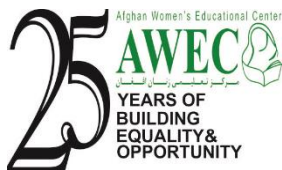


Development Gains in Education: the Stakes are High for Afghan Children



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Acronyms

ACBAR	Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief and Development
ANPDF	Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework
BCA	Brussel Conference on Afghanistan
CBE	Community Based Education
GoA	Government of Afghanistan
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOHE	Ministry of Higher Education
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PwDs	Persons with Disabilities
SCA	Swedish Committee for Afghanistan
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SMAF	Self-Reliance Through Mutual Accountability Framework
SMC	School Management Committees
TEC	Teacher's Elected Council
TVET	Technical Vocational & Education Training
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNECIF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Executive Summary

Progress in the education sector in Afghanistan is a key achievement that has been made possible by the generous assistance of the international community to the Afghan government and the people of Afghanistan over the past 15 years. Currently, 8.4 million Afghan children are enrolled in schools of which around 40 percent are girls. Now with the Afghan government and its international partners increasing focus on counter-insurgency rather than development, and with a deteriorating security situation in the provinces, the gains made in this sector are slowly slipping away. According to UNAMA's recent report, increasing violence, threats and intimidation in 2015 left 103,940 Afghan children without access to education and there is a rising trend in violence against educationⁱ. UNAMA records show a 110 percent increase in number of threats and intimidation against education compared to three years ago in 2013. The deteriorating security situation in the provinces is one of the key underlying factors for low attendance of primary school age children in rural areas. According to the latest Education Sector Analysis, in urban areas 78 percent of children go to school, while in rural areas only 50 percent of primary school-age children go to schoolⁱⁱ.

International community should address the urgent needs for all warring parties in conflict to respect International Humanitarian Law and increase support to the Government in order to implement programs that will prevent harm to schools and school children.

The government of Afghanistan and international partners will come together at the Brussels Conference on Afghanistan (BCA) on 4 – 5th October 2016, to pledge development funds for the country. The objective is to enable the government to implement its development programs, articulated in the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF). It is crucial that donors pledge specific and long term assistance to the education sector and obtain commitment from the Afghan government to meet the development indicators in the education sector. In the long term, this will lead to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets on education where all Afghan girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education.

The size of international assistance to the education sector should be increased. It is vital in order to sustain the progress in the education sector and also to increase the capacity of the Afghan government to enroll the remaining 3.5 million school-aged children who are out of school. Children out of school need to be supported not only to enter school but also to remain in school. The current data from the Ministry of Education (MoE) shows that only 18 percent of students who start school, complete higher education. The majority of the dropouts are female students. Overall one million students are considered permanently absent.

Expanding the scale of education provision, specially where geographic and gender disparity is concerned, is as important as ensuring its quality. The government of Afghanistan and donors should pay special attention to improving the quality of

education, through long term investment in capacity building of teachers and in providing a safe environment for education.

Afghanistan has the highest illiteracy rate in the region and worldwide, yet currently in Afghanistan, only 3.7% of GDP is being spent on education. UNESCO recommends that at least 6% of Afghanistan's GDP should be spent on education. Over the past three years, overall expenditure in the education sector in Afghanistan has increased, but spending has significantly decreased in adult literacy programs. According to the National Literacy Department there was a 35% decrease in spending on literacy programs in 2015. The government of Afghanistan and donors need to immediately address the funding gap in the literacy programs: both should plan to double the current amount in the next four years and gradually increase the total amount of spending in the education sector.

Introduction and Endorsement

The main purpose of this briefing paper is to highlight the importance of continued donor commitments to Afghanistan's education sector. It aims at bringing education as a priority issue for the government and its international partners, as they meet for the Brussels Conference on Afghanistan, so that immediate actions are taken to ensure the gains made in the education sector are not jeopardized, and that progress continues. As highlighted in the SDGs, education is the foundation to all other rights and it is a key to sustainable development of all other sectors.

This briefing paper does not cover all issues related to education but rather has a specific focus on five priority areas: a) safeguarding education and protecting education facilities and civilians b) fund allocation and aid effectiveness, c) vocational training, literacy education and link to economic development, d) school attendance, drop out and inclusivity and e) teacher training.

The priorities and recommendations in this briefing paper are based on five regional consultation workshops conducted by SCA with 100 grassroots level Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in five regional provinces (Balkh, Takhar, Ghazni, Wardak and Nangarhar). These were followed by one focus group discussion held with 10 education NGOs in Kabul, one discussion meeting conducted with the Ministry of Education, and a review of recent literatures about education in Afghanistan.

