



Office of the Chief Executive
Executive Committee on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
SDGs Coordination Unit
Minutes of the ninth EC Meeting on SDGs
Meeting #: 10 Date:
16/ Jan /2017

NO	Agenda	Duration
1	Opening remarks by honorable Co-Chairs and adoption of the previous meeting minutes	10 Minutes
2	MoPH presentation on SDGs progress update in health sector	10 Minutes
3	Progress update by Working Groups (I, MoJ. II, MAIL. III, MoIC. and IV, MoEc) on the A-SDGs targets and baselines	20 Minutes
4	(AOB)	20 Minutes

The 9th meeting of the Executive Committee on SDGs took place at 10:00 am, Tuesday, 16nd January, 2018, at Sapidar Palace, Kabul, Afghanistan. It was Co-Chaired by H.E. Mr. Mustafa Mastoor, Minister of Economy, the honorable Nasrullah Arsalayee, Director General of Council of Ministers and Mr. Jocelyn Mason, Country Director of UNDP in Afghanistan. The meeting was attended by all government officials, International Organizations, civil society and private sector representatives.

Opening the session, H.E Mastoor welcomed the attendees and wished a happy new year for the foreign participants of the meeting. Then, he briefly introduced the meeting agenda. Minister Mastoor once again reiterated on the significance of SDGs for Afghanistan, as according to his statement, around 40% the country's population live under the poverty line. Asking to set a clear nationalization of the program, he said that it is very important for international donor of the

Agenda to have a clear nationalized indicators and their alignment with the national developmental documents.

Greeting the board members, Mr. Arsalayee shortly briefed meeting on the points suggested to him by the Coordination Unit of SDGs consisting in:

1. A need to conduct awareness programs on 2030 Agenda for the members of all Working Groups(WGs) to make them well aware of the nature and importance of the Agenda;
2. A need to conduct public awareness program on SDG Agenda;
3. The Secretariat discontentment from the low-level participation of WGs members in meetings;
4. Suggestion to authorize the Secretariat in archiving the SDGs related documents and information.

Concluding his remarks, Mr. Arsalayee stated that SDG is very broad program. Thus, there is a need for cohesive, joint and hard work to fulfil it. He also confessed that it is very tough task to arrange accurate data for the baselines, albeit, urged the Central Statistics Organization to support dealing with the issue.

In his turn, Mr. Jocelyn Mason, by greeting the attendees, backed the points raised by Minister Mastoor, in particular on the point regarding worrying level of poverty in Afghanistan. He stated that elimination of poverty is a major challenges of the world as well as a key goal of 2030 Agenda. Thus, UNDP is strongly committed to support SDG Agenda across the world, including Afghanistan. Mr. Mason also argued that highlighting the challenges by the Committee members further motivate UNDP to fulfil its mission. He also appreciated the WGs efforts and their attainment in heading the SDG agenda to the phase of its alignment and requested them to do their best in aligning SDGs with the National developmental documents such as NPP and ANPDF. On the matter of the SDGs finances, he said that UNDP will remain committed till the conclusion of SDG Agenda (2030) and will work with MoEc and MoF in this field. In his final remarks, Mr. Mason apologized the UNDP absence in the previous meeting of the Committee. With conclusion of Mr. Mason Talks, H.E Minister Mastoor, congratulated him for his appointment as the Country Director of UNDP in Afghanistan. H.E Mastoor, then asked the meeting members to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. Yet, prior being accepted, the minutes received a number of major comments and suggestions as following:

- The fifth paragraph of the minutes be attuned with its Persian version;
- Distinguish between abbreviated form of Civil Society Organizations (SCOs) and Central Statistics Organization (SCO) to prevent the readers from confusion;
- The drafter of the meeting minutes to mention in detail the remarks, suggestions or quotation shared by the meeting members about the meeting's major discussion points.

Related to the content of the previous meeting minutes, the Honorable, Arsalayee directed the Secretariat to share the meeting minutes 3-4 days in advance so that the committee members have enough time to read and review it.

