



2020 AFGHANISTAN CONFERENCE, 23–24 NOVEMBER, GENEVA
PEACE, PROSPERITY AND SELF-RELIANCE

AFGHANISTAN PARTNERSHIP FRAMEWORK



I. Preamble

The Partners, the Government of Afghanistan and the International Community, commit to continued efforts towards a peaceful, prosperous and self-reliant Afghanistan. This Partnership is based on the principles included in the Afghanistan Partnership Framework (APF), agreed at the *2020 Afghanistan Conference* on 23-24 November 2020.

Shared principles of partnership are an essential element for building trust. Both the Government of Afghanistan and its international partners have learned much about how to improve the effectiveness of their relationship. The prospect of peace offers a transformational opportunity for the people of Afghanistan and its partners, but it also poses new challenges that must be overcome for peace to succeed. The Government and its international partners must preserve and build upon the achievements of the past nineteen years, including critical gains that have been made in education, freedom and opportunity for Afghan women and girls. Acknowledging significant progress in Afghanistan since 2001, and the principle of partnership as an essential element for building trust and to delivering effective support, the purpose of the APF is to preserve and build upon these achievements, consolidate the Partnership and set out the responsibilities for the international partners and the Government in a clear and transparent way.

In support of Afghanistan's goal of self-reliance, the objective of the APF is to advance the country along its path to self-reliance by institutionalizing and operationalizing a set of foundational Principles that underpin a peaceful and democratic society, and that drive inclusive growth. The aim of the APF is to set out clear expectations and to guide high-level policy dialogue on progress against the Principles and towards achieving the outcomes and actions that support peace and development, reduce poverty and improve the welfare of the people of Afghanistan.

The principles outlined in the APF represent core values of the international community, including the international conventions to which Afghanistan is a signatory. The Principles set out the conditions that are necessary for continued international support to the Government. These represent a baseline against which Government presents the progress of its policy agenda and international partners consider their overall levels of support, in an understanding of mutual partnership. The Principles also present high-level development goals as the necessary basis for international support. These are aligned with Afghanistan's overarching national policy frameworks, notably the Afghan Constitution, the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework II (ANPDF II) and the National Priority Programmes (NPPs). These frameworks will guide development interventions and the reform activities of the Government and the international partners for the period 2021-2024 in the pursuit of increased self-reliance by the end of the Transformation Decade in 2024.

In the Partnership, the Government of Afghanistan will be responsible for all planning, execution and results, and doing so by adhering to the international agreements, expectations and norms



set out in the principles below. The international partners commit to supporting the Government's efforts within committed resources and following principles of aid-effectiveness.

Accompanying, but separate from, the Principles laid out in this framework are a set of outcomes and jointly agreed priority actions. These are aligned with the pillars of the ANPDF II – peace-building, state-building and market-building. These provide an additional and more specific framework for assessing progress and guiding policy dialogue. Their purpose is to support the successful implementation of the Government's development agenda and to bring the promise of Afghanistan's "Transformation Decade" to fruition by 2024. The specific actions outlined in sections II-IV below recognise that the Government must operate within a highly challenging environment. They are to be revised only if there are major changes in the political or operating context. Specific annual targets are to be agreed for the subsequent year as determined in the Joint Review Process outlined in section V.

The APF Principles in this Preamble are intended to frame high-level annual dialogue on progress on development in Afghanistan. They articulate the minimum criteria for international support. The APF actions in chapters II-IV are specific and tangible joint priority measures to be taken by the Government in support of its development agenda and the Principles, and may be incentivized by individual international partners through reform-based programmes.

Recognizing the volatile nature of the current environment, the review process described in Section V provides the mechanisms for adjustment. Whilst targets for 2021 are agreed at the 2020 Afghanistan Conference in November 2020, targets for 2022 and beyond remain indicative. The regular annual reviews will provide the possibility for further confirmation, or adaptation if needed, of actions and targets for subsequent years. The full process for the joint review also feeds into individual decisions by international partners regarding the renewal, level and modality of their continued support. If there are clear concerns with adherence to the Principles, international partners may reconsider their support at any point.