This briefing paper is prepared by Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) and endorsed by the following NGOs working in the education sector in Afghanistan, with the coordination efforts of ACBAR. Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) has been working in Afghanistan since 1980 and has been engaged in education service delivery and running community based schools (CBOs) in rural provinces for many years.

1. Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief and Development (ACBAR)
2. Afghan National Association for Adult Education (ANAF AE)
3. Afghan Women Education Center (AWEC)
4. Afghan Health and Development Services (AHDS)
5. CARE
6. International Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband (DVV)
7. Islamic Relief Worldwide
8. Mercy Corps
9. Save the Children - Afghanistan
10. The Tashabos Educational Organization (TEO)
11. The Welfare Association for the Development of Afghanistan (WADAN)

A. Safeguarding Education and Protecting Education Facilities and Civilians

Current Situation and Key Facts:

Increasing violence, threats and intimidation in 2015 left over 139,000 Afghan children with no access to education, according to a UNAMA and UNICEF report published in April 2016. In 2015, UNAMA documented 132 cases in which schools or school personnel were attacked or threatened. This was an 86% increase from 2014, and a 110% increase from 2013. This led to the closing or partial closing of more than 369 schools, affecting at least 139,048 students and 600 teachers.

According to the report, girls were particularly vulnerable with 213 girls' schools forced to shut down last year, depriving around 50,683 girls access to education. In addition to closing of schools, anti-government forces created further barriers to education for women and girls by prohibiting education after 4th or 6th grade, and in many cases by completely banning them from going to school.ⁱⁱⁱ

While the highest number of incidents against schools occurred in Afghanistan's eastern region, which is tied in part to the rise of ISIS there, almost no area of the country was immune, and growing insecurity has further created a climate of fear. Anti-government forces are not the only ones who have misused schools during the ongoing conflict. In fact, pro-government forces are the main perpetrators of using schools for military purposes (70% of the time), including the use of schools as military barracks, storage sites, command centers, defensive positioning, observation posts and firing posts. The government has also used schools to further their political objectives such as using schools as voting stations. During the 2014 Presidential Elections, 45 out of the 3,546 educational facilities designated as polling locations had been affected by election-related violence, around 175 were attacked and closed before the run-off election, and 22 were attacked during the run-off election.^{iv}

Despite security risks, families in rural areas are still sending their children to schools. However, many of these schools have poor infrastructure, and do not meet the basic needs of students. 45 percent of schools have unusable buildings. Many children are forced to attend open-air classes. Most schools have no electricity and no central heating or fans to accommodate the classrooms during the different seasons. In urban centers many schools operate in two, three, and sometimes even four shifts to cope with the high demand of students who want to attend. For instance, one high school in Kabul has four shifts accommodating a total of 9,700 students due to a lack of classroom space and high enrollment. Many students across the country are in school for barely more than two hours daily.^v

Recommendations:

To the Government of Afghanistan (GoA)

1. Schools and education facilities should be protected. The Government of Afghanistan should commit not to use schools for military purposes or for political objectives.
2. Ensure the implementation of the six principles listed in the Safe School Declaration, which was signed by the GoA in May 2015. The Declaration calls for states to commit to reduce the use of educational facilities for military purposes and to mitigate the impact. This practice can have impact on students' safety and education. GoA should prioritize full operationalization of the Comprehensive School Safety Framework (CSSF) recently approved by MoE. In addition, MoE should also consider programmes to work with communities' education structures to enable them for mitigating and responding to natural disasters.
3. There should be an inter-ministerial effort between sectoral ministries to improve education facilities throughout the country, with a special focus on rural areas. In urban areas, there is a need to unclog the school system.
4. The security and immunity of schools should be in top priority of peace-negotiation with government opposition.
5. Schools should not be closed even in the areas controlled by anti-government forces. In the areas where NGOs provide education services to the communities, the NGOs should be allowed to continue their activities by all actors involved in the conflict.

To the international community

6. International community should address the urgent need for all warring parties in conflict to respect International Humanitarian Law. Failure to apply it results in deaths and injuries, school closures, and damage and destruction of school buildings and educational materials.
7. Increase support to the Government in order to implement programs that will prevent harm to schools and school children.

