public sector consists of the central government, provinces, municipalities (urban sub-units of provinces), and districts (rural sub-units of provinces), as well as state enterprises (wholly and majority owned). State agencies, including central government ministries and institutions, are considered to be primary budgetary units with their own discrete budgets.

In theory, Afghanistan is a unitary state: all political authority is vested in the government in Kabul. The powers and responsibilities of the provincial and district administrations are determined (and therefore may be withdrawn) by the central government. Though provinces and districts are legally recognised units of subnational administration, they are not intended to be autonomous in their policy decisions. However, given the political and military strength of some regional powerholders, the practical reality is that certain provinces have considerable decision-making authority.

The Constitution explicitly allows a measure of decentralisation by stating that "the government, while preserving the principle of centralism—in accordance with the law—shall delegate certain authorities to local administration units for the purpose of expediting and promoting economic, social and cultural affairs, and increasing the participation of people in the development of the nation" (Article 137).

The country's 34 provinces are the basic units of local administration. The executive at the provincial level is the Governor (Wali), who is appointed by the President. The provinces are not distinct political entities and formally have a very modest role in decisions concerning their own structure, recruitment of senior staff, and size and composition of work force. In effect, the administration of each province is a collection of branches of central government ministries. The majority of decisions on provincial staffing are made in Kabul by the parent ministry, in negotiation with the Office of Administrative Affairs and with oversight by the head of the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission (IARCSC). The Independent Appointments Board of the IARCSC is required to ratify appointments at Grades one and two and oversee recruitment of grades three and below. As part of its mandate to improve governance and achieve stability on the subnational level, IDLG is responsible for supervising Provincial and District Governors, Provincial Councils, and municipalities (except Kabul Municipality).

Provinces are divided into districts and municipalities. Administrative arrangements between the province and its districts are similar to those in the relationship between the centre and the province. The central ministry in Kabul determines district senior staffing and budget allocations, leaving provincial officials with relatively little discretion in this regard, at least officially.

Municipalities are overseen by the IDLG, in some provinces with significant influence by the Governor. The IDLG approves staffing numbers and budgets in each municipality, even though municipalities are entitled to collect and retain their own taxes. In some provinces, such as Herat and Kandahar, rural municipalities also have a reporting relationship with the provincial municipality, although this is contrary to the established government structure.

Central government ministries and institutions are primary budget units with specific budgets determined by law; provincial departments of the central government ministries and some independent units are secondary budget units—that is, they receive their allotments at the discretion of their ministries and relevant independent agencies. There are no specific provincial department budgets. Districts are tertiary budget units; their budget allocations depend on the decisions made at the request of the relevant provincial-level departments of Kabul ministries and other independent units. All revenues collected by provinces and districts are national revenues; provinces are merely the tax collectors. In effect, both provincial and district staffing levels and budgets are determined more on precedence than on rational planning. This system gives Kabul considerable political authority over provincial expenditure policy, although Provincial and District Governors have a certain amount of de-facto authority.

Development is ostensibly managed at the provincial level through two institutions; the Provincial Development Committee (PDC) and the Provincial Administrative Assembly (PAA). PDCs are made up of key development actors such as line ministries, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, NGOs, and occasionally Provincial Council members, meeting under the chairmanship of the Provincial Governor. They are to create coordinated, prioritised and budgeted plans for provincial development, which should then be passed to the Ministry of Economy and Ministry of Finance (MoF) in Kabul for approval and incorporation into the budgets and plans of the relevant central line ministries.

In reality, these plans rarely influence the central ministries, which will draft budgets based on information from their respective provincial line directorates and their budgetary allocations from the MoF. This centralised process presents considerable difficulties for the coordination of development projects between ministries at the provincial level.

The PAA is chaired by the Provincial Governor, and includes the heads of provincial line ministries and agencies, the provincial Attorney General and the head of provincial security. PAAs are charged with administering and monitoring the implementation of the Provincial Development Plan. While meetings should theoretically be held weekly, in reality they are more irregular with the majority of decision-making and discussion taking place in the PDCs.

State enterprises report to the ministry or department in their respective sector. For example, the head of a coal mine would report to the provincial Department of Mines as well as the Ministry of Mines in Kabul. There are no provincially-owned enterprises.

Although they do not hold formal power, informal community shuras or jirgas (i.e. those not convened under the development programmes discussed above) can also be influential local actors. Shuras are a longstanding feature of Afghan political society. They are usually convened on an ad-hoc basis and are rarely permanent bodies with identifiable members. Shuras of ulema (Islamic scholars) and shuras of elders are usually found at the provincial level, though there are often competing local and district shuras, some of which are run by independent strongmen. As District Councils have not yet been elected, many district administrators make use of shuras in their activities. Many districts are also effectively divided into villages (qaryas), which correspond to areas of shared resources.

In addition to the provincial and district administrative structures, historically there has been a definition of regions or zones (hawzas) in Afghanistan, primarily for military purposes. These hawzas have no legal standing as administrative units and unlike provinces, districts and municipalities, are not mentioned in the 1964 Constitution or the current 2004 Constitution. At times, however, they have been used for administrative convenience. Formally, this zonal structure no longer exists but some inter-provincial coordination and sectoral activities based on zones continue.

Pay and Grading

Every public employee has a grade—in Kabul, in the provinces, and at the district level. Two scales apply throughout Afghanistan, one for permanent staff (karmand) and one for contract staff (agir). Karmand are regular, permanent public employees, whereas agir are (officially) hired on fixed term contracts. In practice, most agir employees remain in government for many years and follow a career path very similar to that of karmand staff. The two pay scales are almost identical.

The key differences between karmand and agir employees are:

- Agir employees are meant to occupy lower-skilled and manual labour posts (such as drivers, cooks, painters, etc.);
- Advancement through the grade (and pay) structure for many agir positions is capped at a particular level (for instance, drivers cannot be promoted beyond Grade 1); however, higher skilled agir employees can advance to the top of the scale (“over” grade); and
- Agir employees are not entitled to receive a professional bonus in addition to their salary.

Pay policy is set centrally for all public employees in Afghanistan. The pay system emphasises rank-in-person arrangements (employees are promoted even if they remain in the same position) rather than the more common rank-in-post arrangements (where promotion generally comes with a new job). Thus, through years of service and regular promotions (once every three years), staff in lower positions of authority can occupy a higher grade and earn a higher salary than their managers. Different occupational groups have ceilings above which they cannot be promoted.

The underlying pay scale, established by the 1970 Law on the Status and Condition of Government Employees, and amended by the 1977 Decree No. 143, offers a reasonably well-structured scale for base pay. The real salary scale for public employees is low—meal allowances (given equally to all public employees) can account for over 90 percent of the monthly pay. Since 2004, the IARCSC (p. 21) has been working to update the government’s pay and grading structure, crucial to the government’s efforts to attract and retain qualified staff and to reduce incentives for corruption within the civil service. A new Civil Service Law was passed in 2005, and in 2007 an eight-grade structure was designed, with new pay scales attached to these grades (with a minimum salary of \$100 and maximum of \$650). Implementation is sequenced, re-grading senior positions (Grades 1 and 2) first, followed by junior grades on a ministry-by-ministry basis.

Pay and grading reform is a key element of the IARCSC - led Public Administration Reform, framework, which seeks to restructure the civil service and institute merit-based, nonpartisan recruitment. The effectiveness of pay and grading reforms may be complicated by the so-called “second civil service” consisting of officials, advisors and staff of aid contractors and international agencies, most of whom receive much higher salaries.

Elections

The electoral system in Afghanistan is the Single Non-Transferable Vote (SNTV), where each eligible voter casts one vote for one individual in his or her multi-member constituency (province). Suffrage is universal for all citizens 18 years of age and older. The Constitution (full text p. 196) provides for the election of:

- A President (every 5 years)
- A National Assembly (Parliament) consisting of the Wolesi Jirga (House of the People) and the Meshrano Jirga (House of Elders) (every 5 years)
- Provincial Councils (every 4 years)
- District Councils (every 3 years)
- Village Councils (every 3 years)
- Municipal Councils and Mayors

Thus far, elections have only been held for the first three categories. The President is elected by absolute majority; if no candidate receives over 50 percent of the votes, a run-off election is held between the top two candidates (although the run-off was cancelled in 2009 when a candidate withdrew).

Key bodies in Afghan elections

Independent Election Commission (IEC - www.iec.org.af)

IEC is the supreme authority responsible for the preparation, organisation, conduct, and oversight of elections and referenda in Afghanistan. The membership, organisation, responsibilities, and functioning of the IEC are determined by the Constitution and the Electoral Law. While the IEC is independent from other branches of the government and administrative institutions, its five members, or commissioners are appointed by the President.

Electoral Complaints Commission (ECC - www.ecc.org.af)

ECC is an independent body responsible for hearing and adjudicating complaints related to the electoral process, including challenges to the list of candidates and complaints about the conduct of campaigns and polling. ECC was established by Article 52 of the 2005 Electoral Law. The ECC is separate from, and independent of, the IEC. As of today, all ECC members are appointed directly by the President.

Free and Fair Election Forum of Afghanistan (FEFA - www.fefa.org.af)

FEFA is an independent umbrella organisation established by civil society groups in March 2004 to: monitor elections to ensure that they are free and fair; promote democracy in the country; promote public participation in electoral affairs; and help consolidate public trust and faith in democracy and elections. The Foundation is Afghanistan's only continual domestic elections monitoring body.



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About this section

This section aims to provide a brief overview of Afghanistan's 34 provinces by presenting a range of information: geographical location, population, rural population, areal size, number of districts, and seat allocation in both the Wolesi Jirga and the Provincial Council. Details on the Meshrano Jirga, the Upper House, is omitted as one-third of the 34 candidates are appointed by the President and the remaining two-thirds from each of the 34 provincial councils are indirectly elected (until the district council elections are held when 34 from the district councils will comprise the remaining third).

Allocation of seats: The Constitution states that the Wolesi Jirga seats are to be distributed among the provinces according to population based on the SY1381-1384 (2003-2005) Household Listing (HL) and the 1979 census with an annual population growth rate of 192 percent. The Constitution reserves an average of two seats per province for female candidates and a total of ten Wolesi Jirga seats for Kuchis, of which three are reserved for female candidates.

The provincial profiles are arranged according to unofficial "regions" of the country, presented alphabetically by province name. Two figures for number of districts indicate temporary divisions or disputes.

Glossary of Provincial Development Indicators:

- Poverty rate (%): Percentage of population living below the official poverty line.
- Unemployment rate (%): Economically active population (labour force) that is without work and seeking employment.
- Underemployment rate (%): Employed individual who work for less than 35 hours per week.
- Literacy rate (%): Percentage of population (age 16 years and older).
- Female literacy rate (%): Percentage of female population (age 16 and older).

Acknowledgements:

Statistics are provided by the Central Statistics Organization based on their annual Afghanistan Population Estimation for SY1391 (2012/2013). This estimation is done on the basis of the data obtained from the SY1381-1384 (2003-2005) Household Listing (HL). The population estimate covers the settled population of the country. Afghanistan's total population in SY1391 is estimated to be about 27 million, of which the settled population (excluding nomads) is estimated at 25.5 million. The maps and development figures are from the Government of Afghanistan, Ministry of Economy, and the World Bank's joint effort in producing the NRVA 2011/2012.

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Afghanistan National Profile:

Area: 647,500

Population: 25,500,100

Rural Population: 76%

No. Districts: 364 (A total of 398 administrative units including 34 provincial centres)

Wolesi Jirga seats: 249 (68 female) Reserved for Kuchi 10 (3 female)

Provincial Council seats: 420 (124 female)

Central Afghanistan

Kabul (Kabul)Area: 4523.9 km²

No. of districts: 14

Population: 3950.3

Rural population: 640.9

Urban Population: 3309.4

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 9 Female; 24 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 8 Female; 21 Male

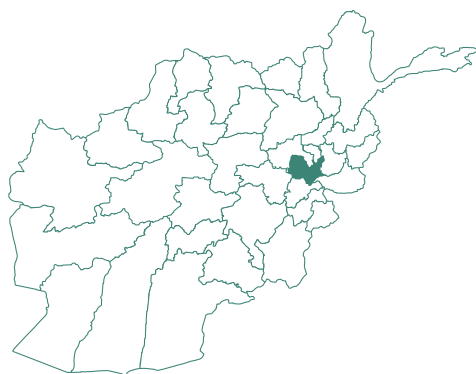
Poverty Rate (%): 23.1

Basic Health Services (%): 75

Comprehensive Healthcare Services (%): 38

Development Projects

- Transportation: 99
- Telecommunication: 6
- Energy: 13
- Irrigation: 77
- Agriculture: 17
- Industry: 3

**Kapisa (Mahmood Raqi)**Area: 1908.0 km²

No. of districts: 6

Population: 419.8

Rural population: 418.4

Urban Population: 1.4

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 1 Female; 3 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 3 Female; 9 Male

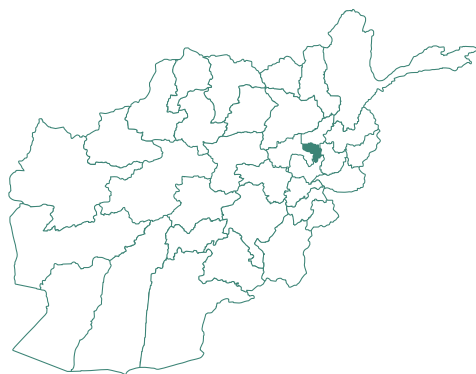
Poverty Rate (%): 21.5

Basic Health Services (%): 15

Comprehensive Healthcare Services (%): 8

Development Projects

- Transportation: 13
- Telecommunication: 2
- Energy: 1
- Irrigation: 37
- Agriculture: 5
- Industry: 0



Central Afghanistan

Bamiyan (Bamiyan)

Area: 18029.2 km²

No. of districts: 6

Population: 425.5

Rural population: 413.5

Urban Population: 12.0

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 1 Female; 3 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 3 Female; 6 Male

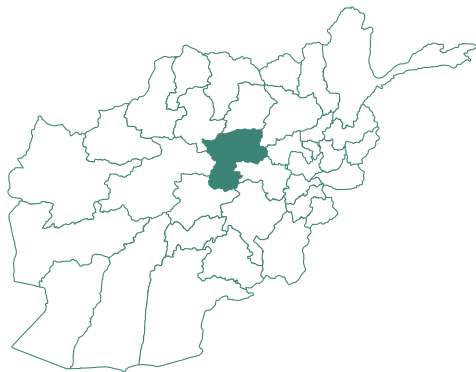
Poverty Rate (%): 55.7

Basic Health Services (%): 23

Comprehensive Healthcare Services (%): 10

Development Projects

- Transportation: 87
- Telecommunication: 3
- Energy: 9
- Irrigation: 156
- Agriculture: 3
- Industry: 2



Daykundi (Nili)

Area: 17501.4 km²

No. of districts: 8

Population: 438.5

Rural population: 435.0

Urban Population: 3.5

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 1 Female; 3 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 3 Female; 9 Male

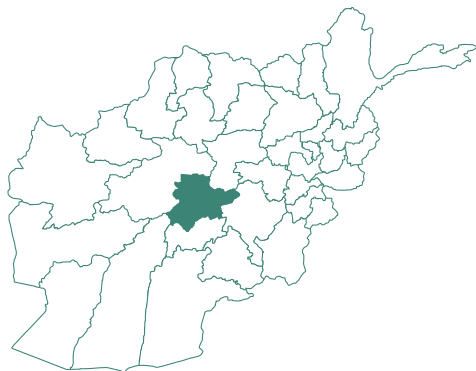
Poverty Rate (%): 43.4

Basic Health Services (%): 14

Comprehensive Healthcare Services (%): 7

Development Projects

- Transportation: 66
- Telecommunication: 3
- Energy: 1
- Irrigation: 35
- Agriculture: 1
- Industry: 1



Central Afghanistan

Logar (Pul-i-Alam)

Area: 4568.0 km²

No. of districts: 6

Population: 373.1

Rural population: 363.8

Urban Population: 9.3

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 1 Female; 3 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 3 Female; 9 Male

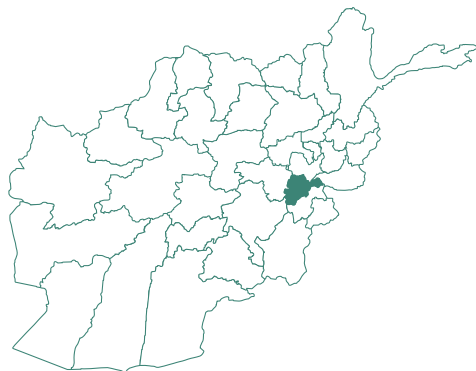
Poverty Rate (%): 75.5

Basic Health Services (%): 21

Comprehensive Healthcare Services (%): 7

Development Projects

- Transportation: 28
- Telecommunication: 2
- Energy: 1
- Irrigation: 58
- Agriculture: 2
- Industry: 0