Principles of the Afghanistan Partnership Framework:

Core principles:

1. Commitment to democracy, the rule of law, human rights and gender equality, embedded in the Afghan Constitution, and respect for Afghanistan's international commitments are prerequisites for international support. In particular, the Partners note the importance of women's empowerment and the full and equal enjoyment of their rights, the rights of the child, the rights of persons belonging to marginalized groups and minorities (including persons with a disability), and the right to freedom of association, expression and opinion.
2. Commitment to ensuring full equality between women and men, girls and boys, in all aspects of life, political, economic and social. This commitment must be reflected through gender mainstreaming in the implementation of the ANPDF II, in the design of specific programmes by the Government, as well as in the results monitoring framework. As a first



step, all indicators in the APF and ANPDF II monitoring framework should be sex-disaggregated, where possible.

3. Commitment to effective implementation of the principles of governance embedded in the Afghan Constitution. The Government conducts elections that are free and fair; ensures the roles of the different branches of government are respected and fulfilled; takes robust measures to address both the causes and manifestations of corruption in Government institutions; strengthens sub-national governance and representation; ensures representative bodies and the civil society are consulted in decision-making at every level. Government ensures an enabling environment for effective and transparent operation of NGOs and CSOs.
4. Commitment to an inclusive Afghan-owned and Afghan-led peace process and sustainable peace; with a meaningful role for victims of conflict and due account taken of victims' rights. The Government ensures the meaningful participation of women, youth, ethnic and religious minorities, refugees, urban and rural voices in the negotiation of a peace agreement and the taking of necessary measures to address exclusion, under-representation, and other sources of grievance.
5. A secure and stable environment that underpins sustainable economic and human development. Security and justice sectors must meet the needs of Afghan citizens, providing accountable and efficient state services that address human security. The Partners work together to strengthen the capacity of security forces; to combat terrorism in all its forms including financing; to reduce the production, supply of and trafficking in illicit drugs; to prevent money laundering; and to fight trafficking in human beings and migrant smuggling, all of which undermine three ANPDF II pillars, in full respect of the applicable national and international laws. Ensuring safety and security of aid workers is vital for the smooth implementation of international partners' assistance.
6. ANPDF II, as per its guiding principles, is to articulate, integrate and roll out the processes of peace-building, state-building, and market-building as instruments of nation-building, and be operationalized through a realistic monitoring and results framework, with clear annual indicators lending themselves to effective monitoring and verification.

Core reform priorities, aligned with the three pillars of ANDPF II:

7. Ensuring good governance, providing quality services to all citizens and promoting stability; resources are distributed fairly and transparently, and should be informed by engagement from citizens and local communities.
8. A meaningful, demonstrable fight against corruption is carried out, evidenced by measures and outcomes that are anchored in a clear, comprehensive and long-term national anti-corruption strategy, with a view to prevent and combat corruption. This strategy will need to be adopted following consultations with the civil society and international partners, and



based on an independent impact-assessment of the previous strategy. In order to further support anti-corruption efforts and contribute to building more effective institutions, public administration must be improved at all levels and across all sectors.

9. Continued Government commitments towards sound macro-economic policies and public financial management, and international support towards key reforms and reinforcement of good governance. Inclusive, private sector-driven growth and poverty reduction are at the centre of policies that lead to progress against the Sustainable Development Goals, outlined in the ANPDF II.