B. Fund Allocation and Aid Effectiveness

Current Situation and Key Facts:

Although the expenditure in the education sector has increased from 32.8 billion Afs (\$492 million) to 44.4 billion Afs (\$666 million) over the period of 2011-2015,^{vi} the Ministry of Education is still struggling to provide basic educational needs for children living in Afghanistan. In 2015, 14.1% of total government expenditure (excluding debt service), 15.5% of government recurrent expenditure, 10.3% of development expenditure and 3.7% of GDP was spent on the education sector.^{vii} These are major developments for the education sector; however, according to UNESCO, countries should allocate at least 6% of their GDP to education, depending on the national context. Afghanistan needs to allocate more funds for education because the current literacy rate, according to the Ministry of Education, is 34% (49% for men and 19% for women) and one of the lowest worldwide.^{viii}

During 2011-2014, the MOE expenditure has been an estimated \$2.5 billion, with at least 41 percent (\$1 billion) funded by donors. Only 25 percent of donor aid expenditure was on-budget. During the same period, Ministry of Higher Education's (MOHE) expenditure was \$US360 million with at least 43 percent (\$US156 million) funded by donors. Of this donor aid only 23 percent was on budget.^{ix} According to the Self-Reliance through Mutual Accountability Framework (SMAF) document agreed and committed between the GoA and international community in the London Conference on Afghanistan in December 2014, donors should increase Afghan government ownership of aid spent in the development sector. By allowing the government to exercise more budgetary discretion, during the annual performance reviews they can move resources from lagging programs to better performing ones, where appropriate.^x There should be better mechanisms in place for coordination of aid spent off-budget in the education sector. With the current poor coordination in off-budget spending, no one can precisely determine how much money has been spent on the education sector and it is difficult to ensure that a duplication of projects will not occur. On-budget and off-budget aid should focus on a strong partnership with civil society, with NGOs and CSOs engaged in education service provision with an independent longer term funding mechanism for civil society actors to expand and improve the service delivery in education, as GoA will not be able to provide services alone in many years to come. Besides, where inclusive education is concerned, NGO experience should be highly utilized for planning and developing partnership to address gender gap and coverage of special groups such as Kuchis and children with disability.

Another major issue over the last 15 years has been the failure of many large scale projects in Afghanistan simply because the project implementers were unable to spend the amount awarded. On an annual basis the recurrent budget allocation is almost always fully utilized, while the development budget expenditure rate is consistently

significantly lower - around 50 percent is usually spent. In 2014, 47 percent was spent while in 2015 it was only around 34 percent. The development budget includes a large carry forward of funds unspent that were programmed in the previous year, which is added to the new development funding in the current budget year.^{xi} There were delays from donors in decision making and granting funds, there was misuse of funds, and programs were not adapted to fit to the context of Afghanistan.

One of the key concerns for donors usually is that their capacity development programs are completed as planned, and that the success of these programs can be easily demonstrated. This leads to a focus on short-term achievements, and causes donors to seek to control the process of capacity development to such an extent that, for instance, reforms are never integrated into the normal running of the education ministries. Donors tend to focus more on quantity rather than quality, demanding fast results instead of addressing root causes and problems. These short term result programs jeopardize sustainability of the education programs.

Recommendations:

To the Government of Afghanistan (GoA)

1. GoA should review the ANPDF and make education a strategic focus on its own, and accordingly develop education and adult literacy focused national priority programmes.
2. The government should increase the budget allocation for the education sector in order to meet the growing demands of the Afghan citizens. Education is a fundamental human right and a basis for guaranteeing the realization of other rights. It is essential for peace, tolerance, and is a key driver for the sustainable development of the country.
3. In order to ensure education programs are implemented successfully, the government and international counterparts should be able to better identify existing challenges that have contributed to low program implementation and expenditure. One solution would be to accelerate the finance and procurement processes to reduce delays in program implementation. In addition, the capacity of government line ministries should be built. Further work needs to be done to make transparent mechanisms for the recruitment of qualified and experienced cadres in the execution and implementation of national projects and programmes, accompanied with a multi-aspectual monitoring and supervision process in the field.
4. Reliable data is needed in the education sector in order to monitor and evaluate the progress towards the target goals. The government should find a systematic

way of collecting data and create a database that makes information easily accessible and available to all actors in the education sector including donors.