Panjshair (Bazarak)

Area: 3771.6 km²

No. of districts: 6

Population: 146.1

Rural population: 146.1

Urban Population: 0

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 1 Female; 1 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 3 Female; 6 Male

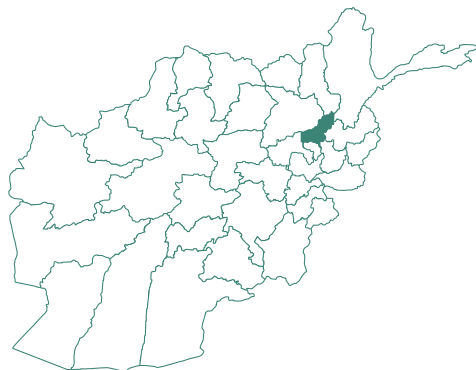
Poverty Rate (%): 22.6

Basic Health Services (%): 9

Comprehensive Healthcare Services (%): 2

Development Projects

- Transportation: 19
- Telecommunication: 2
- Energy: 26
- Irrigation: 68
- Agriculture: 3
- Industry: 0



Central Afghanistan

Parwan (Charikar)

Area: 5715.1 km²

No. of districts: 9

Population: 631.6

Rural population: 576.0

Urban Population: 576.0

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 2 Female; 4 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 4 Female; 11 Male

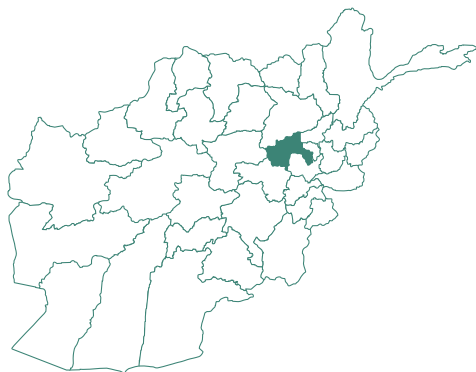
Poverty Rate (%): 18.9

Basic Health Services (%): 32

Comprehensive Healthcare Services (%): 10

Development Projects

- Transportation: 88
- Telecommunication: 3
- Energy: 5
- Irrigation: 68
- Agriculture: 5
- Industry: 0



Wardak (Maidan Shahr)

Area: 10348.3 km²

No. of districts: 8

Population: 567.6

Rural population: 564.8

Urban Population: 2.8

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 2 Female; 3 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 3 Female; 6 Male

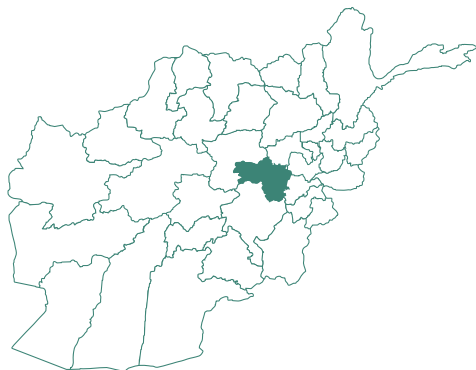
Poverty Rate (%): 59.9

Basic Health Services (%): 26

Comprehensive Healthcare Services (%): 10

Development Projects

- Transportation: 44
- Telecommunication: 2
- Energy: 9
- Irrigation: 56
- Agriculture: 2
- Industry: 0



Northeast Afghanistan

Badakhshan (Faizabad)

Area: 44835.9 km²

No. of districts: 27

Population: 904.7

Rural population: 869.6

Urban Population: 35.1

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 2 Female; 7 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 4 Female; 11 Male

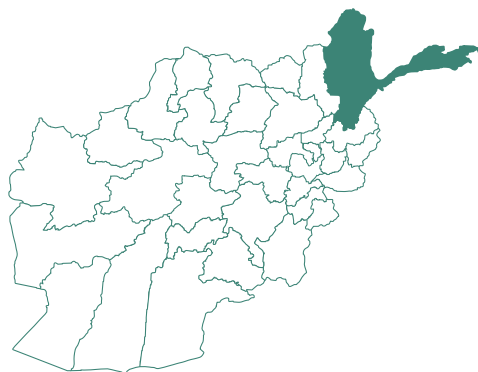
Poverty Rate (%): 61.1

Basic Health Services (%): 33

Comprehensive Healthcare Services (%): 14

Development Projects

- Transportation: 118
- Telecommunication: 3
- Energy: 42
- Irrigation: 111
- Agriculture: 3
- Industry: 1



Baghlan (Pul-i-Khumri)

Area: 18255.2 km²

No. of districts: 14

Population: 863.7

Rural population: 691.1

Urban Population: 172.6

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 2 Female; 6 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 4 Female; 11 Male

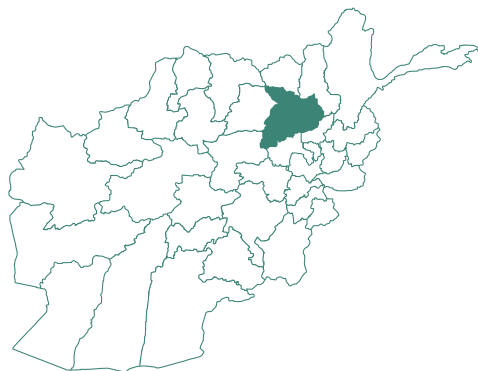
Poverty Rate (%): 18.0

Basic Health Services (%): 26

Comprehensive Healthcare Services (%): 15

Development Projects

- Transportation: 65
- Telecommunication: 2
- Energy: 31
- Irrigation: 105
- Agriculture: 4
- Industry: 0



Northeast Afghanistan

Kunduz (Kunduz)

Area: 8080.9 km²

No. of districts: 6

Population: 953.8

Rural population: 716.8

Urban Population: 237.0

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 2 Female; 7 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 4 Female; 11 Male

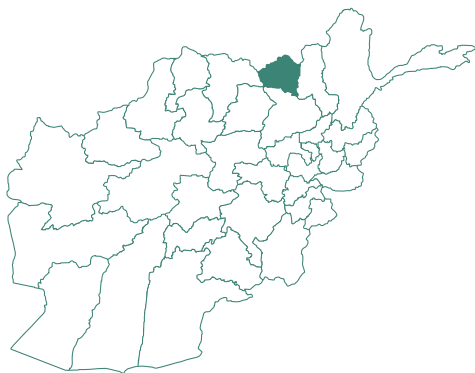
Poverty Rate (%): 29.7

Basic Health Services (%): 31

Comprehensive Healthcare Services (%): 14

Development Projects:

- Transportation: 154
- Telecommunication: 2
- Energy: 30
- Irrigation: 135
- Agriculture: 5
- Industry: 3



Takhar (Taloqan)

Area: 12457.8 km²

No. of districts: 16

Population: 933.7

Rural population: 812.2

Urban Population: 121.5

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 2 Female; 7 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 4 Female; 11 Male

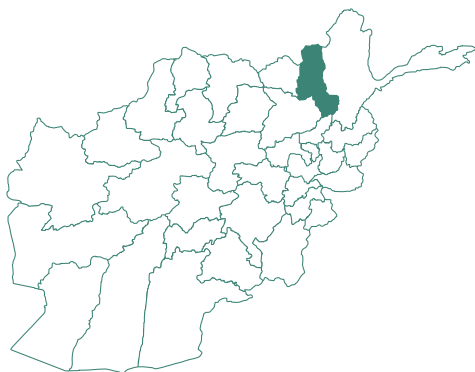
Poverty Rate (%): 36.6

Basic Health Services (%): 37

Comprehensive Healthcare Services (%):

Development Projects

- Transportation: 203
- Telecommunication: 3
- Energy: 14
- Irrigation: 195
- Agriculture: 4
- Industry: 0



East Afghanistan

Kunar (Asadabad)

Area: 4925.9 km²

No. of districts: 14

Population: 428.8

Rural population: 415.7

Urban Population: 13.1

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 1 Female; 3 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 3 Female; 6 Male

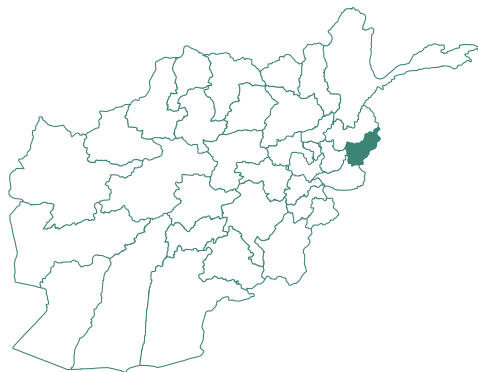
Poverty Rate (%): 62.0

Basic Health Services: 17

Comprehensive Healthcare Services: 8

Development Projects

- Transportation: 13
- Telecommunication: 2
- Energy: 3
- Irrigation: 14
- Agriculture: 1
- Industry: 0



Laghman (Mehtarlam)

Area: 3977.9 km²

No. of districts: 4

Population: 424.1

Rural population: 419.3

Urban Population: 4.8

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 1 Female; 3 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 3 Female; 6 Male

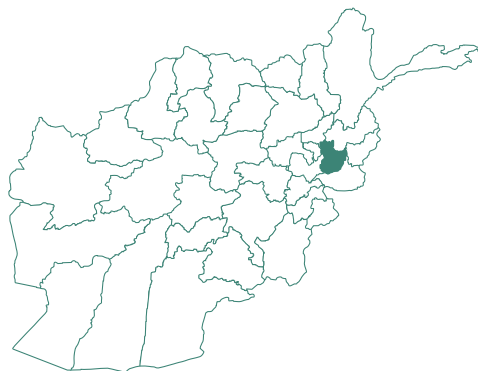
Poverty Rate (%): 66.8

Basic Health Services: 17

Comprehensive Healthcare Services: 8

Development Projects

- Transportation: 33
- Telecommunication: 2
- Energy: 2
- Irrigation: 34
- Agriculture: 1
- Industry: 0



East Afghanistan

Nangarhar (Jalalabad)

Area: 7641.1 km²

No. of districts: 21

Population: 1436.0

Rural population: 1225.0

Urban Population: 211.0

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 4 Female; 14 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 5 Female; 14 Male

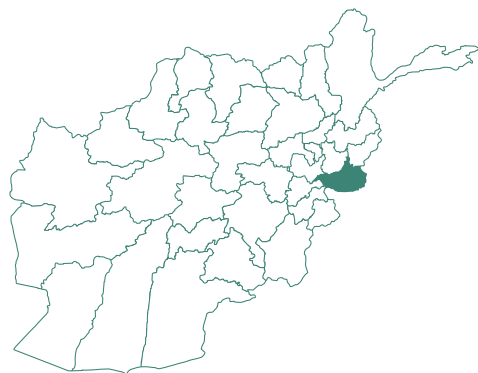
Poverty Rate (%): 33.0

Basic Health Services: 71

Comprehensive Healthcare Services: 19

Development Projects

- Transportation: 106
- Telecommunication: 2
- Energy: 12
- Irrigation: 278
- Agriculture: 3
- Industry: 3



Nooristan (Paroon)

Area: 9266.7 km²

No. of districts: 7

Population: 140.9

Rural population: 140.9

Urban Population: 0

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 1 Female; 1 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 3 Female; 6 Male

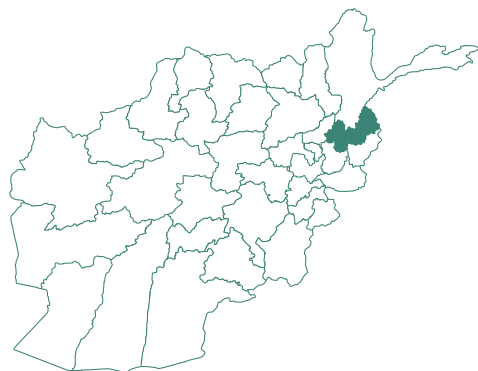
Poverty Rate (%): 49.8

Basic Health Services: 10

Comprehensive Healthcare Services: 2

Development Projects

- Transportation: 16
- Telecommunication: 2
- Energy: 10
- Irrigation: 23
- Agriculture: 1
- Industry: 0



North Afghanistan

Balkh (Mazar-i-Sharif)

Area: 16186.3 km²

No. of districts: 14

Population: 1245.1

Rural population: 794.9

Urban Population: 450.2

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 3 Female; 8 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 5 Female; 14 Male

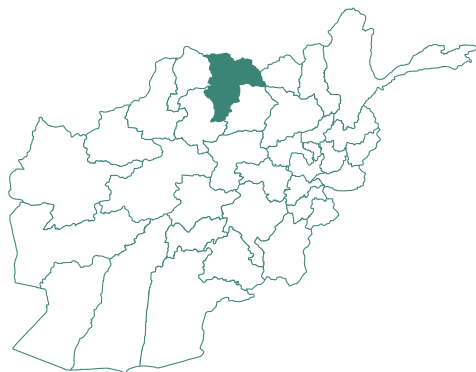
Poverty Rate (%): 60.3

Basic Health Services: 44

Comprehensive Healthcare Services: 14

Development Projects

- Transportation: 157
- Telecommunication: 2
- Energy: 66
- Irrigation: 147
- Agriculture: 5
- Industry: 2



Faryab (Maimana)

Area: 20797.6 km²

No. of districts: 13

Population: 948.0

Rural population: 833.7

Urban Population: 114.3

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 3 Female; 6 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 4 Female; 11 Male

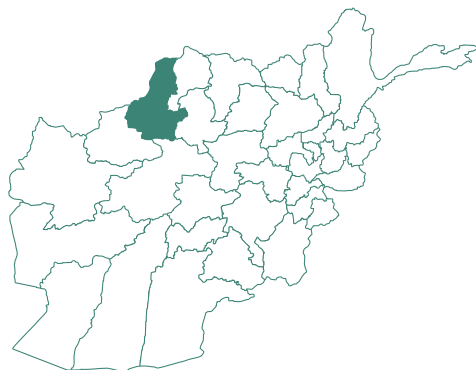
Poverty Rate (%): 29.1

Basic Health Services: 21

Comprehensive Healthcare Services: 16

Development Projects

- Transportation: 114
- Telecommunication: 2
- Energy: 47
- Irrigation: 248
- Agriculture: 2
- Industry: 1



North Afghanistan

Jawzjan (Sheberghan)

Area: 11291.5 km²

No. of districts: 10

Population: 512.1

Rural population: 403.5

Urban Population: 108.6

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 1 Female; 4 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 3 Female; 6 Male

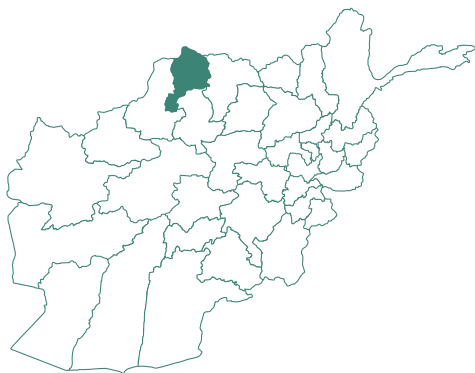
Poverty Rate (%): 14.5

Basic Health Services: 16

Comprehensive Healthcare Services: 7

Development Projects

- Transportation: 41
- Telecommunication: 2
- Energy: 4
- Irrigation: 20
- Agriculture: 3
- Industry: 2



Samangan (Aybak)

Area: 13437.8 km²

No. of districts: 6

Population: 368.8

Rural population: 341.0

Urban Population: 27.8

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 1 Female; 3 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 3 Female; 6 Male

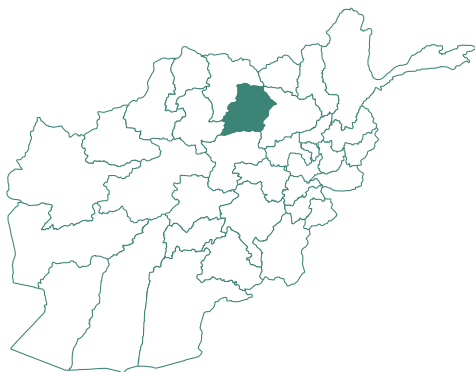
Poverty Rate (%): 55.1

Basic Health Services: 13

Comprehensive Healthcare Services: 5

Development Projects

- Transportation: 12
- Telecommunication: 2
- Energy: 7
- Irrigation: 38
- Agriculture: 5
- Industry: 0



North Afghanistan

Sar-i-Pul (Sar-i-Pul)

Area: 16385.6 km²

No. of districts: 6

Population: 532.0

Rural population: 491.1

Urban Population: 40.9

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 1 Female; 4 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 3 Female; 6 Male