Partnership and aid-effectiveness principles:

10. The Partners commit to the four principles of effective development cooperation that form the basis of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation; (i) country ownership, (ii) a focus on results, (iii) inclusive partnerships involving the full diversity of actors in the country, (iv) and transparency and accountability to citizens.
11. The Partners acknowledge conditionality as a core element of the aid architecture and commit to the principles in the APF. Conditionality must be clearly defined and realistic. Conditions on the Government must reflect in such expected actions that are within the Government's authority and control. The focus is on overall progress along the APF actions and targets, while the Partners are mindful that performance against outcome indicators also depend on various external factors outside Government control. The targets outlined in sections II-IV for the out-years beyond 2021 are indicative and subject to revision based on the second-layer review. Where specific out-year targets are not mentioned, the second-layer process of review and planning will be used to jointly determine their need and formulation.
12. International partners strive for providing predictable multi-year financial assistance. International partners also commit to increasing transparency in their communications and reporting to the Government. The Government and international partners jointly agree to undertake regular aid portfolio reviews, in a spirit of ensuring the alignment of off-budget aid financing, and progress in the achievement of the SDGs, with Government policy priorities and providing reciprocal assurances that international financial assistance is used for agreed purposes.



II. Peace-Building

OUTCOME 1: Social, economic and political inclusion and safety of all, irrespective of age, gender, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status

Measured by:

- **Improvements in the Human Development Index**
- **Improvements in the UNDP Gender Inequality Index**
- **Reduction in civilian casualties reported by UNAMA, particularly by indiscriminate tactics (SDG 16.1.2)**
- **Safe return of refugees and IDPs as measured by the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) is improved**
- **A reduction in the proportion of the population who fear for their personal safety as reported in the Survey of the Afghan People (SDG 6.2.1)**
- **Improved Harvard Kennedy School indicators in Development: Safety and Justice**

APF Action 1.1: Government expands community service-delivery for peace.

- Target 2021: The ARTF safe migration programme (EZ-Kar) is rolled out in 12 cities, with 150 Gozar Assemblies and 150 Business Gozar Assemblies established.
- Target 2022: Citizen's Charter Peace Pilot is rolled out in 300 communities, with all programme management positions filled through monitored and competitive recruitment processes.
- Target 2024: At least 15,000 land disputes are resolved (claimants disaggregated by sex, age and migratory status).

APF Action 1.2: Government ensures orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility, reintegration of returnees.

- Target 2021: The Comprehensive Migration Policy is passed and implementation started through the development of a costed action plan.
- Target 2023: 70 % of returnees, abroad and internally, have improved access to effective basic services and housing, decent employment.
 - 75 % of returnees and resident communities have obtained civil registration documents (disaggregated by sex, age and migratory status).
 - 75 % of returnees and resident communities report having access to effective basic services (disaggregated by sex, location and service sector).
 - 50 % of returnees and resident communities are gainfully (self)employed (informal and formal) (disaggregated by sex, age and migratory status).

APF Action 1.3: Government ensures an improved human rights-based and victim-centered approach in the judicial process and law enforcement, especially with regard to human trafficking, sexual harassment and violence against women and children cases.



- Target 2021: Training developed and piloted for law enforcement officers, criminal judges and prosecutors for a more human rights-based and victim-centered approach. Judicial and Prosecutorial EVAW (Elimination of Violence Against Women) Units work efficiently and effectively, as demonstrated by the increase of cases reported, investigated and tried. Civil Service Commission introduces contract clauses for all civil servants specifying that gender harassment is grounds for dismissal.
- Target 2022: All criminal judges and prosecutors receive training for a more victim-centered approach. Government ensures that all Government ministries as well as independent agencies establish and operationalize Gender Workplace Complaint Offices with clear mandate to receive and investigate sexual harassment complaints in the workplace.

APF Action 1.4: Government ensures civil servants, including law enforcement officers and security forces, receive human rights training.

- Target 2021: Training developed and piloted for Government officials and Members of Parliament incorporating a human rights-based approach to policies and laws, including training on all key human rights principles: equality, non-discrimination, transparency, accountability, participation and inclusion.
- Target 2023: 60 % of Government officials are trained in incorporating a human rights-based approach to policies and laws, including training on all key human rights principles: equality, non-discrimination, transparency, accountability, participation and inclusion.

APF Action 1.5: Government ensures that the education system promotes tolerance and inclusion.