To the international community

5. The international community should increase the amount of funds that they pledge in the education sector.
 - “Ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” is key to achieving the other proposed SDGs^{xii} and a key to succeeding in higher employment and poverty eradication.
 - Afghanistan’s second MDG states that “by 2020, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.”^{xiii} In order to meet this goal, the international community needs to prioritize education and invest more.
6. The international donors should abide by the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness which states that in order for aid to be effective, donor countries should adhere to five principles: ownership, alignment, harmonization, managing for results and mutual accountability. There should be more effort to support the GoA in formulating and implementing its own national development plans, according to its own national priorities, using, wherever possible, its own planning and implementation systems. This should be done for both on-budget and off-budget aid. Donors should put in place a mechanism for regular coordination in order to evaluate progress and address emerging issues in the sector. The coordination should also help in developing joint strategies and coordinating focus of interventions.
7. The low level of on-budget support indicates that there are opportunities to improve aid effectiveness; however, in order to achieve the full impact when moving funds on-budget, improvements in MOE and MOHE’s absorptive capacity have to be made. As currently indicated by development partners, in their future commitments and projections, ODA support will decline in the coming years and this will require MOE and MOHE to have the necessary skills to manage the current funds to the best of their ability.
8. The international community should consider the absorption capacity of implementing partners and review their modalities for important funds:
 - Aid should switch away from a project based approach to a system and sector wide approach
 - Donors should turn away from the desire for quick and demonstrable results, as it relies heavily on project aid and limits the capacity of donor

money to build sustainable institutional capacity. Multi-year long term approaches (more than 5 years) should be preferred. This is vital as tangible sustainable results are only achieved over the medium to long term programs.

- Programs should involve the government at the policy level and have a strong government capacity building component that increases the technical skills and expertise of the individuals involved in delivering and administering education, both in the classroom and at the ministry.
- Funding schemes should be designed to support collaboration between line ministries and NGOs implementing education programs, this will ensure a smooth transition of current education programs run by NGOs to Afghan government. NGOs are key education actors in Afghanistan and should be part of the consultation at policy and program design level.
- Stronger attention should be given to monitoring and evaluating activities against long term quality outcomes.

To the broader community (NGOs, UN agencies, donors, GoA, associations)

9. Coordination should be improved, both at ministerial, donor and NGO level. There should also be a common effort to improve the collection of quality data and for information sharing.

C. Addressing School Attendance, Dropout and Inclusivity Issues

Current Situation and Key Facts:

In 2001, approximately 800,000 students were attending school in Afghanistan. Very few of them were girls. Now, Afghanistan has more than 8.5 million students, with 5,213,426 of them boys and 3,370,280 (39%) girls.^{xiv} This is an outstanding feat which was not easily achieved.

According to the 2nd MDG, Afghanistan should ensure that by 2020, all boys and girls have the opportunity to complete at least primary school education.^{xv} Huge progress has been made but around 3.5 million school age children still do not attend school, while another 1 million are enrolled in school but are considered permanently absent. Currently, 59% of students, who start in grade one make it to the end of grade six, and only 18% make it to the end of grade twelve.^{xvi} The data shows that the majority of dropouts are female students. Retention rate in schools, especially for girls, needs to be seriously addressed.

Due to economic barriers, many children are forced to drop out of school and work in order to support their families. This is a gross violation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states in Article 32 that “State Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child’s education, or to be harmful to the child’s health or physical, mental, spiritual moral or social development.” Further, the Convention calls for the protection of children against exploitation. In Afghanistan, 27% of children aged 5-11 years are involved in child labor activities, while the figure is 22% for children aged 12-14 years. Of the 42% of children aged 5-14 attending school, more than half of them (51%) are also involved in child labor activities.^{xvii}

In Afghanistan, over 95% of children with disabilities and special needs do not have access to school or an educational facility. Some statistics involving PwDs include:

- 73% of persons with disabilities above the age of 6yrs did not receive education.
- Only 32% of children with disabilities have attended some form of schooling.
- Only 15% of girls with disabilities below 7yrs of age have attended school and the dropout rate is the highest in comparison to those without disability. ^{xviii}

Economic difficulties and burden on the families to arrange transportation are the main causes for high drop-out rates among children with disabilities. Long distances between children’s homes and schools as well as inaccessible buildings are also challenging for children with disabilities to get admission in local schools. Children with disabilities also suffer from low confidence, self-esteem and lack basic skills to cope with mainstream education. The teachers also do not have skills to teach diversified group of children with disabilities. The current education system is not adopted according to the needs of children with disabilities. Also, the lack of capacity of school staff and PED/DED

regarding Special Needs Education as well as the non-availability of text books in Braille remains a big challenge.

- The national policy on inclusive and child friendly education (I&CHFE) is in place since 2014. There is little progress on implementation of policy by the Government. Yet there is no strategy and mechanism to implement the policy.