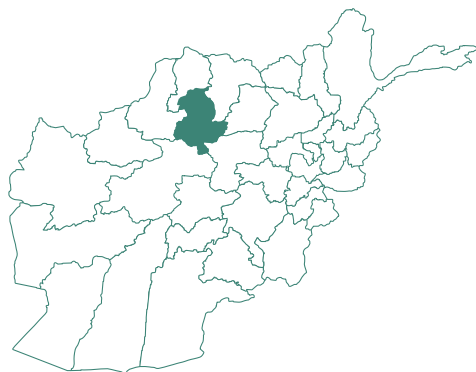
Poverty Rate (%): 24.7

Basic Health Services: 17

Comprehensive Healthcare Services: 8

Development Projects

- Transportation: 65
- Telecommunication: 2
- Energy: 2
- Irrigation: 42
- Agriculture: 1
- Industry: 0

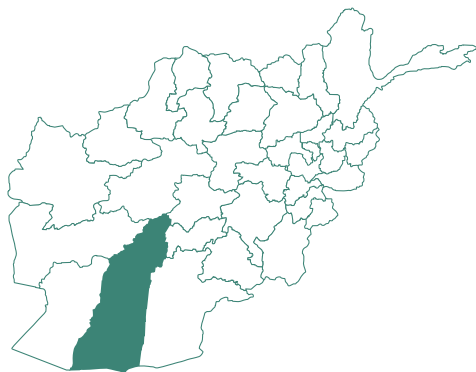


South Afghanistan

Helmand (Lashkar Gah)

Area: 58305.1 km²
 No. of districts: 12
 Population: 879.5
 Rural population: 828.1
 Urban Population: 51.4
 Wolesi Jirga Seats: 2 Female; 6 Male
 Provincial Council Seats: 4 Female; 11 Male
 Poverty Rate (%): 8.9
 Basic Health Services: 29
 Comprehensive Healthcare Services: 15
 Development Projects

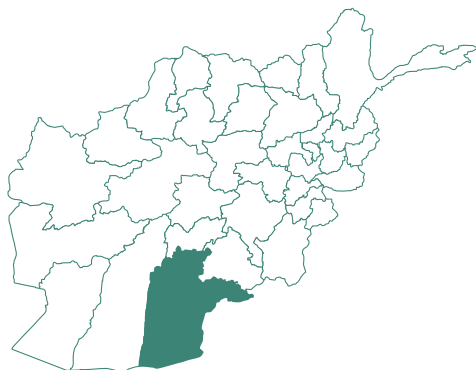
- Transportation: 61
- Telecommunication: 2
- Energy: 2
- Irrigation: 44
- Agriculture: 2
- Industry: 1



Kandahar (Kandahar)

Area: 54844.5 km²
 No. of districts: 15
 Population: 1151.1
 Rural population: 753.6
 Urban Population: 397.5
 Wolesi Jirga Seats: 3 Female; 8 Male
 Provincial Council Seats: 4 Female; 11 Male
 Poverty Rate (%): 22.8
 Basic Health Services: 19
 Comprehensive Healthcare Services: 23
 Development Projects

- Transportation: 112
- Telecommunication: 2
- Energy: 2
- Irrigation: 339
- Agriculture: 1
- Industry: 2



South Afghanistan

Nimroz (Zaranj)

Area: 42409.5 km²

No. of districts: 4

Population: 156.6

Rural population: 131.7

Urban Population: 24.9

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 1 Female; 1 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 3 Female; 6 Male

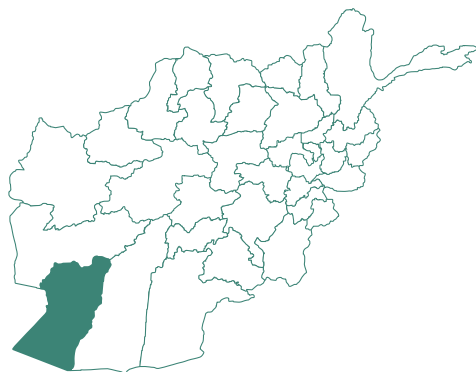
Poverty Rate (%): 24.5

Basic Health Services: 5

Comprehensive Healthcare Services: 2

Development Projects:

- Transportation: 21
- Telecommunication: 2
- Energy: 1
- Irrigation: 5
- Agriculture: 3
- Industry: 1



Uruzgan (Trinkote)

Area: 11473.7 km²

No. of districts: 4

Population: 333.5

Rural population: 323.9

Urban Population: 9.6

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 1 Female; 2 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 3 Female; 6 Male

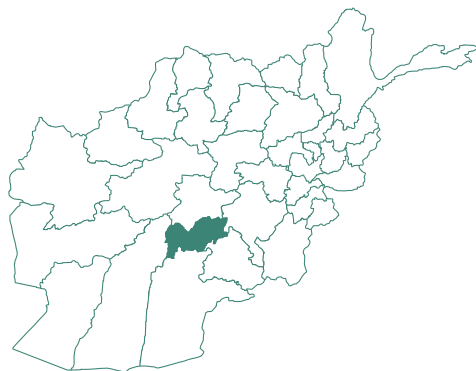
LPoverty Rate (%): 40.8

Basic Health Services: 7

Comprehensive Healthcare Services: 6

Development Projects:

- Transportation: 77
- Telecommunication: 2
- Energy: 1
- Irrigation: 88
- Agriculture: 2
- Industry: 0



South Afghanistan

Zabul (Qalat)

Area: 17471.8 km²

No. of districts: 10

Population: 289.3

Rural population: 277.9

Urban Population: 11.4

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 1 Female; 2 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 3 Female; 6 Male

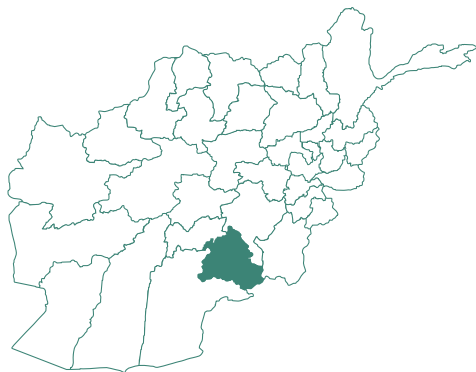
Poverty Rate (%): 37.4

Basic Health Services: 8

Comprehensive Healthcare Services: 7

Development Projects

- Transportation: 37
- Telecommunication: 2
- Energy: 2
- Irrigation: 72
- Agriculture: 1
- Industry: 0



Southwest Afghanistan

Badghis (Qala-i-Naw)

Area: 20794.0 km²

No. of districts: 6

Population: 471.9

Rural population: 458.1

Urban Population: 13.8

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 1 Female; 3 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 3 Female; 6 Male

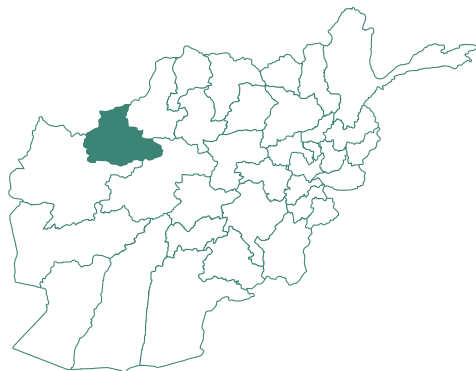
Poverty Rate (%): 41.7

Basic Health Services: 23

Comprehensive Healthcare Services: 3

Development Projects

- Transportation: 70
- Telecommunication: 2
- Energy: 4
- Irrigation: 57
- Agriculture: 3
- Industry: 0



Farah (Farah)

Area: 49339.1 km²

No. of districts: 10

Population: 482.4

Rural population: 447.4

Urban Population: 35.0

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 1 Female; 4 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 3 Female; 6 Male

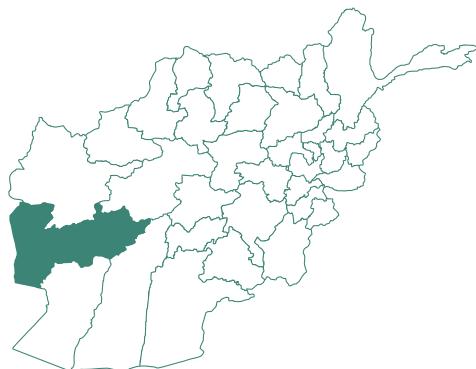
Poverty Rate (%): 12.2

Basic Health Services: 5

Comprehensive Healthcare Services: 11

Development Projects

- Transportation: 89
- Telecommunication: 2
- Energy: 1
- Irrigation: 38
- Agriculture: 1
- Industry: 0



Southwest Afghanistan

Ghor (Chaghcharan)

Area: 36657.4 km²

No. of districts: 9

Population: 657.2

Rural population: 650.5

Urban Population: 6.7

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 2 Female; 4 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 4 Female; 11 Male

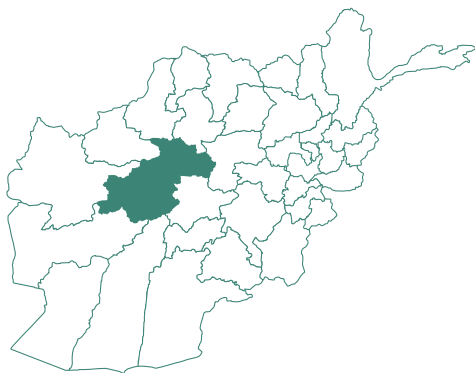
Poverty Rate (%): 44.2

Basic Health Services: 21

Comprehensive Healthcare Services: 8

Development Projects

- Transportation: 96
- Telecommunication: 3
- Energy: 25
- Irrigation: 138
- Agriculture: 1
- Industry: 0



Herat (Herat)

Area: 55868.5 km²

No. of districts: 15

Population: 1780.0

Rural population: 1280.1

Urban Population: 499.9

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 5 Female; 12 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 5 Female; 19 Male

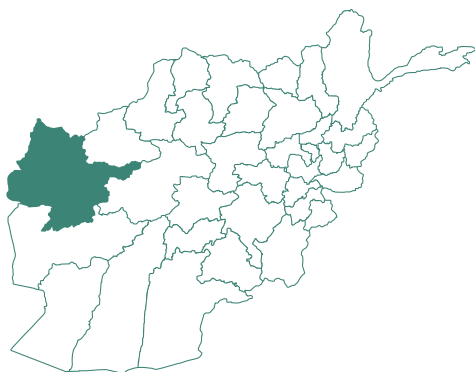
Poverty Rate (%): 38.7

Basic Health Services: 39

Comprehensive Healthcare Services: 25

Development Projects

- Transportation: 126
- Telecommunication: 3
- Energy: 7
- Irrigation: 347
- Agriculture: 4
- Industry: 2



Southeast Afghanistan

Ghazni (Ghazni)

Area: 22460.5 km²

No. of districts: 18

Population: 1168.8

Rural population: 1112.4

Urban Population: 56.4

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 3 Female; 11 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 5 Female; 14 Male

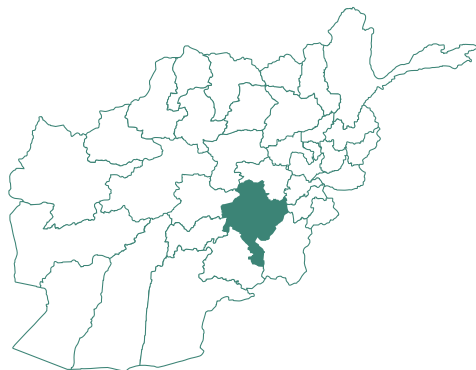
Poverty Rate (%): 19.0

Basic Health Services: 39

Comprehensive Healthcare Services: 26

Development Projects:

- Transportation: 17
- Telecommunication: 2
- Energy: 4
- Irrigation: 47
- Agriculture: 2
- Industry: 0



Khost (Khost)

Area: 4235.3 km²

No. of districts: 12

Population: 546.8

Rural population: 535.8

Urban Population: 11.0

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 1 Female; 4 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 3 Female; 6 Male

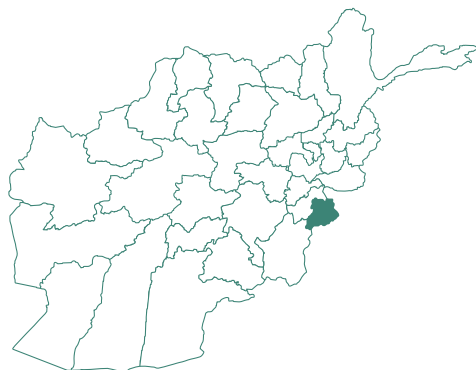
Poverty Rate (%): 47.9

Basic Health Services: 10

Comprehensive Healthcare Services: 12

Development Projects

- Transportation: 23
- Telecommunication: 2
- Energy: 1
- Irrigation: 66
- Agriculture: 2
- Industry: 0



Southeast Afghanistan

Paktika (Sharana)

Area: 19515.9 km²

No. of districts: 18

Population: 413.8

Rural population: 411.2

Urban Population: 2.6

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 1 Female; 3 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 3 Female; 6 Male

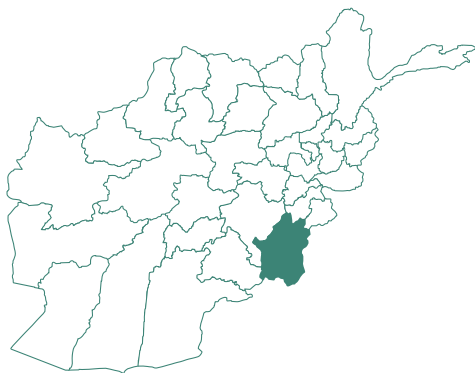
Poverty Rate (%): 76.1

Basic Health Services: 19

Comprehensive Healthcare Services: 4

Development Projects

- Transportation: 3
- Telecommunication: 2
- Energy: 1
- Irrigation: 2
- Agriculture: 1
- Industry: 0



Paktia (Gardez)

Area: 5583.2 km²

No. of districts: 10

Population: 525.0

Rural population: 501.9

Urban Population: 23.1

Wolesi Jirga Seats: 1 Female; 4 Male

Provincial Council Seats: 3 Female; 6 Male

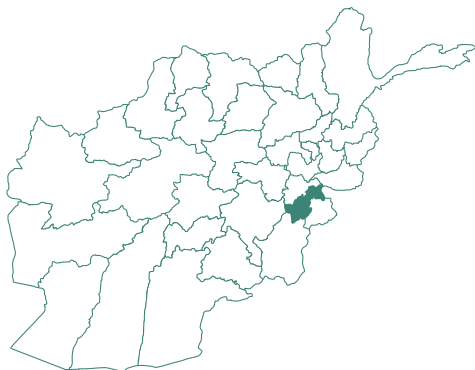
Poverty Rate (%): 60.6

Basic Health Services: 17

Comprehensive Healthcare Services: 8

Development Projects

- Transportation: 19
- Telecommunication: 2
- Energy: 5
- Irrigation: 217
- Agriculture: 3
- Industry: 2





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About this section

This section includes contact information for the assistance community, government agencies, and foreign missions in Afghanistan. It does not generally include private companies.

The information in this directory was updated between October 2014 and January 2015, with occasional updates and additions made throughout the year. However, addresses, phone numbers and email contacts constantly change as organisations relocate and staff turn over. The accuracy of this list relies on the voluntary contributions of the organisations listed, which are encouraged to send any additions or changes to publications@areu.org.af. Organisations can also request that their addresses be omitted.

All organisations' contact details are listed by province. Kabul Province is listed first, with the remaining provinces following in alphabetical order. Within each section, contacts are listed alphabetically by the full title of the organisation.

No distinction is made between mobile, satellite and digital phone lines. Afghan numbers beginning with 070 , 079 , 077 or 078 indicate mobile lines, 0088 indicate satellite lines, and all others indicate digital or ground lines. When calling Afghanistan from other countries, the country code is +93 and the beginning zero should be dropped.

Kabul

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0700157417

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0777328403

0777328404

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Director: Abdul Rahman Hotaki

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0752012958
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0799721469
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0700257672

0786212832

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0752092863

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Administrative & Logistics Officer: Sayed Kai Qubad Rahguzer

Aga Khan Foundation Afghanistan (AKF)

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0795019900
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Laws in Afghanistan

Formal sources of law in Afghanistan are: 1) Islamic law; 2) the 2004 Constitution; 3) codes, decrees and legislation; 4) international treaties and covenants; and 5) various types of regulations and orders. No law can be contrary to the beliefs and provisions of Islam (pursuant to Article 3 of the Constitution), and many of the country's codes and statutes reflect Islamic legal principles.

There have been a number of constitutions in Afghanistan. The constitutions of 1923, 1931, 1964, 1977, 1987 (amended in 1990), and 2004 were all ratified by either Parliaments or Loya Jirgas, while interim constitutions were drafted in 1979, 1980, and 1992, but never ratified. As elsewhere, Afghan legislation must not be in conflict with the Constitution. New legislation and amendments to existing laws must be adopted by the National Assembly and signed by the President, after which they are published (in both Dari and Pashto) in the Official Gazette (or *Rasmi Jaridah*) by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). While many regulations must be published in the Official Gazette, those that affect only the internal operations of a particular ministry need not be sent to the National Assembly for adoption or to the MoJ for publication. Since November 1963, the Official Gazette has been published in a continuously numbered sequence. Before then, individual laws were published in individual pamphlet form and keeping track of them was difficult. Official Gazette no. 787 (SY1378/1999) specifies the manner and requirements of publication and adoption of legislative documents.