- Target 2024: All curricula and textbooks promote religious and ethnic tolerance and do not propagate teachings that denigrate religious, ethnic, or other minorities and that promote harmful gender norms.

III. State-Building

OUTCOME 2: Progress towards effective, accountable and self-reliant state-institutions

Measured by:

- An increase in Government revenues as a share of economic output as recorded in Ministry of Finance data (SDG 17.1.1)
- An increased proportion of civil service positions at all levels being occupied by women as reported in NSIA data (SDG 16.1.7)
- Improvements in PEFA measurements
- Improved rule of law performance as measured by the WJP Rule of Law Index
- Improvement in the perception of corruption as measured by Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index
- Increased effectiveness of high-level corruption prosecution and law enforcement, especially at ACJC and the Supreme Court, and improved recovery of stolen assets by the State

APF Action 2.1: As part of the revised anti-corruption strategy, Government implements the following anti-corruption measures.

- Target 2021: A functionally independent Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) is made operational, with sufficient resources, by 6/2021. The ACC must have a clear mandate in line with the UN Convention Against Corruption, should subsume any existing parallel institutions, as well as incorporate the functions assumed and the expertise accumulated by the Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee.
- Target 2022: Improving on the existing Civil Service codification, an ethical code of conduct for civil servants – including commitment to integrity, honesty, fairness and the rule of law – is clearly articulated, made public, and incorporated into all ministries as an enforceable regulatory framework. All managers in Government institutions are required to exemplify this code; promote it in the organizational culture and arrange training on the code for employees.
- Target 2023: Across the budget and public financial management cycle, establishing electronic and other systems that complement AFMIS and create accountability, checks and balances, and a clear auditable electronic or paper trail for Government budgeting, procurement and service delivery processes.
- Target 2024: The ACC will have conducted at least 15 independent, objective and evidence-based evaluations on high-level institutional processes vulnerable to abuse and on organizational cultures enabling corruption. These evaluations have resulted in effective reform.

APF Action 2.2: Government ensures progress in the legal ramifications of corruption cases, including at the high-level.

- Target 2021: Verifiable data on the number of corruption cases reported versus the number of corruption cases investigated by the Attorney-General's Office (AGO) Anti-corruption units, including the Anti-Corruption Justice Centre (ACJC).



- Target 2022: Increased efficiency of the prosecution of corruption cases by the ACJC and the Supreme Court, demonstrated by a 50 % increase in the number of cases that go from investigation to conclusion at trial in both institutions.
- Target 2023: Increase in the number of high-level officials (Governor, ex-Minister, Deputy Minister, Commissioner, Member of Parliament) tried by ACJC and the Supreme Court.
- Target 2021-2024: 10 % increase of assets recovered year on year between 2021 and 2024 against confiscation orders made in significant corruption cases. This includes the transparent transfer of these assets to the national budget.

APF Action 2.3: Government strengthens revenues and public financial management at national and local levels.

- Target 2021: Publish all tax laws, consolidated with latest amendments on the Ministry of Finance website; New Occupancy Certificate Regulation, conducive to efficient issuing of certificates, is adopted; a new PFM roadmap is developed to cover 2021-2025; the PFM cadre regulation and associated cadre allowance is approved by Cabinet.
- Target 2022: The Value-Added Tax has been introduced and the Business Receipts Tax removed.
- Target 2023: Allow e-filing and e-payment for all taxpayers under the Large Taxpayers Office and Medium Taxpayers Office.

APF Action 2.4: Government moves towards merit-based recruitment and promotion in the civil service, and ensures increase of women represented in civil service, including at the highest levels.

