

AFGHANISTAN RECONSTRUCTION TRUST FUND (ARTF)

Gender Working Group Meeting

Sunday, January 12, 2020

Summary of Discussions

The ARTF Gender Working Group (GWG) held its monthly meeting on 12 January 2020. Representatives of 8 donor partners¹, Ministry of Finance (MOF), Ministry of Women affairs (MOWA) and the ARTF Administrator (the World Bank) attended the meeting that was co-chaired by the Bank and the European Union (EU).

The agenda items were: (i) update on the actions taken on the Gender Based Violence (GBV) in education sector; (ii) integration of gender aspects in the 2020 Incentive Program Development Policy Grant (IP DPG); and (iii) Gender Working Group (GWG) meeting topics for Feb-Jun 2020 and GWG co-chair for the next six months.

Update by the World Bank SWAT team on the GBV case of Logar:

The World Bank GBV special task force (called SWAT) provided an update on the overall approach in response to the recent GBV allegations in a few schools in Logar province. Investigation is still on-going by the government, the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) and the Attorney General's Office (AGO). The AIHRC investigation confirmed the incidence of the case, but the magnitude and severity of the case is yet to be determined. The government and the stakeholders agreed to have a technical working group for which a TOR is drafted, and it focuses on survivor centric approaches. The World Bank drafted the ToR for the proposed inter-agency technical working group (IATWG) with MOF in December. IATWG is led by MOF represented by DM Naheed. The Bank also has commissioned a joint education and gender/GBV mission (January 12-31st 2020) with the aim to facilitate the dialogue on the GBV risks with MOE, review all the existing system – policies, procedures, and laws – in place, identify the gaps in these policies, coordinate with MOE and other stakeholders, come up with recommendations, and develop a GBV roadmap in education sector based on the lessons learned from Logar case. Furthermore, the Bank has identified resources and is planning to bring in more technical staff; international and national consultants to help with the broader efforts in addressing GBV risks of the enter Bank-funded portfolio.

The Bank is coordinating with various partners so as not to reinvent wheels. UNFPA has also planned to establish a Family Protection Centre (FPC) in Logar province to support GBV victims, including health response services, psychosocial counselling, legal and referral services in early 2020. UNICEF has identified and will fund an organization that will provide support to the Logar case survivors who come forward and seek help/support. Child protection from GBV is already on their work program for 2020 and UNICEF has started mapping services of the child protection organizations. The service provider mapping undertaken by the World Bank and UNFPA is focused on GBV services for women, while the UNICEF's mapping is solely on child and youth protection services. DfID offered to share communication strategy for GBV response developed by UNFPA as well as evaluation report of previous phase of the GBV response programme, both funded by DfID. Mapping of various existing GBV working groups was undertaken by

¹ Australia, Canada, Denmark, EU, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and UK

UNWOMEN in 2016 under the WPS (Women, Peace, and Security). Currently, UNFPA has the secretariat role of the GBV Sub-cluster including membership of majority of GBV service providers.

Efficiency of the survivors' hotline system in various forms, capacities and limitations was discussed. The Bank is working with GBV experts to explore options and approaches to strengthen grievance redressal mechanism (GRM) in culturally acceptable and assessable for women especially in rural areas. MOWA representative (M&E Director) also shared the helpline initiative of MOWA – HPC 6767 – which will be launched and enable MOWA to register and resolve issues pertaining violence against women and children. The Bank asked them to share any documents/reports they may have of this initiative.

Gender in IP DPG 2020:

A brief overview of the Incentive Program (IP) including a history of the program which started in 2002 as a mechanism to channel money to the government to support civilian budget and how it evolved from an unconditional budget support facility to more policy-reform based incentive program in the recent years. The program has a budget of USD 400 million in 2020 with a total of 13 reform actions to be financed by IDA and ARTF. Three entry points for gender in this program were described as: (i) certain gender-focused policy actions, (ii) results indicators being gender-specific, and (iii) the overall gender analysis of the program to identify positive and negative gender impacts and mitigation measures. As an example, the civil service law which previously did not allow any positive discrimination now includes affirmative actions with an indicator of 15% women to be recruited at Senior Management Group (SMG) level driven by a civil service reform funded by IP DPG. The IP DPG task team leader explained all the proposed reform actions for IP DPG 2020 and welcomed any comments to strengthen gender aspects of the reform actions and written comments were solicited (by Jan 20).

There is a political will to push reforms through the implementation of IP DPGs with strong support of the President. In the past around 80% of the reforms were achieved and now the vision is to achieve 100% of the target. Besides, the World Bank also provides the government with technical assistance alongside each policy reform through its investment projects. It was clarified that any reversal of the reform will stop the future disbursement.

IP working group involves representatives from government and development partners and is the main body to prioritize and finalize the policy reform actions. On the question whether gender is considered in discussions and gender analysis is appropriately conducted given the limited capacity of the Ministry of Finance Gender Unit, the team responded that the experts are hired to undertake gender analysis and the team welcomes gender related feedback from the GWG.

A suggestion was made to include decreasing fees for land transfer to female land owners through the land ownership service - this is already a suggested provision under the ALASP (Afghanistan Land Administration Support) project now with very little attention received so far to implement it – as a reform action under the 'land governance' policy reform. Some other entry points for gender in this particular policy reform could be more attention and action on the consideration of a marriage contract as a valid proof of land ownership (according to the Land Management Law), and more communication and awareness on registration of marriage certificates through MOJ and MOWA.

GWG Co-chair and discussion topics for the next:

On the co-chair, it was updated that no volunteers so far to co-chair GWG for the next six months taking over from the EU. In the event there is no volunteer, the Bank may singly chair the future meetings until a volunteer comes forward. EU also offered to extend their tenure until there is any volunteer. Discussion

topics for the next six months will be shared and discussed in February (see Annex for some suggested topics).

Agreed Actions:

- WB to share the IP DPG draft policy reform actions matrix with the GWG immediately.
- GWG partners to share their suggestions and recommendations on the mentioned policy reform actions matrix by Monday, January 20th.
- Interested donors to let the ARTF know to co-chair Feb-Jul GWG meetings
- Proposed GWG discussion topics for Feb-Jul meetings to be shared by ARTF team
- The February meeting to revisit the Scorecard discussion and an update on selected pipeline projects.

Annex: GWG meetings topics

Topics covered between July 2019 – Jan 2020:

- AESD and AWSIS (July)
- SEHATMANDI and Discussion on Gender in Energy by DABS (August)
- FSP and PPIAP (September)
- Gender Units' Discussion – CCAP – WEE-RDP (October)
- WEE-NPP (November)
- Scorecard (December)
- IP DPG (Jan 2020)

Suggested Discussion Topics for the next six months:

Project specific discussions

- Payments Automation and Integration of Salaries in Afghanistan
- Higher Education Development Project
- EQRA
- Opportunity for Maximizing Agribusiness Investment and Development
- Afghanistan Water Supply and Sanitation Services and Institutional Support
- Tackling Afghanistan's Government HRM and Institutional Reforms
- Agro-Water and Climate Resilience Project

Non project discussions

- GBV
- Gender Units, MOWA, IARCSC
- Gender Responsive Budgeting