There is currently no unified official index of laws, nor any properly functioning system of reporting court cases or decisions (even of the Supreme Court). USAID's Afghanistan Rule of Law Project (AROLP) scanned a full set of the Official Gazette issues and these PDFs are currently available for download from the MoJ website (in Dari and Pashto only—www.moj.gov.af). There is also a full-text searchable database of the Official Gazette laws (Dari and Pashto only) on the MoJ website. Regulations, rules, charters and decrees cover many important legal areas but are not codified or fully assembled anywhere (although many are published in the Official Gazette).

Many international organisations require translations of older or newer laws. Currently, translations are available for some laws at afghantranslation.checciconsulting.com; other (unofficial) translations are also listed in the AREU library catalogue online (www.areu.org.af). Some ministries make PDFs of relevant legislation available on their website (e.g., tax laws on the Ministry of Finance website—www.mof.gov.af; or laws and regulations relevant to elections on the website of the Independent Election Commission— www.iec.org.af).

There is no established citation style for Afghan laws. To fully identify a post-1963 law it is best to cite the Official Gazette number as well as the date (preferably in both local and international date systems), e.g., Law of Procurement (Official Gazette no. 865) 3 Aqrab SY1384 (25 October 2005). For pre-1963 laws the full title and full dates of publication are needed, e.g. Usul Asasi "Constitution" (8 Aqrab SY 1310) 31 October 1931.

The Constitution of Afghanistan (2004)

This is an unofficial translation of the 2004 Constitution of Afghanistan; refer to the official Dari and Pashto versions for accuracy (source: International Development Law Organization; Office of the President website: www.president.gov.af).

Year 1382

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

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In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

Preamble

We the people of Afghanistan:

1. With firm faith in God Almighty and relying on His lawful mercy, and believing in the sacred religion of Islam,
2. Realising the injustice and shortcoming of the past, and the numerous troubles imposed on our country,
3. While acknowledging the sacrifices and the historic struggles, rightful Jihad and just resistance of all people of Afghanistan and respecting the high position of the martyrs for freedom of the country,
4. With the understanding that Afghanistan is a single and united country and belongs to all ethnicities residing in this country,
5. Observing the United Nations Charter and respecting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
6. For strengthening national unity, safeguarding independence, national sovereignty, and territorial integrity of the country,
7. For establishing a government based on people's will and democracy,

8. For creation of a civil society free of oppression, atrocity, discrimination, and violence and based on the rule of law, social justice, protection of human rights and dignity and ensuring the fundamental rights and freedoms of the people,
9. For strengthening the political, social, economic, and defensive institutions of the country,
10. For ensuring a prosperous life and sound environment for all those residing in this land,
11. Finally, for regaining Afghanistan's deserved place in the international community, have adopted this Constitution in accordance with historical, cultural, and social requirements of the era, through our elected representatives in the Loya Jirga dated 14 Jaddi 1382 in the city of Kabul.

Chapter One: The State

- Article 1 • Afghanistan is an Islamic Republic, and an independent, unitary and indivisible state.
- Article 2 • The religion of the state of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan is the sacred religion of Islam.
- Followers of other religions are free to exercise their faith and perform their religious rites within the limits of the provisions of law.
- Article 3 • In Afghanistan no law can be contrary to the beliefs and provisions of the sacred religion of Islam.
- Article 4 • National sovereignty in Afghanistan belongs to the nation that exercises it directly or through its representatives.
- The nation of Afghanistan consists of all individuals who are the citizens of Afghanistan.
 - The nation of Afghanistan is comprised of Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek, Turkman, Baluch, Pashai, Nuristani, Aymaq, Arab, Qirghiz, Qizilbash, Gujur, Brahwui and other ethnic groups.
 - The word Afghan applies to every citizen of Afghanistan.
 - No member of the nation can be deprived of his/her citizenship of Afghanistan.
 - Affairs related to citizenship and asylum are regulated by law.
- Article 5 • Implementation of the provisions of this constitution and other laws, defending independence, national sovereignty, territorial integrity, and ensuring the security and defence capability of the country, are the basic duties of the state.
- Article 6 • The state is obliged to create a prosperous and progressive society based on social justice, protection of human dignity, protection of human rights, realisation of democracy, and to ensure national unity and equality among all ethnic groups and tribes and to provide for balanced development in all areas of the country.

- Article 7 • The state shall observe the Charter of the United Nations, international treaties, international conventions that Afghanistan is a party to, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- The state prevents all types of terrorist activities, cultivation and smuggling of narcotic drugs, and production and consumption of intoxicants.
- Article 8 • The state regulates the foreign policy of the country on the basis of preserving independence, national interests, territorial integrity, non-interference, good neighbourliness, mutual respect, and equal rights.
- Article 9 • Mines and other underground resources and cultural heritages are the properties of the state.
- Protection, management and mode of proper utilisation of public properties shall be regulated by law.
- Article 10 • The state encourages and protects private investments and enterprises based on the market economy and guarantees their protection in accordance with the provisions of law.
- Article 11 • Affairs related to domestic and external trade shall be regulated by law in accordance with the needs of the national economy and the public interest.
- Article 12 • Da Afghanistan Bank is the central and independent bank of the state.
- Issuance of currency and formulation and implementation of monetary policy of the country are the mandates of the central bank in accordance with the law.
- The central bank shall consult the economic commission of the Wolesi Jirga in matters related to printing of currency.
- Structure and operation of this bank shall be regulated by law.
- Article 13 • The state shall formulate and implement effective programmes for the development of industries, growth of production, increase of public living standards, and support of craftsmanship.
- Article 14 • The state shall design and implement within its financial resources effective programmes for the development of agriculture and animal husbandry, improving the economic, social and living conditions of farmers, herders, and settlements and living conditions of the nomads.
- The state adopts necessary measures for housing and distribution of public estates to deserving citizens in accordance within its financial resources and the law.
- Article 15 • The state is obliged to adopt necessary measures for safeguarding and improving forests and the environment.

- Article 16 • From among the languages of Pashto, Dari, Uzbeki, Turkmani, Baluchi, Pashai, Nuristani, Pamiri and other languages spoken in the country, Pashto and Dari are the official languages of the state.
- In areas where the majority of people speak one of the Uzbeki, Turkmani, Baluchi, Pashai, Nuristani and Pamiri languages, that language shall be recognised as third official language in addition to Pashto and Dari, the modality of its implementation shall be regulated by law.
 - The state adopts and implements effective plans for strengthening and developing all languages of Afghanistan.
 - Publications and mass media are allowed in all languages spoken in the country.
 - The existing national academic and administrative terminology of the country shall be preserved.
- Article 17 • The state shall adopt necessary measures for promotion of education in all levels, development of religious education, and organising and improving the conditions of mosques, madrasas and religious centres.
- Article 18 • The calendar of the country shall be based on the migration of the Prophet (Peace be upon Him).
- The basis of work for state offices shall be the solar calendar.
 - Fridays and the 28th of Asad and the 8th of Sawr are public holidays.
 - Other holidays shall be regulated by law.
- Article 19 • The Afghan flag is made up of three equal parts, with black, red and green colours juxtaposed from left to right perpendicularly.
- The width of every coloured piece is equal to half of its length. The national insignia is located in the centre of the flag. The national insignia of the state of Afghanistan is composed of a Mehrab and pulpit in white colour. Two flags are located on its two sides. In the upper-middle part of the insignia the sacred phrase of "There is no God but Allah and Mohammad is his prophet, and Allah is Great" is placed, along with a rising sun. The word "Afghanistan" and year 1298 (solar calendar) is located in the lower part of the insignia. The insignia is encircled with two branches of wheat.
 - The law shall regulate the use of national flag and emblem.
- Article 20 • The National Anthem of Afghanistan shall be in Pashto and mention "Allahu Akbar" and the names of the ethnic groups of Afghanistan.
- Article 21 • The capital of Afghanistan is the city of Kabul.

Chapter Two: The Fundamental Rights and Duties of Citizens

- Article 22 • Any kind of discrimination and privilege between the citizens of Afghanistan is prohibited.
- The citizens of Afghanistan—whether woman or man—have equal rights and duties before the law.
- Article 23 • Life is a gift of God and a natural right of human beings. No one shall be deprived of this right except by the provision of law.
- Article 24 • Liberty is the natural right of human beings. This right has no limits unless affecting the rights of others and public interest, which are regulated by law.
- The liberty and dignity of human beings are inviolable.
 - The state has the duty to respect and protect the liberty and dignity of human beings.
- Article 25 • Innocence is the original state.
- An accused is considered innocent until convicted by a final decision of an authorised court.
- Article 26 • Crime is a personal action.
- The prosecution, arrest, and detention of an accused and the execution of penalty cannot affect another person.
- Article 27 • No act is considered a crime, unless determined by a law adopted prior to the date the offence is committed.
- No person can be pursued, arrested or detained but in accordance with the provisions of law.
 - No person can be punished but in accordance with the decision of an authorised court and in conformity with the law adopted before the date of the offence.
- Article 28 • No citizen of Afghanistan accused of a crime can be extradited to a foreign state unless according to mutual agreement and international conventions that Afghanistan has joined.
- No Afghan can be sentenced to deprivation of citizenship or to exile inside the country or abroad.
- Article 29 • Torture of human beings is prohibited.
- No person, even with the intention of discovering the truth, can resort to torture or order the torture of another person who may be under prosecution, arrest, detention or convicted to be punished.

- Punishment contrary to human integrity is prohibited.
- Article 30 • Any statement, confession or testimony obtained from an accused or of another person by means of compulsion, is invalid.
- Confession to a crime is a voluntary admission before an authorised court by an accused in a sound state of mind.
- Article 31 • Every person upon arrest can seek an advocate to defend his/her rights or to defend his/her case for which he/she is accused under the law.
- The accused upon arrest has the right to be informed of the attributed accusation and to be summoned to the court within the limits determined by law.
 - In criminal cases, the state shall appoint an advocate for a destitute.
 - The confidentiality of oral, written or telephonic communications between an advocate and his/her accused client are immune from invasion.
 - The duties and authorities of advocates shall be regulated by law.
- Article 32 • Being in debt does not limit a person's freedom or deprive him/her of liberty.
- The mode and means of recovering a debt shall be regulated by law.
- Article 33 • The citizens of Afghanistan have the right to elect and be elected.
- Law regulates the conditions and means to exercise this right.
- Article 34 • Freedom of expression is inviolable.
- Every Afghan has the right to express thoughts through speech, writing, or illustration or other means by observing the provisions of this Constitution.
 - Every Afghan has the right to print or publish topics without prior submission to the state authorities in accordance with the law.
 - Directives related to printing houses, radio, television, the press, and other mass media, shall be regulated by law.
- Article 35 • The citizens of Afghanistan have the right to form social organisations for the purpose of securing material or spiritual aims in accordance with the provisions of law.
- The citizens of Afghanistan have the right to form political parties in accordance with the provisions of law, provided that:
 1. The programme and charter of the party are not contrary to the principles of sacred religion of Islam, and the provisions and values of this Constitution.
 2. The organisational structure and financial sources of the party are made public.

3. The party does not have military or paramilitary aims and structures.
 4. The party should have no affiliation to a foreign political party or sources.
 - Formation and functioning of a party based on ethnicity, language, religious sect and region is not permissible.
 - A party set up in accordance with provisions of the law shall not be dissolved without lawful reasons and the decision of an authorised court.
- Article 36 • The citizens of Afghanistan have the right to unarmed demonstrations for legitimate peaceful purposes in accordance with the law.
- Article 37 • Confidentiality and freedom of correspondence and communication, whether in the form of letters or through telephone, telegraph and other means, are immune from invasion.
- The state does not have the right to inspect personal correspondence and communication unless authorised by the provisions of law.
- Article 38 • A person's residence is immune from invasion.
- Other than the situations and methods indicated in the law, no one, including the state, is allowed to enter or inspect a private residence without prior permission of the resident or holding a court order.
 - In case of an evident crime, an official in charge of the situation can enter or conduct a house search prior to the permission of the court.
 - The official involved in the situation is required to obtain a subsequent court order for the house search within the period indicated by law.
- Article 39 • Every Afghan has the right to travel or settle in any part of the country except in the regions forbidden by law.
- Every Afghan has the right to travel abroad and return home in accordance with the provisions of law.
 - The state shall protect the rights of the citizens of Afghanistan abroad.
- Article 40 • Property is immune from invasion.
- No person shall be forbidden from acquiring and making use of property except within the limits of law.
 - No person's property shall be confiscated without the provisions of law and the order of an authorised court.
 - Acquisition of a person's property, in return for a prior and just compensation within the bounds of law, is permitted only for securing public interests in accordance with the provisions of law.

- Inspection and disclosure of private property are carried out only in accordance with the provisions of law.
- Article 41 • Foreign individuals do not have the right to own immovable property in Afghanistan.
- Lease of immovable property for the purpose of investment is permissible in accordance with the law.
 - The sale of estates to diplomatic missions of foreign countries and to those international agencies of which Afghanistan is a member is permissible in accordance with the provisions of law.
- Article 42 • Every Afghan is obligated to pay taxes and duties to the government in accordance with the provisions of law.
- No taxes and duties are enforced without provisions of the law.
 - The rate of taxes and duties and the method of payments are determined by law on the basis of observing social justice.
 - This provision is also applied to foreign individuals and agencies.
 - Every kind of tax, duty and income collected shall be delivered to the state account.
- Article 43 • Education is the right of all citizens of Afghanistan, which shall be provided up to the level of the Bachelors free of charge by the state.
- The state is obliged to devise and implement effective programs for a balanced expansion of education all over Afghanistan, and to provide compulsory intermediate level education. The state is also required to provide the opportunity to teach native languages in the areas where they are spoken.
- Article 44 • The state shall devise and implement effective programs for balancing and promoting education for women, improving of education of the nomads and elimination of illiteracy in the country.
- Article 45 • The state shall devise and implement a unified educational curriculum based on the provisions of the sacred religion of Islam, national culture, and in accordance with academic principles, and develop the curriculum of religious subjects on the basis of the Islamic sects existing in Afghanistan.
- Article 46 • Establishing and operating higher, general and vocational education are duties of the state.
- The citizens of Afghanistan also can establish higher, general, and vocational private educational institutions and literacy courses with the permission of the state.

- The state can also permit foreign persons to set up higher, general and vocational educational private institutes in accordance with the law.
 - The conditions for admission to state higher education institutions and other related matters are regulated by law.
- Article 47 • The state shall devise effective programs for the promotion of science, culture, literature and the arts.
- The state guarantees the rights of authors, inventors, and discoverers, encourages and supports scientific researches in all areas, and publicises the effective use of their results in accordance with the law.
- Article 48 • Work is the right of every Afghan.
- Working hours, paid holidays, rights of employer and employee and other related affairs are regulated by law.
 - Choice of occupation and craft is free within the limits of law.
- Article 49 • Forced labour is forbidden.
- Active participation in times of war, calamity, and other situations threatening lives and public welfare is a national duty of every Afghan.
 - Children shall not be subjected to forced labour.
- Article 50 • The state is obliged to adopt necessary measures for creation of a strong and sound administration and realisation of reforms in the administration system of the country.
- Government offices are bound to carry out their work with full neutrality and in compliance with the provisions of law.
 - The citizens of Afghanistan have the right of access to information from government offices in accordance with the provisions of law. This right has no limits, unless in violation of the rights of the others.
 - The citizens of Afghanistan are employed for state services on the basis of qualification without any kind of discrimination and in accordance with the law.
- Article 51 • Any person suffering undue harm by government action is entitled to compensation, which he can claim by appealing to court.
- With the exception of situations stated in the law, the state cannot claim its right without the order of an authorised court.
- Article 52 • The state is obliged to provide free means of preventive health care and medical treatment, and proper health facilities to all citizens of Afghanistan in accordance with the law.

