



AFGHANISTAN RECONSTRUCTION TRUST FUND (ARTF)

Gender Working Group Meeting

Tuesday February 6, 2018

Summary of Discussions

An ARTF Gender Working Group (GWG) Meeting was held on February 6, 2018¹. The meeting was chaired by Wezi Msisha (Senior Operations Officer) and Najla Sabri (Social Development Specialist, World Bank), and attended by 9 donor representatives. Ms. Nahid Wardak (Director for Policy & Planning, Ministry of Women's Affairs); Mr. Abdul Wassay Arian (Director General Policy and Planning, Ministry of Education), and Ms. Sheela Samimy (Ministry of Finance) represented the government.

Discussion Highlights

The main items discussed during the meeting are highlighted below.

- 1) **ARTF GWG Term of Reference:** The revisions made to the ToR based on discussions at the January 2018 GWG meeting. It was agreed that: (i) the GWG chair (the World Bank) will draft meeting minutes and share with the GWG; the Bank will share an updated list of the GWG members so they can confirm the primary and alternate members from each donor agency; GWG members should direct all requests for changes to the GWG email distribution list to Ms. Farishta Ali at the World Bank (contact to be provided separately); the GWG will agree prior to each meeting the points to be presented to the ARTF Strategy Group (SG) and the Administrator will present it with inputs from other GWG members as needed; the Administrator will circulate a draft of the expected key milestone dates for the Fiscal Year 19 ARTF pipeline projects to the GWG to give an idea of when documents/missions would be expected; a bullet point would be added to the GWG ToR that Government participation would include other government agencies (aside from MOF and MOWA) as needed depending on the topics being discussed at each meeting.
- 2) **GWG Co-chair:** It was agreed that Canada would be the co-chair of the GWG for the first 6 months of 2018; and the UK would assume the role for the second half of 2018.
- 3) **ARTF PFFP:** the draft outline for the 2018-2020 ARTF Partnership Framework and Financing Program (PFFP) [formerly known as the ARTF Financing Strategy] which was circulated to the GWG was discussed at the meeting. The GWG raised the following points: the PFFP should clarify that the World Bank Group (WBG) Gender Strategy and the Afghanistan Country Gender Action Brief (CGAB) would be the guiding documents for the gender engagement in ARTF programming for the next 3 years; move the point on gender equality in the PFFP from the cross cutting areas to the operationalizing the ANPDF section; the PFFP should include concrete examples of how specific programs

¹ Attendees: Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Italy, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Women's Affairs, Switzerland, UK, US, World Bank.



operationalized gender tagging/mainstreaming e.g. public sector reform programs should mention efforts to recruit more female civil servants, and also mention that gender efforts in ARTF programs would include working with men and not only women. The Bank noted that the PFFP is a strategic document that sets out the broad areas of engagement, but the specifics of what individual programs would do will be outlined in project appraisal documents. The Bank also clarified that any comments/suggestions the GWG members may have on the proposed ARTF pipeline for the next 3 years should be provided to their representatives on the ARTF Strategy Group. MoF informed the GWG that the government is having internal discussions on the strategic directions/programming for the ARTF aiming to have some final conclusions during this month.

- 4) **WBG Gender Strategy and the ARTF:** The Bank made a presentation on the operationalization of the new Gender tagging initiative in the WBG portfolio and provided an update on the main aspects of the WBG Gender Strategy for 2016-2021; the gender commitments under IDA 18; implementation of the new gender tagging approach in ARTF/IDA financed projects; the South Asia Region Commitment on Gender tagging (target of 100% for all new projects); the Afghanistan Gender and Social Inclusion Platform which is an implementation arrangement/tool aiming to deepen attention on gender and social inclusion in the country portfolio; improve results in key thematic areas; and supporting. The Bank gender team explained how they work with different teams at various stages of the project cycle from the design to implementation ensuring that projects consider gender tagging in a systematic way by considering clear results chain. The team discussed some ongoing work to implement gender tagging in some of the pipeline projects- the Modernization of the State-Owned Banks Project; and the Sehatmandi Project.
- 5) **Gender Approach in the EQRA Project:** Mr. A. Wassay Arian, DG Policy and Planning, Ministry of Education, presented how gender is being considered in the new basic education program- EQRA. The presentation covered some of the challenges affecting children and particularly girl's enrollment in primary school; the main aspects of the new Third National Education Strategic Plan (NESP III); the proposed objectives of EQRA are to support implementation of the main strategic NESP directions focusing on increasing equitable access to basic education especially for girls in selected lagging provinces; and improving learning outcomes. The proposed disbursement linked indicators (DLIs) for the EQRA were presented.
The main areas discussed during the meeting were: the curriculum revisions that will aim to provide both girls and boys with knowledge and skills to deal with the practical aspects of social life; approaches and tools for reducing gender disparity in terms of enrollment which includes better incentive for the government for increasing girls students, and involving community development councils (CDCs) in identifying girls out of school and motivating families to send them to school; improved coordination mechanisms between on budget and off budget donor funding to avoid duplication and improve access in lagging areas; the concept and mechanism for increasing the number of female teachers by hiring females locally with the best available qualification and



providing on the-job training as an interim solution, and finally monitoring mechanisms especially by 3rd party monitors and CDCs.

6) Other:

- The GWG appreciated the EQRA presentation and requested that in the future the Bank team first presents the status of gender tagging for the project being discussed followed by a presentation on the design, implementation and progress of the project by the government colleagues.
- It was also agreed that one week prior to the SG meeting, participants will send bullet points to be presented to the SG.
- The next meeting will be on March 06, 2018, exact time and venue will be communicated closer to the date.