- Target 2021: The Civil Service Pay Policy is implemented in all ministries and other relevant Government entities and roll out of the competency-based adjustment for general education teachers initiated; at least 1 % increase of women civil servants in grades 1 and 2, and 2 % increase in all other grades across civil service, excluding the Ministry of Education, from the January 1, 2021 baseline. Deputy Ministers in the five largest civilian ministries are subject to competitive hiring processes overseen by a special committee, in accordance with the Regulation for Appointment of Civil Servants in Category A.
- Target 2022: At least 500 appointments are completed in accordance with the customs cadre regulation; 200 appointments are completed in accordance with the procurement cadre regulation; % increases to Target 2021 on female representation to be determined as part of the second-layer joint review outlined in section V.
- Target 2023: At least 700 appointments are completed in accordance with the customs cadre regulation; customs positions filled through direct appointments are replaced through a competitive selection; % increases to Target 2022 on female representation to be determined as part of the second-layer joint review outlined in section V.
- Target 2024: All Deputy Ministers are subject to competitive hiring processes in key ministries overseen by an Appointments Commission supported by an internationally recruited HR firm; % increases to Target 2023 on female representation to be determined as part of the second-layer joint review outlined in section V.



IV. Market-Building

OUTCOME 3: A reduction in poverty driven by a vibrant private sector

Measured by:

- **A reduction in the proportion of Afghans (sex-disaggregated) living below the basic needs poverty line as measured by NSIA survey data (SDG 1.2.1)**
- **Annual growth rate of real GDP per employed person (SDG 8.2.1) is improved**
- **The real rate of economic growth as recorded in NSIA data (SDG 8.1.1) is improved**
- **The gross value of exports as recorded in Da Afghanistan Bank data (SDG 17.11.1) is improved**
- **Afghanistan's overall score recorded in the World Bank Group Doing Business survey is improved**
- **Domestic credit to the private sector as a proportion of GDP increased to 10 % by 2024**

APF Action 3.1: Government adheres to sound policies for macroeconomic stability, demonstrated by satisfactory progress with the IMF Extended Credit Facility program, and ensures increasing access to finance.

- Target 2021: State-owned commercial banks are fully compliant with prudential requirements and publish audited financial statements.
- Target 2024: In line with the state-owned banks strategy, the merger of Bank-e-Millie and New Kabul Bank has been completed and an action plan for private participation in the merged bank and Pashtany Bank are approved.

APF Action 3.2: In keeping with SDG 5a, Government undertakes reforms to ensure the equal rights of women to economic resources, to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.

- Target 2021: Gender analysis is thoroughly conducted in the preparation of all projects, in accordance with the Public Investment Management Regulations. Based on these gender analyses, 100 % of approved projects include a positive expected impact on women and girls.
- Target 2024: A nation-wide mechanism is operational for improving and promoting women's access to markets and international value chains. # % increase in loans given to SMEs owned by women; annual % increases to be determined as part of the second-layer joint review outlined in section V.

APF Action 3.3: Government facilitates agribusiness and agriculture exports.

- Target 2021: The WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and the WTO Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) are fully and effectively implemented.



- Target 2022: Harmonized Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) rules and regulations with international standards, requirements, accreditation and best practices.
- Target 2023: Modernized quality SPS/certification infrastructure and management, Streamlined National Food Safety Authority established to regulate and support standardization of food safety.

APF Action 3.4: Government mobilizes growth and investment in mining sector.

- Target 2021: The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) membership is maintained. The financial statements of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) in the extractive industries are published and audited. At least two bidding areas are defined for the planned tenders to allocate Mineral Development Contracts.
- Target 2022: Afghanistan addresses the 5 identified gaps in the implementation of the EITI standards (either partially or full) by April 2022 and ensures its EITI membership is maintained.
- Target 2023: The EITI membership is maintained. The financial statements of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) in the extractive industries are published and audited.
- Target 2024: The EITI membership is maintained. The financial statements of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) in the extractive industries are published and audited.



V. Joint Review Process

The Partners agree on a joint review process to inform high-level policy dialogue and contribute to individual decisions of sovereign international partners on the renewal, level and modality of their support. The review process seeks to establish the overall direction and pace of progress against the APF Principles articulated in the Preamble.

In addition to directly reviewing adherence to the Principles, the Partners also conduct joint reviews of performance against the outcome and action indicators of the APF. These are based on a shared understanding that progress in APF outcomes and actions will also be an expression of the adherence to key Principles, but as such only one element for the full assessment of the development progress. The joint review for this Partnership framework therefore follows a two-layered review process.