- The state encourages and protects the establishment and expansion of private medical services and health centres in accordance with law.
 - The state adopts necessary measures to promote physical education and improve national and local sports.
- Article 53 • The state takes necessary measures for regulating medical services and financial support to descendants of martyred and lost, re-integration of disabled and handicapped individuals and their active participation in society in accordance with the law.
- The state guarantees the rights of pensioners and renders necessary assistance to needy elders, women without caretakers, disabled and handicapped individuals and needy orphans in accordance with the law.
- Article 54 • Family is a fundamental unit of society and is supported by the state.
- The state adopts necessary measures to ensure the physical and psychological well-being of the family, especially of child and mother, upbringing of children and the elimination of traditions contrary to the principles of the sacred religion of Islam.
- Article 55 • The defence of the country is the responsibility of all citizens of Afghanistan.
- The conditions for military service are regulated by law.
- Article 56 • Observing the provisions of the Constitution, obeying the laws, and adhering to public law and order are the duties of all people of Afghanistan.
- Ignorance about the provisions of law is not considered an excuse.
- Article 57 • The state guarantees the rights and liberties of foreign citizens residing in Afghanistan in accordance with the law. These people are obliged to observe the laws of the state of Afghanistan in accordance with International Law.
- Article 58 • The State, for the purpose of monitoring the observation of human rights in Afghanistan, and their promotion and protection, shall establish the Independent Human Rights Commission of Afghanistan.
- Any person in case of a violation of his/her rights can report their complaint to this Commission.
 - The Commission can refer cases of violations of the human rights of persons to legal authorities, and assist them in defending their rights.
 - The structure and mode of function of this Commission will be regulated by law.
- Article 59 • No one can misuse the rights and freedoms under this Constitution against independence, territorial integrity, sovereignty and national unity.

Chapter Three: The President

- Article 60 • The President is the head of state of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, and conducts authority in executive, legislative, and judicial branches in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution.
- The President shall have first and second Vice Presidents.
 - The candidate to the Presidency on his or her candidacy shall also declare the names of the Vice Presidents to the nation.
 - The first Vice President in the absence, resignation, or death of the President acts in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution.
 - In the absence of the First Vice President, the Second Vice President shall act in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution.
- Article 61 • The President is elected by receiving more than 50 percent of the votes cast through free, general, secret, and direct voting.
- The presidential term expires on the first of Jawza of the fifth year after the elections.
 - Elections for the new President are held thirty to sixty days before the end of the presidential term.
 - If none of the candidates succeeds in receiving more than 50 percent of the votes in the first round, a run-off election shall be held within two weeks.
 - In this round, only the two candidates with the highest number of votes will participate.
 - In the run-off, the candidate who gets the majority of the votes shall be elected as the President.
 - In case of death of one of the candidates during the first or second round, after the elections or prior to the announcement of the results of elections, new elections shall be held in accordance with the provisions of law.
- Article 62 • Presidential candidates should possess the following qualifications:
1. Should be citizens of Afghanistan, Muslim and born of Afghan parents, and should not have citizenship of another country.
 2. On the day of becoming a candidate, his/her age should not be less than 40 years.
 3. Should not have been convicted of crimes against humanity, a criminal act, or deprived of their civil rights by a court.
- No one can be elected as president for more than two terms.
 - The provision of this article applies to the Vice Presidents as well.

- Article 63 • The President-elect, prior to assumption of his/her duties, performs the following oath in accordance with the rules of procedures prescribed by law:

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate; In the name of God Almighty, in the presence of you representatives of the nation of Afghanistan, I swear to obey and safeguard the provisions of the sacred religion of Islam, to observe the Constitution and other laws of Afghanistan and supervise their implementation; to safeguard the independence, national sovereignty, and the territorial integrity of Afghanistan and the fundamental rights and interests of the people of Afghanistan, and with the assistance of God and the support of the nation, to make great and sincere efforts for the happiness and progress of the people of Afghanistan.

- Article 64 • The power and duties of the President are as follows:

1. Supervising the implementation of the Constitution
2. Determining the fundamental policies of the state with the approval of the National Assembly
3. Being the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces of Afghanistan
4. Declaration of war and ceasefire with the confirmation of the National Assembly
5. Taking the required decisions to defend territorial integrity and protect independence
6. Sending contingents of the armed forces to foreign countries with the confirmation of the National Assembly
7. Convening the Loya Jirga except in the situation stated in Article 68 of this Constitution
8. Declaring the state of emergency and ending it with the confirmation of the National Assembly
9. Inaugurating the National Assembly and the Loya Jirga
10. Accepting resignation of the Vice Presidents
11. Appointing Ministers, the Attorney General, the Governor of the Central Bank, Head of the National Security Directorate and the President of the Afghan Red Crescent Society with the confirmation of the Wolesi Jirga, dismissing them and accepting their resignations
12. Appointing the head and members of the Supreme Court with the confirmation of the Wolesi Jirga
13. Appointing, retiring and accepting the resignation of and dismissing judges, officers of the armed forces, police, national security, and high-ranking officials in accordance with the law

14. Appointing heads of the diplomatic missions of Afghanistan in foreign countries and international organisations
 15. Accepting the credentials of diplomatic missions in Afghanistan
 16. Signing laws and legislative decrees
 17. Issuing credential letters for the conclusion of bilateral and international treaties in accordance with the provisions of law
 18. Reducing and pardoning penalties in accordance with the law
 19. Issuing medals and honorary titles in accordance with the provisions of law
 20. Establishing commissions for the improvement of the administrative condition of the country, in accordance with the law
 21. Exercising other authorities in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution
- Article 65 • The President can call for a referendum on important national political, social or economic issues.
- Calling for a referendum shall not be contrary to the provisions of this Constitution or for amending it.
- Article 66 • The President takes into consideration the supreme interests of the people of Afghanistan while enforcing the powers stated in this Constitution.
- The President cannot sell or bestow state properties without the provisions of law.
 - The President cannot act based on linguistic, ethnic, religious, political, and regional considerations during his/her term in office.
- Article 67 • In case of resignation, impeachment, or death of the President, or of a serious illness that could hinder the performance of duties, the First Vice President undertakes his/her duties and authorities.
- The President submits his/her resignation personally to the National Assembly.
 - Serious illness shall be proved by an authorised medical committee appointed by the Supreme Court.
 - In this case, an election for a new President shall be held within the period of three months in accordance with Article 61 of this Constitution.
 - During the time when the First Vice President acts as the interim President, he/she cannot perform the following:
 1. Amendment of the Constitution
 2. Dismissal of Ministers
 3. Call for a referendum

- During this period the Vice Presidents can nominate themselves as candidates for the post of President in accordance with the provisions of this constitution.
- In the absence of the President, the duties of the First Vice President shall be determined by the President.

Article 68 • In case of resignation or death of one of the Vice Presidents, another person shall replace him/her by the proposal of the President and approval of the Wolesi Jirga.

- In case of the simultaneous death of the President and the First Vice President, in turn the Second Vice President, the Chair of the Meshrano Jirga and in the absence of the chair of the Meshrano Jirga, the Chair of the Wolesi Jirga, and in the absence of the Chair of the Wolesi Jirga, the Foreign Minister shall perform the duties of the President in accordance with Article 67 of this Constitution.

Article 69 • The President is responsible to the nation and the Wolesi Jirga according to this Article.

- Accusations of crimes against humanity, national treason or crime can be levelled against the President by one-third of the members of the Wolesi Jirga.
- If two-thirds of the Wolesi Jirga votes for charges to be brought forth, the Wolesi Jirga shall convene a Loya Jirga within one month. If the Loya Jirga approves the accusation by a two-thirds majority of votes the President is then dismissed, and the case is referred to a special court. The special court shall be composed of three members of the Wolesi Jirga, and three members of the Supreme Court appointed by the Loya Jirga and the Chair of the Meshrano Jirga.
- The lawsuit is conducted by a person appointed by the Loya Jirga.
- In this situation, the provisions of Article 67 of this Constitution are applied.

Article 70 • The salary and expenditures of the President are regulated by law.

- After the expiration of their term, the President is entitled to the financial benefits of the presidency for the rest of his/her life in accordance with the law except in the case of dismissal.

Chapter Four: The Government

Article 71 • The government consists of the Ministers who work under the Chairmanship of the President.

- The number of Ministers and their duties shall be regulated by law.

Article 72 • A person who is appointed as a Minister should have the following qualifications:

1. Must have only the citizenship of Afghanistan. Should a nominee for a ministerial post also hold the citizenship of another country, the Wolesi Jirga shall have the right to confirm or reject his or her nomination.
2. Should have higher education, work experience and good reputation.
3. His/her age should not be less than 35.
4. Should not have been convicted of crimes against humanity, a criminal act, or deprived of civil rights by a court.

Article 73 • The Ministers can be appointed from within and without the National Assembly.

- If a member of the National Assembly is appointed as a minister, he/she loses his/her membership in the National Assembly, and is replaced by another person in accordance with the provisions of law.

Article 74 • Prior to taking office, the Minister shall perform the following oath in the presence of the President:

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate: I swear in the name of God Almighty to support the provisions of the sacred religion of Islam, follow the Constitution and other laws of Afghanistan, protect the rights of citizens, and safeguard the independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Afghanistan, and consider God Almighty present in performing all my responsibilities, and honestly perform the duties assigned to me.

Article 75 • The government shall have the following duties:

1. Execute the provisions of this Constitution, other laws, and final orders of the courts
2. Protect the independence, defend the territorial integrity, and safeguard the interests and dignity of Afghanistan in the international community
3. Maintenance of public law and order and elimination of administrative corruption
4. Prepare the budget, regulate financial affairs and protect public wealth
5. Devise and implement programmes for social, cultural, economic, and technological progress
6. Report to the National Assembly at the end of the fiscal year about the tasks accomplished and about the main plans for the new fiscal year
7. Perform other duties as recognised by this Constitution and other laws to be duties of the government

- Article 76 • In order to implement the main policies of the country and regulation of its duties, the government shall devise and approve regulations. These regulations should not be contradictory to the text and spirit of any law.
- Article 77 • As heads of administrative units and members of the government, the Ministers perform their duties within the limits determined by this Constitution and other laws.
- The Ministers are responsible to the President and the Wolesi Jirga for their particular duties.
- Article 78 • If a Minister is accused of crime against humanity, national treason or a criminal act, the case shall be referred to a special court in accordance with Article 134 of this Constitution.
- Article 79 • In cases of recess of the Wolesi Jirga, the government can adopt legislation in an emergency situation on matters other than those related to budget and financial affairs.
- The legislative decrees become laws after they are signed by the President. The legislative decrees should be submitted to the National Assembly in the course of thirty days beginning from the first session of the National Assembly.
 - In case of rejection by the National Assembly, the legislations become void.
- Article 80 • Ministers during the course of their work cannot use their posts for linguistic, regional, ethnic, religious and partisan purposes.

Chapter Five: The National Assembly

- Article 81 • The National Assembly of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, as the highest legislative organ, is the manifestation of the will of its people and represents the whole nation.
- Every member of the National Assembly takes into judgment the general welfare and supreme interests of all people of Afghanistan at the time of casting their vote.
- Article 82 • The National Assembly consists of two houses: Wolesi Jirga (the House of People) and Meshrano Jirga (House of Elders).
- No one can become a member of both houses simultaneously.
- Article 83 • Members of the Wolesi Jirga are elected by the people through free, general, secret and direct elections.
- Their mandate ends on the 1st of Saratan of the fifth year after the elections and the new assembly starts its work.

- The election of the members of the Wolesi Jirga shall be held 30 to 60 days before the expiry of the term of the Wolesi Jirga.
- The number of members of the Wolesi Jirga, proportionate to the population of each region, shall be not more than two hundred and fifty.
- Electoral constituency and other related issues shall be determined by election laws.
- In the Election Law, measures should be adopted so the election system shall provide general and just representation for all the people of the country and based on the population, from each province on average at least two female delegates shall have membership to the Wolesi Jirga.

Article 84 • Members of the Meshrano Jirga are elected and appointed as follows:

1. From among the members of each Provincial Council, the respective council elects one person for a period of four years.
 2. From among the District Councils of each province, the respective councils elect one person for a period of three years.
 3. The President appoints the remaining one-third of the members for a period of five years from among experts and experienced personalities, including two representatives of the disabled and impaired and two representatives from the Nomads.
- The president appoints 50 percent of these people from among women.
 - A person who is appointed as a member of the Meshrano Jirga shall relinquish their membership in the respective council, and another person replaces him/her in accordance with the law.

Article 85 • A person who is nominated or appointed as a member of the National Assembly should have the following qualifications in addition to those considered by voters:

1. Should be a citizen of Afghanistan, or has obtained citizenship of the state of Afghanistan at least ten years before becoming a candidate or being appointed.
2. Should not have been convicted by a court for committing a crime against humanity, a crime, or sentenced to deprivation of his/her civil rights.
3. Members of the Wolesi Jirga should be at least 25 years old at the date of candidacy and members of the Meshrano Jirga should be at least 35 years old at the date of candidacy or appointment.

Article 86 • Credentials of members of the National Assembly are reviewed by the Independent Election Commission in accordance with the law.

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- Article 87 • In the beginning of the legislative period, each one of the two houses elects one of its members as the Chairperson for one legislative period, and two people as the first and second Vice Chairperson, and two people as the Secretary and Assistant Secretary for a period of one year.
- These individuals constitute the Bureau in their respective houses.
 - The duties of the Bureau are determined in the regulations pertaining to the internal duties of each house.
- Article 88 • Each house of the National Assembly sets up commissions to study the topics under discussion in accordance with its internal regulations.
- Article 89 • The Wolesi Jirga has the authority to set up a special commission if one-third of its members put forward a proposal to inquire about and study government actions.
- The composition and procedure of this commission is specified in the internal regulations of Wolesi Jirga.
- Article 90 • The National Assembly has the following authorities:
1. Ratification, modification, or abrogation of laws and or legislative decrees
 2. Approval of plans for economic, social, cultural, and technological development
 3. Approval of state budget, permission for obtaining and granting loans
 4. Creation, modification, and or abrogation of administrative units
 5. Ratification of international treaties and agreements, or abrogation of the membership of Afghanistan to them
 6. Other authorities specified in this Constitution
- Article 91 • The Wolesi Jirga has the following special authorities:
- Deciding on interrogation of Ministers in accordance with the provisions of Article 92 of this Constitution.
 - Taking decisions about the State's development programmes and the State budget.
 - Approval or rejection of the appointments according to the provisions of this Constitution.
- Article 92 • The Wolesi Jirga, based on a proposal by 20 percent of its members, can interrogate a Minister.
- If the responses given are not satisfactory, Wolesi Jirga shall consider a vote of no confidence.

- The vote of no confidence in a Minister shall be explicit, direct, and on the basis of well-founded reasons. This vote should be approved by a majority of all members of the Wolesi Jirga.
- Article 93 • Any commission of both Houses of the National Assembly can question each of the Ministers about specific topics.
- The person questioned can provide verbal or written response.
- Article 94 • Law is what both Houses of the National Assembly approve and the President endorses unless this Constitution states otherwise.
- In case the President does not agree to what the National Assembly approves, he can send the document back with justifiable reasons to the Wolesi Jirga within 15 days of its submission. With the passage of this period or in case the Wolesi Jirga approves a particular case again with a majority of two-thirds votes, the bill is considered endorsed and enforced.
- Article 95 • Proposal for the promulgation of a law can be initiated by the government, or members of the National Assembly, and in the domain of regulating judicial affairs through the Supreme Court by the government. Proposals for drafting the budget and financial affairs laws shall be made only by the government.
- Article 96 • If a proposal for the promulgation of law includes imposition of new taxes or reduction in State incomes, it is included in the working agenda on condition that an alternative source is also envisioned.
- Article 97 • Proposals for promulgation of law initiated by the government are submitted first to the Wolesi Jirga.
- The Wolesi Jirga approves or rejects as a whole the proposal for promulgation of law including budget and financial affairs and the proposal of taking or giving a loan after discussion.
 - The Wolesi Jirga cannot delay the proposal more than one month.
 - The proposed draft of law is submitted to the Meshrano Jirga, after its approval by the Wolesi Jirga.
 - The Meshrano Jirga decides on the draft within a period of 15 days.
 - The National Assembly shall give priority to the promulgation of laws, treaties, and development plans of the government that require urgent consideration and decision as per the request of the government.
 - If a proposal for promulgation of law is initiated by ten members of one of the two Houses and then approved by one-fifth members of the respective houses, it can be admitted to the agenda of the respective houses.

- Article 98 • The state budget and development plan of the government is submitted through the Meshrano Jirga along with advisory comments to the Wolesi Jirga.
- The decision of the Wolesi Jirga, irrespective of the consent of the Meshrano Jirga, is enforceable after it is signed by the President.
 - If for some reason the budget is not approved before the beginning of the new fiscal year, the budget of the year before is applied until the approval of the new budget.
 - The government is obligated to give to the Wolesi Jirga the budget of the new fiscal year and a brief account of the current year's budget within the fourth quarter of the fiscal year.
 - The definite account of the previous fiscal year shall be submitted by the government to the Wolesi Jirga within six months of the new year, in accordance with the provisions of law.
 - The Wolesi Jirga cannot delay the approval of the budget for more than one month or permission to give or take a loan for more than 15 days.
 - If during this period the Wolesi Jirga does not take any decision with regards to taking or giving a loan, the proposal will be considered as approved.
- Article 99 • If, during a session of the National Assembly, the annual budget or a developmental plan or an issue related to public security, territorial integrity, and the country's independence is under discussion, the session of the Assembly cannot end before the approval of the matter.
- Article 100 • In case the decision of one house is rejected by another house, a combined committee composed of equal members of each house is formed to resolve the disagreement.
- The decision of the committee is enforced after its approval by the President.
 - In case the combined committee cannot solve the disagreement, the defeated resolution is considered void.
 - In this case the Wolesi Jirga can approve it at the next session of the Wolesi Jirga by a two-thirds majority vote of its all members.
 - This approval is assumed as enforceable, after it is signed by the President, without submission to the Meshrano Jirga.
- Article 101 • No member of the National Assembly is legally prosecutable for expressing his /her views while performing their duty.
- Article 102 • When a member of the National Assembly is accused of a crime, the law enforcement authority informs the house of which the accused is member about the case, and the accused member can be prosecuted.