In the next phase of the session, representatives from the MoEc and MoPH delivered their presentations.

Mr. Ahmad Jan Nayeem, deputy minister of Policy and Planning of MoPH presented the ministry's initiatives and successful practices related to SDGs. His presentation focused on the bellow topics:

- Importance of health sector for SDG Agenda;
- Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and MoPH efforts in the field;
- Basic Package of Health Services (BPHS) and MoPH efforts in the respect;
- Essential Package of Health Services (EPHS) and MoPH attainments in this regard.

Mr. Nayeem noted that health sector is a key goal of SDG, therefore MoHP has made a tremendous effort to identify priorities in this sector with aim to improve the health facilities for the public in the country. H.E Mastoor appreciated the presentation and said that MoPH has been very successful in its efforts regarding improvement of health services and its programs alignment with the SDGs. Minister Mastoor once again asked the MoPH to share their successful practices and policies with the Committee members and argued that the ministry, though, facing numerous challenges by some international agencies like WHO and national actors over the past decade, managed to tangibly improve the health sector in Afghanistan. Mr. Nayeem, appreciating the encoring words of Minister Mastoor, said that MoPH has given parts of health related program to the national and international private agencies. However, the ministry majorly played the role of policy maker and M&E actor of the contracted projects. Minister Mastoor also expressed his optimism that with a robust and effective planning and strategy for SGD implementation, Afghanistan will be able to celebrate the successful conclusion of SDG Agenda in Afghanistan in 2030.

Additionally, some meeting members also commented on the presentation. Mr. Haseeballah Moahed, general director of Central Statistics Agency, raised the contradiction between the facts and figures shared in the presentation and those of data about the same topics available in the agency. "In the presentation, it was highlighted that MoPH managed to reduce the mortality rate to 661/100000 during giving birth, while according to the data of the Central Statistics Agency, the rate is 1200/100000. The Agency shared the issue with WHO, but even WHO could not explain the root causes of such difference" He said.

Appreciating the achievements of MoPH, Mr. Jocelyn Mason, congratulated the MoPH and said the ministry successful practices is inspiring and source of hope.

Mr. Mahjoor, deputy minister of higher education had a moderate critic on the amount of time spent for nationalization process of SDGs. He stated that about one and half year spent merely for the nationalization process, which according to him, is lots of time. Therefore, he suggested

to start the implementation process without any further delay. He also warned on the disturbing scale of illicit drugs consumption among Afghans and asked MoPH to arrange health therapy programs for the addicts. Mr. Mohammad Ismael Rahimi, Deputy Minister of Economy applauded the activities of MoPH and asked other ministries to consider MoPH plans and actions as one of the successful models and prepare a cost-efficient model for the SDGs implementation at the national level.

Mrs. Spozhmai Wordak, deputy minister of Women Affairs proposed MoPH to consider preventive measures as the decent way of tackling with different diseases. She also asked the MoPH to arrange a public awareness about health related parts of SDGs. Mrs. Wordak argued that some diseases such as chest cancer is gradually rising among women and recommended the MoPH to establish medical institutes at the provincial centers to diagnose and cure cancers. She also asked to establish Forensic medicine institute at the provincial level, because, according to her, in the rural areas women have remarkable challenges in getting access to health services.

Criticizing on the reports which shows progress in health care facilities in the country, Mr. Mohammad Hassan Sepahi, head of Afghanistan national entrepreneurs stated that most of such progress merely remain on paper. "In 2012, roughly 57% of Afghans reported to have access to health care services. If that was real and health facilities were on the improving path, in five years' time, that amount ought to be 100% for now. While, at the moment we cannot see such sign of tangible improvement. Notable amount of patients leaves the country for treatment which force them to take out huge amount of money outside the country." He said. In response to the feedbacks and critics to the MoPH Presentation, H.E Mastoor said that the presentation aimed to generally brief success and efforts of MoPH in progress of health care services in the country through cost-efficient manner as well as the way MoPH successfully aligned the SDGs into its programs. So, the important point for the Committee members is to learn from successful practices of MoPH in general and discuss the specific issues about health sector in the Environment and Health Sub-Committee.