Technical Level Review Process

A two-layered review process on the technical level forms the basis for annual review consultations at the Senior Officials Meetings. The two layers of review are conducted annually by a joint team of Government officials and Kabul-based staff from the international partners with relevant expertise. Where specialized expertise is required, or when reporting is deemed inadequate, the Partners may agree to use independent third-party experts for monitoring and verification, feeding into the reporting of the joint review teams.

The assessment will provide an information base regarding progress against: i) the Principles laid out in the Preamble to this framework; and ii) the outcome indicators and short-term actions. Adequate progress against Principles is a minimum condition for continued international financial support. Assessment of progress against outcome indicators and actions can be used by individual international partners to help inform decisions regarding the renewal, level, and modality of aid support.

1. First-Layer Review: APF Principles

The Partners seek to establish a shared understanding on overall progress against the Principles as laid out in the Preamble of this framework. Commitment to gender equality, women's rights, the rights of the child, minorities and marginalized groups (including persons with a disability), to democracy, rule of law, good governance and peace, remain priority Principles against which progress is reviewed. The first-layer review will be informed by:

- Progress against available international indices, including reporting on Afghanistan's progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals;
- The extent to which Government policy decisions and reforms over the previous year demonstrate adherence to UN conventions and treaties to which Afghanistan is a signatory party. This will be informed by assessments and monitoring reports produced by UN agencies, NGOs, and CSOs;



- The extent of progress against reforms and outcomes specified in the ANPDF monitoring framework and under reform programs agreed with the IMF, the World Bank, the EU, the ADB and other partners;

2. Second-Layer Review: APF Outcomes and Priority Actions

The second-layer assessment has two purposes. The first is to measure the progress against the outcome indicators, actions and targets specified in sections II-IV of this framework. The outcome objectives are taken largely from the ANPDF II and reflect Government-owned policies.

The second purpose of the second-layer assessment is to make recommendations to adjust actions, and targets for the subsequent year or to agree on alternative actions, based on an assessment of: i) progress achieved to date and required next steps; ii) current country political and economic circumstances; and iii) the policy priorities of Government and its international partners. This review will be supported by a task force established in early 2021 between the Government and international partners, under the auspices of UNAMA, World Bank and Ministry of Finance, which will make recommendations for adaptations and endorsement at the annual Senior Officials Meetings as described below, beyond the targets for 2021 agreed at the 2020 Afghanistan Conference.

Both layers of review are conducted in a spirit of partnership and consultation between the Partners. These review consultations between the Partners will be documented in an aide-memoire, which will record the views of the Partners with the aim of establishing a shared understanding of progress.

The aides-memoires of these two layers of review will inform:

Annual Senior Officials Meetings

The annual Senior Officials Meetings (SOM) will review commitment to the Principles and, where appropriate, approve changes to the APF actions. The chief function of the SOM is to review overall progress and, based on its findings, make a recommendation for the renewal, level and modality of support. In light of current levels of uncertainty regarding Afghanistan's future trajectory, for example regarding the outcomes of Afghanistan Peace Negotiations, the first annual SOM in late 2021 will inform the confirmation or modification of support pledged at the 2020 Afghanistan Conference. Decisions to confirm the continuation, modification or suspension of support based on the review process outlined above will be taken on an individual, sovereign basis.

Biennial Ministerial Meeting

Following the established schedule, a biennial ministerial meeting in 2022 will serve as a mid-term review of progress, leading to a confirmation or modification of the pledges made at the 2020 Afghanistan Conference. The review will follow a progressive and proportionate approach



and make recommendations for policy dialogue at country level. Any decision regarding the level, modality or renewal of financial support in response to the review findings will be accompanied by a commitment to intensified and enhanced policy dialogue in order to identify and overcome bottlenecks.

Review findings will also inform the need for and the nature of any subsequent international conference.