- In case of an evident crime, the law enforcement authority can legally pursue and arrest the accused without the permission of the house of which the accused is a member.
 - In both cases, when legal prosecution requires detention of the accused, law enforcement authorities are obligated to inform the respective house about the case immediately.
 - If the accusation takes place when the National Assembly is in recess, the permission of arrest is obtained from the administrative board of the respective house and the decision of this board is presented to the first session of the aforementioned house for a decision.
- Article 103 • The Ministers can participate in the sessions of each one of the two houses of the National Assembly.
- Each house of the National Assembly can demand that Ministers take part in its session.
- Article 104 • Both houses of the National Assembly hold their sessions separately at the same time.
- Under the following circumstances, both houses can hold joint sessions:
 1. When the legislative session or the annual session is inaugurated by the President
 2. When it is deemed necessary by the President
 - In this case, the head of the Wolesi Jirga chairs the joint session of the National Assembly.
- Article 105 • The sessions of the National Assembly are open unless the Chairman of the assembly, or at least ten members of the National Assembly, request secrecy and the assembly accepts this request.
- No one shall enter the building of the National Assembly by force.
- Article 106 • The quorum of the sessions of each house of the National Assembly for voting is complete with the presence of the majority of the members, and its decisions are taken with the majority of the members present, unless this Constitution states otherwise.
- Article 107 • The National Assembly convenes two ordinary sessions each year.
- The term of the National Assembly in each year is nine months. When necessary, the Assembly can extend this period.
 - Extraordinary sessions of the Assembly during recess can take place by the order of the President.

- Article 108 • In cases of death, resignation and dismissal of a member of the National Assembly, and/or disability or handicap, which prevents performance of duties permanently, an election in the related constituency is held for a new representative for the rest of the legislative period, in accordance with the law.
- Matters involving the presence or absence of members of the National Assembly are regulated according to internal rules.
- Article 109 • Proposals for amendments of the Electoral Law cannot be included in the working agenda of the Assembly during the last year of the legislative period.

Chapter Six: Loya Jirga

- Article 110 • A Loya Jirga is the highest manifestation of the people of Afghanistan.
- A Loya Jirga consists of the following:
 1. Members of the National Assembly
 2. Chairpersons of the Provincial and District Councils
 - The Ministers, Chief Justice and members of the Supreme Court and the Attorney General can participate in the sessions of the Loya Jirga without the right to vote.
- Article 111 • A Loya Jirga shall be convened in the following situations:
1. To take decisions on issues related to independence, national sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the supreme interests of the country
 2. To amend the provisions of this Constitution
 3. To prosecute the President in accordance with the provisions of Article 69 of this Constitution.
- Article 112 • The Loya Jirga in its first session elects from among its members a Chairperson, a Deputy Chair, a Secretary and an Assistant Secretary.
- Article 113 • The quorum of the Loya Jirga for voting is completed by the majority of members.
- The decisions of the Loya Jirga are taken by a majority of the present members except in cases explicitly stated in this Constitution.
- Article 114 • Discussions of the Loya Jirga are open except when one-fourth of its members demand their secrecy, and the Loya Jirga accepts this demand.
- Article 115 • During the session of a Loya Jirga, the provision of Articles 101 and 102 of this Constitution are applied on its members.

Chapter Seven: The Judiciary

Article 116 • The judicial branch is an independent organ of the state of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

- The judicial branch consists of the Supreme Court, High Courts, Appeal Courts, and Primary Courts, the structure and authorities of which are determined by law. The Supreme Court shall be the highest judicial organ, heading the judicial power of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

Article 117 • The Supreme Court is composed of nine members who are appointed by the President for a period of ten years with the confirmation of the Wolesi Jirga with observance of the provisions of the final clause of Article 50 and Article 118 of this Constitution. In the beginning the appointment will be as such:

- Three members are appointed for a period of four years, three members for seven years and three members for ten years.
- Later appointments will be for a period of ten years.
- The appointment of members for a second term is not permissible.
- The President appoints one of its members as the Head of the Supreme Court.
- Members in no way can be dismissed from their service until the end of their term, except circumstances stated in Article 127 of this Constitution.

Article 118 • A member of the Supreme Court should have the following qualifications:

1. The age of the Head of the Supreme Court and its members should not be lower than 40 at the time of appointment
2. Should be a citizen of Afghanistan
3. Should have higher education in law or in Islamic jurisprudence, and enough expertise and experience in the judicial system of Afghanistan
4. Should enjoy high ethics and good reputation
5. Should not have been convicted of crimes against humanity, crimes, or sentenced to deprivation of civil rights by a court
6. Should not be a member of any political party during the term of official duty

Article 119 • Members of the Supreme Court take the following oath in the presence of the President before occupying the post:

In the name Allah, the Merciful and the Compassionate: I swear in the name of God Almighty to support justice and righteousness in accordance with the provisions of the sacred religion of Islam and the provisions of this Constitution and other laws of Afghanistan, and to execute the duty of being a judge with utmost honesty, righteousness and nonpartisanship.

- Article 120 • The authority of the judicial organ is to attend to all lawsuits in which real individuals or incorporated bodies including the state stand before it as plaintiff or defendant in accordance with provisions of the law.
- Article 121 • The Supreme Court on the request of the government or the courts shall review laws, legislative decrees, international treaties and international covenants for their compliance with the Constitution and provide their interpretation in accordance with the law.
- Article 122 • No law, under any circumstance, can transfer a case from the jurisdiction of the judicial branch to another organ as has been determined in this Constitution.
- This provision does not apply to establishing special courts stated in Articles 69, 78 and 127 of this Constitution and military courts in matters relating to them.
 - The structure and authority of these courts are regulated by law.
- Article 123 • With observance of the provisions of this Constitution, the rules related to the structure, authority, and performance of the courts and the duties of judges are regulated by law.
- Article 124 • Other officials and administrative personnel of the judicial branch are subject to the provisions of the laws related to the officials and other administrative personnel of the state, but their appointment, dismissal, promotion, pension, rewards and punishments are regulated by the Supreme Court in accordance with the law.
- Article 125 • The budget of the judicial branch is prepared by the Supreme Court in consultation with the government and presented by the government to the National Assembly as part of the state budget.
- Implementation of the budget of the judicial branch is the authority of the Supreme Court.
- Article 126 • Members of the Supreme Court enjoy official financial benefits for the rest of their lives provided they do not occupy state or political positions.
- Article 127 • When more than one-third of the members of the Wolesi Jirga demand the trial of the Chief Justice, or a member of the Supreme Court due to a crime committed during the performance of duty, and the Wolesi Jirga approves of this demand by a majority of two-thirds, the accused is dismissed from their post and the case is referred to a special court.
- The setting up of the court and the procedures of trial are regulated by law.
- Article 128 • In the courts of Afghanistan, trials are open and everyone is entitled to attend in accordance with the law.

- The court, in situations which are stated in the law or in situations in which the secrecy of the trial is deemed necessary, can conduct the trial behind closed doors, but the announcement of the court decision should be open in all instances.

Article 129 • The court is obliged to state the reasons for the decisions it issues.

- All final decisions of the courts are enforceable, except for capital punishment, which is conditional upon approval of the President.

Article 130 • While processing cases, the courts apply the provisions of this Constitution and other laws.

- When there is no provision in the Constitution or other laws regarding ruling on an issue, the courts' decisions shall be within the limits of this Constitution in accord with the Hanafi jurisprudence and in a way to serve justice in the best possible manner.

Article 131 • The Courts shall apply the Shia school of law in cases dealing with personal matters involving the followers of the Shia Sect in accordance with the provisions of law.

- In other cases, if no clarification by this Constitution or other laws exists, courts will resolve the matter according to laws of this Sect.

Article 132 • Judges are appointed with the recommendation of the Supreme Court and approval of the President.

- The appointment, transfer, promotion, punishment, and proposal to retire judges are within the authority of the Supreme Court in accordance with the law.
- The Supreme Court shall establish the General Administration Office of Judicial Power for the purpose of better arrangement of the administration and judicial affairs and ensuring the required improvements.

Article 133 • When a judge is accused of having committed a crime, the Supreme Court shall inquire about the case involving the judge in accordance with the law.

- After listening to the defence, when the Supreme Court regards the accusation to be valid, it shall present a proposal about the judge's dismissal to the President.
- After Presidential approval, the accused judge shall be dismissed from duty, and punished in accordance with the provisions of the law.

Article 134 • Discovery of crimes is the duty of the police and investigation and prosecution are conducted by the Office of the Attorney General in accordance with the provisions of the law.

- The Office of the Attorney General is part of the Executive branch, and is independent in its performance.
- The structure, authority and activities of the Office of the Attorney General are regulated by law.
- Discovery and investigation of crimes related to the armed forces, police, and national security officials are regulated by a special law.

Article 135 • If parties involved in a case do not know the language in which the trial is conducted, they have the right to understand the material and documents related to the case through an interpreter and the right to speak in their native language in the court.

Chapter Eight: The Administration

Article 136 • The Administration of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan shall be based on central and local administrative units in accordance with the law.

- The central administration is divided into a number of administrative units, each of which shall be headed by a Minister.
- The local administrative unit is a province.
- The number, area, parts, and structures of the provinces and the related administrations are regulated by law on the basis of population, social and economic conditions, and geographic location.

Article 137 • The government, while preserving the principle of centralism, shall delegate certain authorities to local administration units for the purpose of expediting and promoting economic, social, and cultural affairs, and increasing the participation of people in the development of the nation.

Article 138 • In every province a Provincial Council is to be formed.

- Members of the Provincial Council are elected in proportion to the population by free, direct, secret and general elections by the residents of the province for a period of four years in accordance with the law.
- The Provincial Council elects one of its members as Chairman.

Article 139 • The Provincial Council takes part in securing the developmental targets of the state and improving its affairs in a way stated in the law, and gives advice on important issues falling within the domain of the province.

- Provincial Councils perform their duties in cooperation with the provincial administration.

- Article 140 • In order to organise activities involving the people and provide them with the opportunity to actively participate in the local administration, Councils are established in districts and villages in accordance with the provisions of the law.
- Members of these Councils are elected by the local people through, free, general, secret and direct elections for a period of three years.
 - The participation of nomads in these councils is regulated by law.
- Article 141 • Municipalities shall be set up in order to administer city affairs.
- The Mayor and members of the Municipal Councils are elected by free, general, secret, and direct elections.
 - The affairs related to municipalities are regulated by law.
- Article 142 • For the purpose of the implementation of the provisions, and ensuring the values of this Constitution, the State shall establish the required departments.

Chapter Nine: The State of Emergency

- Article 143 • If due to war, threat of war, serious rebellion, natural disasters, or situations similar to these, protecting the nation's independence or survival becomes impossible by following the provision of this Constitution, the President in confirmation with the National Assembly shall declare a state of emergency in some or all parts of the country.
- If the state of emergency continues for more than two months, the agreement of the National Assembly is required for its extension.
- Article 144 • During the state of emergency, the President, with the consultations of heads of the National Assembly and the Supreme Court, can transfer some authorities of the National Assembly to the government.
- Article 145 • During the state of emergency, the President, with the consent of the heads of the National Assembly and the Supreme Court, can suspend the validity of the following Articles or can place restrictions on them:
1. Clause two of Article 27
 2. Article 36
 3. Clause two of Article 37
 4. Clause two of Article 38
- Article 146 • During the state of emergency, the Constitution cannot be amended.
- Article 147 • If the presidential term of office and or the legislative period expire during a state of emergency, the new elections shall be postponed, and the presidency and the legislative period shall be extended for up to four months.

- If the state of emergency continues for more than four months, a Loya Jirga shall be called by the President for further decisions.
- Following the termination of state of emergency, elections should be held within two months.

Article 148 • After the end of the state of emergency, the measures adopted on the basis of Articles 144 and 145 of this Constitution shall be considered invalid immediately.

Chapter Ten: Amendments

Article 149 • The provisions of adherence to the provisions of the sacred religion of Islam and the regime of an Islamic Republic cannot be amended.

- The amendment of the fundamental rights of the people are permitted only in order to make them more effective.
- Considering new experiences and requirements of the time, other contents of this Constitution can be amended by the proposal of the President or by the majority of members of the National Assembly in accordance with the provisions of Articles 67 and 146 of this Constitution.

Article 150 • In order to implement proposals regarding amending the Constitution, a commission composed of members of the government, National Assembly, and the Supreme Court must be established by a presidential decree, and the commission shall prepare a draft of the amendments.

- For approval of the amendments, a Loya Jirga shall be convened by the decree of the President in accordance with the provisions of the Chapter on the Loya Jirga.
- When the Loya Jirga approves an amendment by a majority of two-thirds of its members, it shall be enforced after endorsement by the President.

Chapter Eleven: The Miscellaneous Provisions

Article 151 • The President, Vice Presidents, Ministers, Head and members of the Supreme Court, Attorney General, Head of the Central Bank, National Security Directorate, Governors and Mayors cannot engage in any profitable business contracts with the government during their term of office.

Article 152 • The President, Vice Presidents, Ministers, Heads and members of the National Assembly, Head and members of the Supreme Court, Attorney General and judges, cannot undertake other jobs during their terms of office.

Article 153 • Judges, Attorneys, and officers of the armed forces and police, and national security officials, cannot be members of political parties during their terms of office.

- Article 154 • The wealth of the President, Vice Presidents, Ministers, members of the Supreme Court and the Attorney General before and after their term of office should be registered and monitored by an organ to be set by law.
- Article 155 • Appropriate salaries shall be paid to the Vice Presidents, Ministers, Chairs and members of the National Assembly, the Supreme Court, Attorney General and judges in accordance with the provisions of law.
- Article 156 • The Independent Electoral Commission shall be set up for the organisation and supervision of any election and for holding a referendum within the country based on the provisions of the law.
- Article 157 • The Independent Commission for the Supervision of the Implementation of the Constitution will be established by the provisions of the law.
 - Members of this Commission shall be appointed by the President with the confirmation of the Wolesi Jirga.

Chapter Twelve: The Transitional Provisions

- Article 158 • The title of the Father of the Nation and the privileges granted by the Emergency Loya Jirga of 1381 (2002) to His Majesty Mohammad Zahir Shah Former King of Afghanistan are preserved for him during his lifetime, in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution.
- Article 159 • The period following the adoption of this Constitution until the date of inauguration of the National Assembly is deemed as a transitional period.
 - During the transitional period, the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan shall carry out the following tasks:
 1. Issue legislative decrees related to the elections of the President, National Assembly and local councils within six months
 2. Issue decrees regarding the structure and authorities of the courts and basic administration structures within a period of less than one year
 3. Establish an Independent Election Commission
 4. Take necessary measures for reform of executive and judicial affairs
 5. Adopt necessary measures for preparing the ground for enforcement of the provisions of this Constitution
- Article 160 • The first elected President shall take up his/her duties after 30 days of the announcement of the elections in accordance with this Constitution.
 - Every effort shall be made to hold the first presidential elections and the parliamentary elections at the same time.

- Until the establishment of the National Assembly, the powers of this assembly outlined in this Constitution will be held by the government, and the interim Supreme Court shall be established by Presidential Decree.

Article 161 • The National Assembly will exercise its powers immediately after its establishment in accordance with this Constitution.

- The government and the Supreme Court shall be established within 30 days of the first session of the Wolesi Jirga taking place.
- The President of the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan shall continue his duties until the elected President has taken office.
- The executive and judicial organs of the state in accordance with provisions of Clause 4 of Article 159 of this constitution shall continue their duties, until the formation of the government and the Supreme Court.
- The decrees enforced from the beginning of the interim period shall be submitted to the first session of the National Assembly.
- These decrees are enforceable until they are annulled by the National Assembly.

Article 162 • This Constitution is enforced upon its approval by the Loya Jirga, and will be signed and announced by the President of the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan.

- Upon the enforcement of this Constitution, laws and decrees contrary to the provisions of it are invalid.

Access to Information Law

This is an unofficial translation of the 2014 Access to Information Law, provided by Integrity Watch Afghanistan; refer to the official Dari and Pashto versions for accuracy: http://moj.gov.af/content/files/OfficialGazette/01101/OG_01156.pdf.

Chapter 1 - General Provisions

- The Basis

Article 1 - This law has been enacted following article fifty (50) of the Constitution of Afghanistan.

