



Office of the Chief Executive

Executive Committee on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

SDGs Coordination Unit

Subject: Meeting Minutes  
Time: 10:00 am  
Venue: Sapidar Palace  
Date: September 26, 2017  
No: 4

Agenda:

- Opening Remarks by H.E. Mustafa Mastoor, Acting Minister of Economy of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.
- Remarks by Honorable Co-chairs and Adoption of Minutes of the Meeting.
- Discussion on finalized SDGs' Committee ToR.
- Presentation and Open Discussion on SDGs' Working Groups ToR.
- Presentation on the way forward to achieve the SDGs by Claire Van Loveren from UNDP.
- AOB

Major Discussion points:

- The Honorable Co-chairs stated their remarks and adopted the minutes of the previous meeting.
- The meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Mustafa Mastoor, Acting Minister of Economy of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan; Honorable, Nasrallah Arsalayee, General Director of Council of Ministers of the Office of Chief Executive of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Honorable Mr. Jocelyn Mason, UNDP Deputy Country Director. **The Honorable Abdul Rahman Shekib, Senior Economic and Development Advisor to H.E the Chief Executive**, Representatives of the office of the President, MoJ, MoCI, MoWA, MOLSAMD, MoPH, MAIL, MRRD, MCIT, MoHE, MUDH, CSO, ACCI, IDLG, NEPA, FACT were other members of the meeting. Besides, representatives from the UN Working Team on SDGs Project in Kabul, EU, Indian Embassy and ACBAR organization also attended the meeting that was launched in Sapidar Palace, Kabul, Afghanistan at 10:00 am, 26-Sept-2017.
- As an opening remark, H.E. Mustafa Mastoor, Acting Minister of Economy of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, greeted the members and other participants and expressed his rejoices and appreciation from the tangible accomplishments of the Executive Committee on SDGs. He also applauded the Committee members' robust incentive and motivation and indicated that their steady attendance and active contribution in the committee's meetings is a good sign of their commitment and devoutness to the SDGs program. The Acting Minister updated the participants

about the recent accomplishments of the Coordinating Units of the Office of Chief Executive. As an instance, Mr. Mastoor noted that half (5 out of 10) of the Executive Committees on SDGs already started their activities in a proper and pleasing manner.

- The Honorable, Nasrallah Arsalayee, General Director of Council of Ministers of the Office of Chief Executive of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan welcomed the participants. Following his greetings, he reported that FAO is interested to be a member of the Executive Committee. The suggestion has been already shared with the Secretariat of the Executive Committee on SDGS for the approval.
- Mr. Douglas, the UNDP Representative, after greeting the participants, shed new lights on a number of wide-ranging viewpoints of UN on SDGs. In his speech, he reiterated the UN commitment to support Afghan Government in realizing the SDGs. Mr. Douglas pointed that well coordination and soundness between ANPDF and SDGs is dynamic element for the effective enactment of SDGs. Thus, he entreated the participants to think on ways for further enhancement such coordination. Pointing to a particular case in this regard, he said that it is important to form a better coordination between SDGs and the Afghanistan Peace and Development National Framework. Because SDGs is a long-term Agenda that is supposed to be ended in 2030, while, in compare to SDGs, the “Afghanistan Peace and Development National Framework” is a short-term program.
- The meeting went ahead with another statement raised by H.E Mustafa Mastoor on the content of the meeting’s agenda. He described that the main aim of the meeting is to finalize the Term of References (ToR) of the Executive Committees on SDGs. Related to the issue, Mrs. Claire Van Loveren, from UNDP delivered two presentations on the ToR of the Executive Committees’ Working Groups as well as UNDP’s forthcoming developmental campaigns including those on SDGs.
- H.E Mustafa Mastoor called for the participants’ views about the content of the previous meetings’ agendas which was approved endorsed the agendas content. Dr. Mastoor, also said that the suggestion to make CSO as a Co-Chair of the Executive Committee on SDGs- which was recommended in the previous meeting- has been submitted to the Office of Chief Executive that is on hold for the approval of H.E Dr. Abdulla Abdulla, Chief Executive of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. H.E Mustafa Mastoor also expressed his gladness on the activities progress of the Working groups and said that the Executive Committee on SDGs has successfully accomplished all of their assignments: The committee completed the Term of references (ToR) and crafted its preliminary version. It also appointed the members and co-chair of the working groups in the upcoming meetings further discussion sessions will be held to improve the current draft.
- The succeeding part of the meeting went ahead with talking of Mrs. Fonia Gall, representative of ACBAR who talked about the role of the local Units on SDGs. She said that the given roles for the Units are ambiguous yet and need clarification.
- Mr. Mohammad Nasir, Director of Provincial Affairs from IDLG came up with proposition to include IDLG as a Co-Chair of the Executive Committee’s all Working Groups in Kabul and a member at the provincial level.