Mr. Ahmad Jan Nayeem shared his view about the comments regarding modality and cost estimation shared by a number of meeting members. He stated that developing a clear modality and cost estimation framework is very important for attainment of SDGs. In addition, he reported that while sub-contracting some of the health related projects, MoPH remain in charge of the policy making and contract management mechanism for the contractors to get sure that about quality working and credible background of the contractors.

Subsequently, Mr. Nabi Soroush, General Director of Policy and Monitoring of MoEc delivered his presentation. In the presentation he briefed the recent advancement in activities on nationalization and alignment process of SDGs. In particular, his presentation covered the following topics:

- The current state of nationalization process of SDGs;
- Briefed the developed-table containing the selected indicators, targets;
- Updated the progress in the activities and attainments of WGs;

- Briefed on the prepared-table containing the alignment of SDGs with the national development documents;
- Introduced the developed-table containing the cost estimation procedures;
- Explained the logic behind effectiveness of using the “Integration SDGS Model” in the country;

For further enhancement in the activities on SDGs, Mr. Soroush proposed the following recommendations:

- The sectorial ministries to officially submit their selected indicators for the MoEc for further process;
- Establishment of a joint committee by MoEc, MoWA, and the Central Statistics Organization to arrange survey for collecting the needed data for the selected indicators;
- Start actions on alignment of SDGs with ANPDF and NPP;
- WGs to start working on development of their programs related to SDGs implementation phases;

In response to the suggestion, the Central Statistic Organization representative said that the agency is ready to adopt with the suggestions of MoEc and MoWa for inclusion of the proposed survey program in the next year survey of the Agency.

Mr. Jocelyn Mason, appreciating the presentation, asked the WGs to align the highly-prioritized targets and indicators with the national developmental documents.

Mr. Shafiqullah Atayee, deputy head of Chamber of Commerce of Afghanistan, stated that the private sector can play crucial role and nationalization of targets and indicators, yet, the chamber has not been selected as a member of budgeting board. He asked to consider his suggestion.

Mrs. Fiona, representative of ACCBAR wanted to become sure if the listed targets and indicators in the presentation are the final version. She also proposed to breakdown the responsibilities of the WG 4 and 2, because the number of targets and indicators belongs to the Groups are huge while comparing with the remaining Groups.

Summary of the decisions and next steps:

1. The Secretariat need to send the invitation letter and other related documents to the Committee members early enough so that they find time to read and review them;
2. The documents presented in the meeting need to be shared with the attendees via email;
3. The Secretariat need to organize interpreter for the upcoming meetings of the Committee;

4. The Secretariat to revise and edit the “Minutes of the previous meeting” based on feedbacks received in the meeting;
5. The Private Sector; Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI); Chamber of Industry and Mines and the Afghan National Entrepreneur Association be included as a member of WG-2 and 4;
6. The WGs’ “Finalized-Work Plan” be shared with WGs and be asked start their following arrangements based on their finalized -Action Plans;
7. The committee approve the targets and indicators nationalized by MoEc. MoEc need to mention the name of all WGs at the end the document;
8. UNDP to support the arrangement of Public Awareness programs on SDGs. Private Sector be proposed to contribute in the public awareness program as well;
9. MoEc to include a comprehensive “Cost estimation” section in the developed “Annex”
10. MoEc, MoWa and Central Statistical Agency to establish a joint Committee. The Committee comprise indicators which need data in the annual survey of the Central Statistics organization;
11. The Secretariat and MoEc to inform member of the Committee and WGs about the “Article Writing Contest on SDGs” program, initiated by Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA);
12. The next meeting of the Executive Committee on SDGs will be held on January 30 at 10:00 am, in the same venue.

Mustafa Mastoor,
Minister of Economy of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

Nasrullah Arsalayee,
Director General of Council of Ministers of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

Jocelyn Mason,
Country Director of UNDP in Afghanistan