Objectives

Article 2 - The objectives of this law are:

1. To ensure the right of access to information for all citizens from the government as well as non-governmental institutions.
2. To observe article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, as per article 3 of the Afghan Constitution.
3. To ensure transparency and accountability in the conduct of governmental and non-governmental institutions.
4. To organise request processing and provision of information.

Terminology

Article 3 - The terminologies in the law describe the following concepts:

1. Information: Any type of documents, recorded and registered information, models and samples.
2. Personal Information: Information about a person that includes his/her name, surname, residential and workplace addresses, condition of personal and family life, letters, correspondences, transactions, bank account, passwords and all other information that are not related to his/her official duties.
3. Applicant: An internal legal and real person who requests the required information from relevant government and non-government institutions.
4. Publication: Information disseminated in a manner that is accessible and usable to the public.
5. Information request form: A priced printed sheet that is provided to the applicant in order to write their requests in accordance with this law.
6. Institutions: Include ministries, general independent directorates, independent state commissions, Executive, Judicial and national assembly institutions, local administrations, provincial, districts, villages and municipalities councils, boards of municipalities, enterprise, government corporations, joint ventures and all other institutions.

7. Non-Government Organisations: According to the enforced laws in the country, non-government organisations include all those organisations and institutions that are active outside the jurisdiction of government organisations.
8. Civil Society: Those political parties and associations that are formed in accordance with the provisions of the law.

Chapter 2 - Access to Information

Right to Access Information

Article 4

1. Information applicant is entitled to access information from institutions according to the provisions of this law.
2. Institutions are responsible to provide information to the applicants and public according the provisions of this law.

Request for Information

Article 5

1. For access to information, the applicant shall refer to the relevant institution and fill out the information request form.
2. Institutions are responsible for responding in written form to the information requested.

Timeframe of Providing Information

Article 6

1. Institutions are required to provide the requested information to the applicant within a maximum of 10 working days starting from the day the information is requested. In the case of justifiable reasons this duration can be extended by three more days.
2. Institutions are required to provide media with the requested news-related information within a time period of three days from the date the information request form is received.
3. Institutions are required to provide the requested information necessary for the safety, security and freedom of an individual within 24 hours of receiving a request form.

Expenditure of Providing Information

Article 7

1. Whenever the provision of information requires expenditure, the applicant is required to pay for the actual expenditure; otherwise the request will be rejected.

2. The amount of expenditure and the manner of payment is established in accordance with the procedure prepared by the relevant institutions and approved by the Monitoring Commission on Access to Information.

Procedure of Providing Information

Article 8

1. Institutions are required to provide the requested information in one of the following forms, provided that the original document is not damaged:
 - 1- A copy of the original document.
 - 2- A written note from the original document.
 - 3- A copy of the original document in written, audio or video form.
 - 4- Providing information in audio or video form.
 - 5- Providing sample.

Providing Information through Interview

Article 9

Providing information through a journalist's interview with government and nongovernment officials and employees is not subject to the legal provisions mentioned in articles 6, 7 and 8 of this law.

Chapter 3 - Providing Information

Public Information Office

Article 10

1. Institutions are responsible to specify a public information office for the purpose of citizens' right to access information.
2. The public information office mentioned in article 10 (1) is responsible for providing the identity and contact details of relevant officials to public access for the purpose of awareness.

Duties of Public Information Office

Article 11

The public information office has the following duties:

1. Provide information request form to the applicant.

2. Issue information request form to the applicant in accordance with the provisions of this law.
3. Submit information request form to the relevant department for provision of information.
4. Retrieve the request form as mentioned in article 11 (3) and return it to the applicant.
5. Cooperate with the staff of relevant department in the process of providing information.
6. Ensure that information provided is in accordance with the provisions mentioned in this law.
7. Publish information on institutions' web sites and to other relevant media.
8. Perform all duties assigned by relevant office to improve access to information-related affairs.

Rejection of Information Request Form

Article 12

In case an information request form is not in accordance with the provisions mentioned in this law, the public information office will reject it by citing the reasons in a written form.

Assessment of Complaints

Article 13

1. In case the information applicant is not satisfied with the information provided, the applicant can submit a complaint in a written form to the relevant public information office.
2. The public information office is required to assess the received complaint and make a decision for solution in accordance with provisions in the law within three working days.
3. In case the applicant is not satisfied with the assessment mentioned in article 13 (2), he/she can refer to the access to information monitoring commission.

Annual Publication of Information

Article 14

1. Institutions are required to publish the following information at least once a year.
 - 1- Organisational structure, duties and authorities of the institutions and its related performances report.
 - 2- Financial status of the institutions.
 - 3- Details of direct services provided to public.

- 4- Procedure of addressing public information requests and public complaints.
 - 5- Related legislative documents.
 - 6- Related bills, procedures and guidelines.
 - 7- Related internal and international contracts, protocols and memorandums.
 - 8- Related policies, strategies and work plans.
 - 9- All other institutional-specific matters.
2. Institutions are responsible for creating an information bank (database) for better protection of documents and information as well as to facilitate public access to information

Prohibitions

Article 15

1. Providing information in the following instances is prohibited.
- 1- In case the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, national security and national interest are faced with danger.
 - 2- In case it harms Afghanistan's political, economic and social bonds with other countries.
 - 3- In case the life, properties and reputation of a person are endangered.
 - 4- In case it becomes a barrier in the detection or prevention of crime.
 - 5- In case it disrupts the process of detection, investigation and prosecution of the suspect or the safeguards in this regard.
 - 6- In case it disrupts the process of a fair trial and enforcement of a judicial order.
 - 7- In case it violates the privacy of an individual.
 - 8- In case information is about commercial matters, private properties and bank account, unless otherwise identified in the legislation.
2. The following cases are exempted in article 15 (1), (7) and (8).
- 1- In case a competent court approves disclosure of personal information.

- 2- In case the copyright law and competition support law and all other legislative documents are not violated.
- 3- Violation of article 15 (1) is crime; the perpetrator shall come under judicial prosecution.

Chapter 4 - Monitoring Commission on Access to Information

Establishment of Commission

Article 16

1. To achieve the objectives mentioned in this law, a monitoring commission on access to information, which is named 'commission' in this law, shall be formed with the following composition in the center.
 - 1- Authorised representative of Ministry of Information and Culture.
 - 2- Authorised representative of Ministry of Communication and Information Technology.
 - 3- Authorised representative of Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
 - 4- Authorised representative of the National Security Directorate.
 - 5- Authorised representative of Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission.
 - 6- Authorised representative of Independent Bar Association.
 - 7- Authorised representative of Lawyers Union of Afghanistan.
 - 8- Two elected representatives of Professional Journalists' Unions.
 - 9- One elected representative from political parties.
 - 10- Two elected representative from civil society.
 - 11- A representative of Chamber of Commerce and Industries.
2. Commissions in provinces are formed of authorised representatives of the relevant departments and institutions in accordance with the provisions of article 16 (1).
3. Members of commissions in article 16 (1 and 2) are appointed for three years. Their re-appointment for another term is permitted.

4. Commissions in article 16 (1 and 2) in their first meeting elect the chairman, deputy chairman and secretary amongst its members for one year term. Their reelection for another term is permitted.
5. The members of the commission mentioned in article 16 (1 and 2) deserve compensation for their presence in the commission; the amount is proposed by the Ministry of Information and Culture and approved by the President.
6. The compensation mentioned in article 16 (5) is paid from the budget of the Ministry of Information and Culture.
7. The functions of the commission are set according to the procedure that is prepared by the commission.

Membership Criteria

Article 17

A person fulfilling the following criteria can be appointed as a member of the central or provincial commissions.

- 1- Have citizenship of Afghanistan only.
- 2- Reached 30 years of age.
- 3- Having a bachelor's degree as a minimum educational requirement.
- 4- Not convicted for violation of civil rights and crimes against humanity.
- 5- Have three years of work experience

Disqualification of Membership

Article 18

1. A member of the central commission or a provincial commission loses membership in the following circumstances:
 - 1- A written resignation from membership of the relevant commission, after it is confirmed by majority of the members and approved by the chairman.
 - 2- Dismissal from the job in the institution that the member represents.
 - 3- Physical and mental incapacity which prevents the member from performing his/her duties.
 - 4- When it has been proven that the information provided fulfilling membership

criteria is false.

- 5- No participation in four consecutive or eight anomalous meetings in one year without providing convincing reasons.
2. When a member of the commission loses membership in one of the cases mentioned in article 1 (1), the relevant institution within 15 work days introduces another qualified person to be the substitute for the remaining time period.

Functions and Powers of the Commission

Article 19

The commissions in center and provinces have the following powers and functions in their respective areas:

- 1- Monitor applicant's access to information process from the respective institutions and the manner in which information is provided.
- 2- Assess applicants' complaints.
- 3- Demand documents from information offices of institutions if required.
- 4- Provide suitable advice to information applicants and institutions
- 5- Evaluate reports from information offices of the relevant institutions.
- 6- Present and publish annual report of activities of the commission to the President and the National Assembly.
- 7- Promote the culture of access to information in the country by conducting educational programs.
- 8- Disseminate commission's decision for public awareness.
- 9- Monitor implementation of the provisions of this law.
- 10- Approval of the relevant bills and procedures.
- 11- Perform all functions mentioned in this law.

Holding Meetings of the Commission

Article 20

1. Ordinary meetings of the central and provincial commissions will be held every 15 days and the extraordinary meetings will be held as per the request of the chairman or with the suggestion of one third of the members.

2. Quorum for holding meetings of the commission is the presence of the majority of members.
3. Decisions of the commission are based on the majority votes of the present members. In case of equal votes, the side that has been voted by the chairman is considered majority.
4. Commissions in provinces are required to provide a quarterly report of their activities to the central commission.
5. Affairs of the meeting are set by a separate procedure.

Reporting Timeframe of Information Offices

Article 21

Information offices are required to provide their monthly activities report to the relevant commissions.

Limitations

Article 22

1. The chairman and members of commissions shall not take part in decision-making meetings in which they have an interest.
2. Chairman and members of commissions shall not disclose or use any information that they have gained or that which is prohibited based on the provisions of this law, for their and their relatives' interests while on duty or thereafter.
3. In case the chairman or members of commission violate provision of article 22 (2), the violator shall come under judicial prosecution according to the provisions of the law.

Implementation of Commission's Decisions

Article 23

The decisions of the commission are final and implementable after declaration by the commission.

Administrative and Executive Affairs

Article 24

1. Administrative and executive affairs of the commission are organised and led in accordance with procedures by the Ministry of Information and Culture in the center, and by Directorates of Information and Culture in the provinces.

Chapter 5 - Addressing Complaints

Complaints of the Information Applicant

Article 25

1. An applicant can present complaints to the commission in accordance with the provisions of this law.
2. The commission is required to assess that complaint within two working meetings from the date it is received.
3. The manner of assessing complaints and relevant documents are set in the procedure ordained by central commission.
4. Commissions in provinces assess complaints and relevant documents according to the procedure mentioned in article 25 (3).

Violation and Correctional Fines

Article 26

1. The following are recognised as violations of this law.
 - 1- Providing that information to the applicant that does not conform to the contents of information request form.
 - 2- Refusal of information to the applicant without justified reasons.
 - 3- Providing false information to the commission.
 - 4- Not providing requested information within the allocated timeframe.
 - 5- Not observing decisions and procedures of the commission.
 - 6- Not providing report of information office to the commission on specified timeframe.
2. In case any violation mentioned in article 26 (1) is proved, the commission shall decide on one of the following punishments, according to the circumstances:
 - 1- Admonition.
 - 2- Written warning.
 - 3- Recommendation to the relevant department for deduction of salary according the law.

3. In cases of violations mentioned paragraph (1) of this article resulting in material and moral damage to the natural and legal persons, should be compensated according to law.
4. The relevant departments are required to implement the recommended correctional fines and ensure the commission of the implementation.

Chapter 6 - Miscellaneous Provisions

The Cost of Information Request Form

Article 27

The price, form and content of the information request form is designed and fixed by the Ministry of Information and Culture; after approval of the commission it is printed by the relevant department of Ministry of Finance and put for public access.

Non-Governmental Organisations:

Article 28

Non-governmental organisations are required to provide requested information in accordance with the provisions in this law.

Proof of Violation:

Article 29

In case any violation committed by a non-governmental organisation is proved, in terms of condition the commission shall decide on one of the correctional fines mentioned in 26 (2) of this law.

Transfer of Money to the Bank

Article 30

The sums acquired through the implementation of this law shall be transferred to the revenue collection account of the government.

Establishing Bills, Procedures and Guidelines

Article 31

The commission mentioned in article 16 (1) shall establish separate bills, procedures and guidelines to improve implementation of this law.

Enforcement

Article 32

This law shall come into force 30 days after it is published in Official Gazette.

NGO Legislation and Code of Conduct

www.ngos.moec.gov.af/

Since 2002 there have been two major initiatives to clarify what is, and what is not, a non-profit, non-governmental organisation (NGO), and to strengthen the accountability and transparency of NGO activities in Afghanistan. The first initiative was legislation to: determine what an NGO is and what are permissible NGO activities, to set criteria for the establishment and internal governance of NGOs, clarify reporting requirements for NGOs, enable profit-making bodies currently registered as NGOs to establish themselves as businesses, and enhance the transparency and accountability of NGOs. The second initiative was an NGO Code of Conduct, designed by the NGO community working in Afghanistan as a self-governing mechanism to ensure commitment to transparency, accountability, and professional standards from all signatories.

In consultation with NGOs and with technical assistance from the International Centre for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL), an initial draft for the NGO legislation was presented to the Ministry of Justice in 2003. NGOs called for the timely finalisation of the legislation at the Afghanistan Development Fora in both April 2004 and April 2005, and the NGO legislation was eventually passed in June 2005. This legislation provided a means by which nonprofit NGOs can be differentiated from the many contractors registered as NGOs (between 2001 and 2004 around 2,400 entities had registered with the government as NGOs, despite the lack of any official criteria for such a registration).

Shortly after the first NGO legislation draft was prepared for the government in July 2003, 120 NGOs participated in a workshop to discuss the content of the NGO Code of Conduct. The text of the Code was jointly drafted by the four major NGO coordination bodies in Afghanistan: the Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief (ACBAR, p. 38), the Afghan NGOs Coordinating Bureau (ANCB, p. 31), the Southern and Western Afghanistan and Balochistan Association for Coordination (SWABAC, p. 53), and the Afghan Women's Network (AWN, p. 32). A Code of Conduct Secretariat was established under the auspices of ACBAR to coordinate and finalise the draft, which was completed in May 2004. The NGO community publicly launched the Afghanistan NGO Code of Conduct on 30 May 2005. In order to be a signatory to the Code of Conduct, NGOs are required to submit several documents to prove their NGO status, including legal registration documentation, coordination body membership, financial records, and proof of reporting to the relevant ministry. The NGO Code of Conduct has approximately 100 Afghan and international signatories.

By law, NGOs are obliged to register with the Ministry of Economy and submit details of their assets and expenditures, biannual reports, and annual financial audit reports of their implemented projects to the government. The NGO Department at the Ministry of Economy and their website (listed above) can provide more information on NGO registration and reporting requirements.

Code of Conduct for NGOs engaged in Humanitarian Action, Reconstruction, and Development in Afghanistan (2005)

Preamble

Because Afghanistan is at a unique point in its history and has the opportunity to move towards long-term stability, economic prosperity and respect for human rights;

Because NGOs are civil society actors and a strong civil society is essential to the development and functioning of a stable Afghan nation and state;

Because NGOs are committed to the development of Afghanistan and Afghan capacity;

Because the development of a new Constitution and a legislative structure for Afghanistan provide a context in which accountable and responsible behaviour can flourish and be recognised;

Because NGOs, as civil society organisations and emergency and development programme implementers, continue to make important contributions with and for the Afghan people;

Because the nature and roles of NGOs are not well understood, leading to accusations that NGOs misuse funds and are wasteful and self-serving;

Because various “for-profit” and political actors misuse the NGO umbrella to promote their commercial or political interests;

Because NGOs continue to face demands that pull them in many different directions and may threaten their capacity and their independence as civil society actors; and

Because Codes of Conduct are a mechanism by which NGOs can ensure higher standards – including greater transparency and accountability,

We, the accredited representatives of NGOs in Afghanistan, hereby voluntarily affix our signatures to this Code of Conduct and commit our organisations to upholding the Principles of Conduct in this Code.

Definitions

The Code of Conduct is a set of shared norms, principles and values that aims to enhance the conduct and reputation of NGOs.

Non-governmental organisations are voluntary, not-for-profit, non-partisan and independent organisations or associations engaged in serving the public good. NGOs may be national as well as international; secular as well as “faith-based;” and of membership and non-membership categories.

Voluntary denotes free will on the part of the NGO as well as community partners.