- Mrs. Kalair from UNDP spoke on the first draft of the Committee's ToR, Co-Chairs and member of the Working Groups. She stated that due to cross-cutting nature of activities of the Working Groups, stakeholders need joint efforts to accomplish the tasks in a well-coordinated manner. To accomplish the SDGs, she said that it is necessary to be equipped with precise facts and figures on Gender, Environment, partnership, technology and financial stuffs. In her presentation, Mrs. Kalair also elaborated the major role and responsibilities of the Working Groups; number of meeting to be held; the source organization(s) to report for; and work on suggestions raised by the stakeholders of Working Groups.
- Honorable, Abdul Rahman, Shekib, the Chief Economic Development Advisor to the Office of Chief Executive of AFG, stated that the current ToR and managerial arrangement of Working Groups are merely a preliminary draft. Thus, each Group have rights to share their suggestions and recommendations for the improvement and amendments of the draft.
- Referring to the forthcoming assignments of the Committees' secretariat, H.E the Minister of Economy said that the Executive Committee ought to prepare the Targets and Indicators for each Working Group and share them with participants prior to the next round of the meeting.
- Mr. Feroz Masjidi, Director of the Policy and Planning department of MoCI, suggested to finalize ToR of the Committee's Working Groups and if needed, bring necessary amendment to the current managerial arrangement of the Groups. Realizing highly technical nature of the program, he came up with a suggestion for the involved ministries to develop a Baseline for the SDGs program as their opening efforts. Though, he said that most of the Ministries still lack precise and updated quantitative data which needs to be discussed in the upcoming series of the Working Groups meetings.
- Honorable Mohammad Ismail Rahimi, Deputy Minister of Economy raised a number of issues related to the financial aspect of achieving SDGs. "First of all, it is important to contemplate about the cost of realizing SDGs agenda in Afghanistan," he said. To propose an initial solution for the issue, Mr. Rahimi proposed each sector to identify relevant targets and indicators and then, determine the cost of accomplishing them. Furthermore, he suggested to prepare an Action Plan for this end and bring IDLG as a member of each Working Group.
- With regards to the role and usage of Information Technology in SDGs related projects, Honorable, Hadi Hedayati, Deputy Minister of MICT urged the government to use the technology for attaining SDGs and include the ministry as member of the Working Group-1.
- Honorable Mahboobullah Iltaf, Director General of Planning Directorate of the MAIL, emphasized on the importance of the SDGs budgeting and cost estimation. He stated that financial arrangement of the program is complicated matter and need thoughtful consideration. In this regard, Mr. Iltaf pointed out to the current issues in the MAIL and said: "MAIL has designed its activities planning and strategies including those of budgeting based on ANPDF. Therefore, it will be challenging for the Ministry to adjust SDGs with ANPDF." As an alternative way out, Mr. Iltaf suggested to prepare a separate annual budget for the SDGs. As a reply to the above-mentioned issues related to the Information Technology, budgeting and cost estimation of SDGs programs, Mrs. Claine Valovern, Governance Affairs Officer from UNDP, indicated that MCIT is already a

member of all Working Groups. Pointing the budget, she agreed that budgeting and cost estimation is a technical work and needs precise information and data, whereas, the Afghan Government lacks such information and data. H.E Mostafa Mastoor, Minister of Economy, also reiterated to the technical nature of budget preparation and suggested to arrange a technical team within each Working Group to deal with the budget and cost estimations. As a practical step for realizing the teams, he suggested MoEC, MoF and UNDP to take responsibility of arranging the technical team within each Group.