Not-for-profit means that an NGO cannot distribute its assets, earnings or profits as such to any person. However, there may be paid employees or activities generating revenue which will be used solely for the stated purposes of the organisation.

Non-partisan and independent indicates that the NGO is controlled and directed by its governing body, in keeping with its mandate and not by any other power or group.

Signatories are NGOs whose duly accredited representative has signed and accepted this Code of Conduct.

We refers to all signatories to the Code of Conduct.

Civil society includes all formal and informal groups and associations that are not of the public and business sectors. NGOs are a part of civil society.

Gender equality means that the different behaviour, aspirations, needs and rights of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally. It does not mean that women and men have to become the same, but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female.

Gender equity means fairness of treatment for women and men, according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment or treatment that is different but which is considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities.

Capacity building is the process by which individuals, groups, organisations, institutions and societies increase their abilities to:

1. perform core functions, solve problems, define and achieve objectives; and
2. understand and deal with their development needs in a broad context and in a sustainable manner.

Humanitarian action includes those activities taken to prevent and alleviate human suffering arising out of conflict, crisis and calamity, including any situation involving:

1. damage to or loss of lives of non-combatants in a conflict situation; or
2. patterns of (gross) human rights or humanitarian law violations against civilians in conflict and/or ongoing political crisis.

NGO Mission Statement

Our general mission as NGOs operating in Afghanistan is to address humanitarian, reconstruction and sustainable development needs in Afghanistan, with a special focus (on the right)s of those who are disadvantaged and vulnerable. We work in partnership with each other, the government, donors and communities.

Purpose of the Code

The Code of Conduct will promote:

- improved understanding of NGOs, their purposes and their accomplishments among the general public, government, donors and the media;

- transparency, accountability and good management practices in the operation of NGOs by voluntary self-regulation; and
- improved quality of services provided by NGOs by raising standards of conduct.

Principles of Conduct

1. Our organisations are people-centered

- 1.1 Focus on the people we serve: Our primary loyalty, accountability and responsibility is to the people we serve. Our programmes are designed and developed in response to the needs of the people.
- 1.2 Self-reliance and ownership: We seek to help people and communities to solve their own problems. We encourage and enable the development of self-reliance and advance the right of people to fully participate in decisions that affect their lives.
- 1.3 Human rights: We endeavour to respect, protect and promote the fulfilment of the human rights and obligations of all Afghans in accordance with international law.
- 1.4 Trust: We work to build the trust of the communities with which we work.
- 1.5 Participation and non-discrimination: We involve men, women, youth and children of our target communities to the greatest possible extent, engaging them in the conception, implementation and evaluation of projects and programmes. We strive to ensure the participation of marginalised groups in communities where we work.
- 1.6 Respect for local values: We respect the dignity and identity of the individual, and acknowledge indigenous knowledge, culture, religious faith and values. This does not mean that we support practices that undermine the human rights of any individual or group.

2. Our organisations are committed to sustainable positive impact

- 2.1 Effectiveness: We are committed to effectiveness and to maximising the positive impact of our programmes. We avoid duplication of services.
- 2.2 Sustainability: Whenever possible, our programmes seek durable solutions that are cost effective, that build Afghan ownership and capacity, and that are driven by the long-term development goals of communities.
- 2.3 Environmental impact: We exercise a responsible and responsive approach to the care of the physical, natural environment and to the proper management of Afghanistan's ecosystems in all our activities.
- 2.4 Monitoring and evaluation: We monitor and evaluate the impact of our programmes and share findings with relevant stakeholders, including the communities we serve, donors, government and the general public.

3. Our organisations are committed to transparency and accountability

- 3.1 We are transparent and accountable in our dealings with the government and community partners, the public, donors and other interested parties.
- 3.2 Accountability: We develop and maintain sound financial policies, audits, and systems in order to manage our accounts. We conform to the constitution, laws, rules and regulations of the government of Afghanistan and where necessary, lobby for policy change. We are truthful and honest in all matters related to raising, using and accounting for funds. We maintain sound financial, accounting, procurement, transport and administrative systems that ensure the use of resources in accordance with intended purposes.
- 3.3 Transparency: We disseminate information on our goals and activities to interested stakeholders. We maintain and make available financial and activity reports upon request by relevant and interested parties. We use all available opportunities to inform the public about our work and about the origin and the use of our resources.

4. Our organisations are committed to good internal governance

- 4.1 Governing documentation: We have written constitutions or memorandums of association that clearly define our missions, our objectives and our organisational structures.
- 4.2 Equal opportunity: We develop and apply written policies, rules and procedures that affirm our commitment to equal opportunities in our employment practices and in the promotion of staff.
- 4.3 Employment practices: We apply hiring and termination practices that respect the freedom of choice of individuals and the human resource needs of other stakeholders. We offer positions based on merit, pay appropriate salaries, allocate job responsibilities according to individual capacities, and demand adequate notice from employees and provide adequate notice for terminations without cause.
- 4.4 No conflicts of interest: All our organisational transactions are free of conflicts of personal and professional interest. The services of board members shall be given freely and voluntarily, other than reimbursements for essential costs incurred during service.

5. Our organisations are committed to honesty, integrity and cost effectiveness

- 5.1 Honesty: We are truthful in all our professional activities.
- 5.2 Integrity: We refrain from internal and external practices that undermine the ethical integrity of our organisations. We do not engage in theft, corrupt practices, nepotism, bribery or trade in illicit substances. We accept funds and donations only from sources whose aims are consistent with our mission, objectives and capacity, and which do not undermine our independence and identity.
- 5.3 Cost effectiveness: We utilise the resources available to our organisations in order to pursue our missions and strategic objectives in cost-effective ways. We strive to minimise waste and unnecessary expense, and to direct all possible resources to the people we serve.

6. Our organisations are committed to diversity, fairness, non-discrimination against marginalised groups and to affirmative action

- 6.1 Diversity: We seek to have a workforce that appropriately reflects the gender, ethnic, geographic and religious diversity of Afghanistan and of the areas where we work.
- 6.2 Equity: We seek to advance greater balance and to promote equity in all internal relations as well as equitable access to opportunities within our organisations. We seek to include the underserved, the vulnerable, the disabled and other marginalised groups in all our initiatives.
- 6.3 Gender equity: We consider and value equally the different behaviour, aspirations, needs and rights of women and men. This may include equal treatment or treatment that is different but which is considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities. Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities do not depend on whether they are born male or female.
- 6.4 Non-discrimination against marginalised groups: Our human resource policies and practices promote non-discriminatory recruitment, hiring, training and working practices, and relationships.
- 6.5 Affirmative action: We strive to increase the representation of under-represented groups in senior decision-making positions at headquarters, in the field, in boards and in advisory groups. We seek to include the underserved, the vulnerable, the marginalised and the disabled in all our initiatives. We endeavour to strengthen the position of Afghan women both within and outside our organisations.

7. Our organisations are committed to building Afghan capacity

- 7.1 Capacity building: We take every appropriate opportunity to help build Afghan capacity to understand needs, establish priorities and take effective action so that ultimately humanitarian, development and reconstruction needs are met by Afghans.
- 7.2 Consultation: We design and implement projects in consultation with local communities and the government because we are committed to the long-term sustainable development of Afghanistan.
- 7.3 Sustainability: We design and facilitate projects so that services may be taken over by target communities or by government bodies to enhance sustainability.
- 7.4 Human resources: In line with our policy of commitment to capacity building, we give priority to Afghan nationals in our recruitment, hiring and training practices.
- 7.5 Physical and technical resources: We maximise the utilisation of locally available physical and technical resources, where appropriate.
- 7.6 Appropriate technologies: We promote the use of appropriate technologies that can be owned and maintained by communities.

8. Our organisations are committed to independence

- 8.1 Independence: We formulate our own policies, programs, and implementation strategies. We do not allow ourselves to be used to implement programs or gather information of a political, military or economically sensitive nature for governments or other bodies that may serve purposes other than those directly consistent with our humanitarian or development missions.
- 8.2 Autonomy: We strive to maintain our autonomy according to Afghan and international law, and to resist the imposition of conditionalities that may compromise our missions and principles.

9. In humanitarian emergency contexts, we adhere to the following additional principles:

- 9.1 Impartiality: We provide aid on the basis of need alone. We provide support regardless of the race, religion, ethnicity, gender, or nationality and political affiliation of the recipients. We do not tie the promise, delivery or distribution of humanitarian assistance to the embracing or acceptance of a particular political or religious creed.
- 9.2 Neutrality: We do not promote partisan national or international political agendas. We do not choose sides between parties to a conflict.
- 9.3 Application of SPHERE: We are knowledgeable about the SPHERE Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response, and seek to apply these standards and the SPHERE indicators in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of our humanitarian projects and programs.

Code Observance

The Code Observance Committee

- The Code Observance Committee (hereafter called “the Committee”) shall be the body ultimately responsible for promoting observance of the code.

Composition of the Committee

- The Committee shall have seven members.
- The Agency Coordination Body For Afghan Relief (“ACBAR”), the Afghan NGOs’ Coordinating Bureau (ANCB), and the South-West Afghanistan and Balochistan Association for Coordination (SWABAC) will each nominate two representatives to the Committee.
- The Afghan Women’s Network (AWN) will nominate one member to the committee.
- The term of office of members of the Committee shall be one year.
- A member can only serve for three consecutive terms.
- The Committee shall select a Chair and a Secretary from among its members.

Functions of the Committee

- The Committee shall act as guardian of the Code of Conduct.
- The Committee shall ensure understanding, trust and co-operation between the Public, the Government, the donors, the NGO sector itself and community partners.
- The Committee shall meet twice a year to consider:
 - Petitions by NGOs to become Code signatories. The Committee will permit NGOs to sign the Code only upon such NGOs furnishing the appropriate documentation as listed in Clause 14 below.
 - Petitions or complaints related to the nonobservance of the Code by an NGO. The petition may be received from government, a donor, a community partner, the public or another NGO.
 - The Committee shall nominate a Secretary who will manage the administrative responsibilities of the Committee. Among other things, the Committee Secretary shall:
 - Receive all requests from NGOs to become Code signatories.
 - Maintain files of public documents of signatories, and make those files available to key stakeholders upon request.
 - Request a signatory to provide a written report when implicated in alleged breach of Principles of Conduct.
 - Ensure that a signatory receives a copy of the complaint registered against it by the person or group of persons who lodged the complaint.
 - The Committee shall be engaged in awareness raising about the Code of Conduct enshrined herein involving Signatories.

Becoming a Signatory to the Code of Conduct

To become a signatory to the Code of Conduct an NGO must submit to the Secretary in writing:

- Legal registration: A copy of the NGO's legal registration with the Government of Afghanistan;

Operational experience: A signed statement on official stationery affirming that the NGO has been operational for at least one year;

- Coordination Body Membership: A letter affirming the NGO's current membership in one or more of the following coordination bodies: ACBAR, ANCB, or SWABAC;
- Governance Documentation: A copy of the NGO's written constitution or memorandum of association that clearly define the NGO's mission, objectives and organisational structure.
- Financial Documentation: A copy of an audited financial report for its most recent fiscal year; and;

- **Operational Documentation:** A copy of its annual report for its most recent year of operations. For international NGOs, a copy of the global annual report will suffice.
- **Completed Survey of Accomplishments:** A completed survey of accomplishments allowing the Secretariat to monitor and communicate the combined accomplishments of NGOs.
- **Mandatory Government Reports:** Copies of semi-annual reports required by the Ministry of Planning.

Complaints

Any one person or group of persons may file a complaint or petition (supported by evidence) with the Secretary of the Committee. A written complaint shall include the following:

- The name and address of the complainant;
- The name and address of the NGO or official against whom the petition is lodged;
- The circumstances in which the breach or violation of the Code is alleged to have been committed; and
- Where possible, a reference to the Standard of Conduct that was allegedly breached.

The Secretary shall open a file after receiving a fully documented complaint and shall immediately share a copy of the complaint with all members of the Observance Committee.

Jurisdiction of the Committee

The Committee shall hear and decide on all instances involving the violation or breach of the Code of Conduct by any signatory or any other acting for and/or on behalf of a signatory.

When a complaint is made under Clause 16 hereof, the Committee may either dismiss the case where no breach of the Code is established or notify the signatory or official against whom the complaint is made.

In an instance of a significant breach or violation of the Standards of Conduct, the Committee shall:

- Call a meeting of the accused signatory and/or official of the agency and the person or group of persons who lodged the complaint in order to discuss the case. This can take place either at the regularly scheduled semi-annual meeting of the Committee, or in the case of a grievous violation of the code, an extraordinary meeting can be held.
- Request any signatory and/or official to provide evidence on the case under consideration.

When the Committee finds that the signatory or its employee has violated the Code, it shall take one or more of the following measures:

- Provide the necessary education for compliance;
- Call on another signatory to assist in the education process;
- Advise the signatory in violation to take corrective measures against the NGO official or employee who is directly responsible for the breach of the Code;
- Admonish the signatory;
- Suspend or cancel the signature of the NGO to the code.

The Unseating of a Committee Member

A Committee member shall not take part in any deliberation or decision making process where he or she has an interest in the case presented to the Committee.

Scope of Application

The Principles of Conduct shall apply to all NGO signatories to this Code of Conduct working in Afghanistan.

The Principles of Conduct shall apply to all officials and employees who act for and/or on behalf of NGOs which have agreed to abide by this Code.

Compliance to the Code

All signatories and all individuals or groups who act for and/or on behalf of the signatories shall observe, respect and uphold the standards of this Code.

To that end, every signatory shall ensure that all its officials and employees are adequately acquainted with the standards of the Code and work by them.

Revision of Code

Revision of the Code will require the approval of two-thirds of the representatives of the signatory organisations.

The Committee may from time to time review and recommend changes to the Code to the Coordination bodies.

Annex: Historical Context

Since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, national and international NGOs have played a crucial role in providing assistance to people in rural and urban communities throughout the country and to people in refugee camps in Pakistan.

1979-88: Immediately following the Soviet invasion, NGOs began programs to address the food, shelter and health care needs of Afghan refugees in Pakistan. In the early 1980s NGOs initiated cross-border programs into Afghanistan to address the basic health and livelihood needs of those

Afghans in areas not under Soviet control. Cross-border programs working inside Afghanistan included education by 1984 and agricultural and infrastructure projects commenced in 1986. Throughout this period, “cash-for-food” projects sought to give Afghans in resistance-held areas the resources they needed to remain inside Afghanistan. During the 1980s many NGOs were also engaged in advocacy efforts to raise awareness in Western capitals about the plight of Afghans as both victims of military aggression and refugees.

1988-95: By the late 1980s, NGOs had begun to implement development activities—using development principles in a context of “chronic emergency” and political and security instability—in addition to providing emergency assistance. The changed political context and increase in resources for Afghanistan in the late 1980s led to a number of developments in the NGO sector. The number of Afghan NGOs grew rapidly, support for Afghan capacity building increased, and several NGO coordination bodies were formed, which focused on strengthening the accountability, standards, and professionalism of the NGO community and on coordinating to increase impact and reduce duplication of activities. During this period many Afghan NGOs, and thousands of Afghans, built their professional skills in NGO-led training institutions with support from international NGOs.

1996-2001: In the Taliban period from 1996 to 2001, despite political restrictions, improved security in many parts of the country enabled agencies to work directly with local communities in remote rural areas. NGOs continued to coordinate closely with UN and donor agencies in establishing programming priorities and setting out agreed principles for the promotion of coherent and well-focused assistance to Afghans. The efforts of around twenty NGOs to develop an improved set of learning standards for Afghan children typified the cooperative approach during this period.

The severe drought from 1997-2001 exacerbated humanitarian need for many rural communities and forced new waves of displacement into urban areas, internal camps and refugee camps in Pakistan and Iran. While NGOs expanded their emergency activities to help these populations, they also continued their development programs.

Late 2001-present: Following the events of 11 September 2001, the working environment for NGOs in Afghanistan changed dramatically. In 2002, the return to Afghanistan of large numbers of refugees from neighboring countries required new emergency shelter and feeding programs. Following the fall of the Taliban, NGOs have, in coordination with the transitional Afghan authorities, increasingly sought to balance their emergency response work with longer-term reconstruction and development initiatives. The advent of an internationally recognised Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan has provided NGOs the opportunity to rearticulate the role of humanitarian actors, not as service contractors but rather as mission-driven civil society organisations.

Maps:

The maps for the A to Z Guide to Assistance in Afghanistan are provided by United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

Map 1: Afghanistan's Administrative Divisions

Map 2: Afghanistan's Physical Geography

Map 3: Natural Disasters in Afghanistan

Map 4: Population Estimate of Afghanistan

Map 5: Humanitarian Presence in Afghanistan

Please note that maps are available only in hard copies of English edition.



This index lists organisations, events, programmes and other items mentioned in the A to Z Guide. It does not list people who appear in the guide, or organisations who feature only in the contacts directory; the latter are listed alphabetically by province, with a table of contents on page 107.

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