- The Minister of Economy endorsed the suggestion to include IDLG as a Co-Chair of the Executive Committee on SDGs and a member of the Working Group-1. Speaking on the reporting timeline of the SDGs related activities, Dr. Mastoor proposed for the stakeholders to prepare a quarterly report. In his remarks, once again Dr. Mastoor emphasized the importance of effective coordination among stakeholders of SDGs program and said that team work and decent coordination was the key factor behind successful attainment of MDG. Hence, working on SDGs should follow the same pattern.
- In order to arrange the coming meetings in an effective manner, H.E Dr. Mastoor asked from the involved Ministries to introduce their prime and alternate representatives for the upcoming meetings of the Executive Committee on SDGs so that Working Groups register their names in the participants list.
- During discussions, representatives from ACBAR and MoF reported that the role of their respective organizations is ambiguous in the drafted ToR of the Executive Committees on SDGs. Speaking on the issue, representative of MoF stated that in MoF there are policy and planning department that work on Peace framework, and Budget and Financial Evaluation Unit that focus national budget. He asked to consider these units while dealing with the Role of MoF in ToR of the Executive Committee on SDGs.
- Honorable, Mr. Shekib recapped that each group should, and are authorized to share their suggestions and views regarding modification or change in the managerial arrangement of Working Groups. Based on his view, it is a technical task and after finalization, the Secretariat can go ahead to wrap up them. Speaking on the duties of the Secretariat, H.E Minister of Economy said: “The Secretariat is responsible to identify and finalize the targets and indicators and present them to the Working Groups till the end of the next week.
- Mr. Hafizullah Baha, Head of the SDGs Coordination Unit of the Office of Chief Executive stated that hitherto, Ministry of economy was responsible for nationalization of the SDGs targets and indicators. But it is important to know which organization(s) will be responsible for now on. “It is not clear to me either the SDGs Coordination Unit or the Ministry of Economy will take the responsibility?”. He said. In response, the Minister of Economy clarified the task will be the joint duty of SDGs Coordination Unit and Ministry of Economy.
- Speaking on the significance of nationalization of SDGs, Mrs. Claire said that nationalization of SDGS an important component of the SDGS agenda. She also emphasized that people need to know about their rights from the SDGs and the program ought to be introduced in detail to people. In her statements, Mrs. Claire also spoke about importance of forming cohesive approach

for SDGs, prioritization of SDGs goals and targets, ways forward, coordination of SDGs with other national programs and finally, partnership and evaluation procedures of SDGs.

- Mrs. Fiona Gall, director of ACBAR spoke about nationalization of SDGs. She also said that for her it is difficult to know how it is possible to coordinate among Stakeholders in the Center as well as provincial level, particularly between ANPDF and SDGs. She asked the participants to shed lights on the issue.
- As a response to coordination issue among stakeholders, the Honorable, Mr. Rahimi, deputy Minister of Economy said that in order to improve coordination among stakeholders with regard to nationalization of SDGs, the Ministry aims to hold a major Conference in due course. In the conference they will invite representatives of local administrations from provinces. He further added: "In the conference the ministry will attempt to identify and categorize the targets and indicators of SDGs as well as structure of the Working Groups." To answer the question on how to make an effective coordination among the stakeholders, H.E Dr. Mastoor stated that all the Committees that are supposed to be established at the provincial level will be put in close coordination and cooperation with the House of Council of Ministers. Pointing to the raised issue on the CSO problem, he said that H.E Mohammad Ashraf Ghani, President of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan already directed SCO, Ministry of Economy and MoLSAMD to initiate a Nationwide Quantitative Data Management strategy.
- Representative of Central Statistics organization (CSO) raised his organization problem with regards to availability of numerical data and asked members of the Committee to support the agency improve the agency's capacity collect quality information.

#### **Actions to be taken:**

- Term of References(ToR) of the Executive Committee be amended based on recommendations and suggestions raised in the meeting;
- Term of References(ToR) of the Working Groups ought to be changed and amended and targets and indicators for all Working Groups have to be finalized;
- All Working Groups of the Executive Committee should hold their meetings prior to the next meeting of the Executive Committee on SDGs, to be held on 10 Oct, 2017;
- In the next scheduled meeting, UNDP should prepare and deliver a presentation on the successful experiences of other countries regarding nationalization and implementation of SDGs;
- IDLG should be included as a Co-Chair of the Executive Committee on SDGS and member of the Committee's First Working Groups;
- Scope of Work should be prepared on separate sheets for each Working Groups on SDGs;
- SDG costing estimation (budgeting) should be prepared by MoEC, MoF and UNDP.

Mr. Nasrullah Arsalai  
DG of Council of Ministers Secretariat

**Annex 1:**

Participants List of 4th Executive Committee Meeting on SDGs:

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