Recommendations:

To the government

1. In order to ensure children, have access to education, alternative approaches need to be taken and regulations need to be more flexible. There is a strong need to increase the amount of female teachers in rural areas. Decreasing the grade 12 requirement for teachers in rural areas could help in increasing the amount of female teachers. In addition, working with local community education Shuras can help to reduce traditional and cultural barriers for female teachers.
2. Further motivation and increased involvement of community representatives in the education sector at the village level is cost effective, and it would enhance the safety and security of the students, teachers and school buildings as well as help facilitate children enrollment in schools and reduce student's dropout.
 - Increasing the amount of Community-Based Education (CBE) classes could help to provide better access to education in remote communities, in areas where schools are too far away and it is too dangerous for students to travel to school, CBE classes could help them obtain the education they need at an area closer to their home. However, in areas where there are CBE schools, programs should be considered for smooth transition of CBE school students to high schools.
 - Practical coordination and cooperation among all stakeholders in the national, local and villages' levels would synergize efforts in effective mobilization of the existing structures like District Development Assemblies (DDA), Community Development Councils (CDC), School Parent Associations (SPA), PTA (Parent Teacher Associations), Masjid (Mosque) Imams, Maliks (villages leaders) through the National Maliks Association (NMA) that would play a key role in mitigation of education related issues. Other proven local coordination mechanisms currently practiced by some NGOs implementing community based education programs also helped reduce local problems, by making the education programs more cost effective and establishing links between the different stakeholders at the village level. For instance, SCA established School Management Committees (SMCs) in communities where it has CBE schools. The SMC members consist of village elders, influential figures of the village and parents. In addition, SCA has also developed and maintained a strong coordination and collaboration relationship with the

provincial and district government authorities. These practices are important lessons learnt to be replicated by other NGOs and stakeholders engaged in education service delivery.

3. The MOE has developed an inclusive and child friendly education policy. As a priority there should be an action plan for materializing and operationalizing the mentioned policy.
4. The government needs to ensure children are protected from exploitation and child labor laws are being followed.
5. More efforts should be made to include PwDs in education. The government should enforce the Law of Rights and Privileges of Persons with Disabilities and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCPRD).
6. Early childhood development is negligible (1%) and average preschool attendance is 13%. Many developing countries put a value on preschool and kindergarten because of the effect that it can have on a child's development. GoA should also invent and develop national programmes for early childhood development.

D. Vocational Training, Literacy Education and Link to Economic Development

Current Situation and Key Facts:

The National Literacy Curriculum has been reviewed and a new Literacy Curriculum framework was recently developed in order to better meet the needs of diverse learners in many different settings. This will significantly improve the quality of literacy education and enhance effectiveness of vocational training and employability of youth. But at the same time, the available financial resources have decreased. According to the National Literacy Department there was a 35% decrease of spending on literacy programs in 2015 which has resulted in the lowest enrollment rate since the last five years.^{xix}

External and national support to literacy development is diminishing while illiteracy in Afghanistan, one of the highest rate worldwide, hinders the development of the country. The World Bank estimates that in next three years, annually 400,000 new job seekers will enter the Afghan job market. Given the high rate of illiteracy among Afghan youths, employment will become even more challenging than ever. In order to overcome this problem, the World Bank suggests, government and donors should focus on adult literacy programs and increase investment in literacy. Addressing illiteracy will help tackle many of Afghanistan's other problems as well such as empowering women, reducing radicalization and expanding the economy.

Within the current large number of unemployed youth, a substantial number are marginalized due to issues such as: corruption, violence, routine injustice and lack of access to opportunities. Young adults that face these issues can be manipulated by armed opposition groups and criminal elements for recruitment purposes.

Good progress can be observed in Technical Vocational and Education Training (TVET) all over the country. The total enrolment in TVET is estimated at 238,000 students. The capacity to take in new learners annually is only about 130,000. But the number of job placements of students graduated from TVET schools and institutions remains much lower. The quality of skills acquired through TVET is still poorly matched to readily available job opportunities, mostly because of the systemic deficiencies and low capacity of service providers: Vocational training (VT) is needed to solve the underutilization of human capacity. It is better placed to provide opportunity for those who are currently illiterate to find meaningful work. VT can also help to address the problem of illiteracy within the workplace

The main challenge in vocational training is the quality: training is not linked to market needs, the curriculum is outdated and teachers lack the key competencies to teach. The current Technical Vocational Education & Training (TVET) sector is populated by a

variety of service providers including private companies, national and international NGOs. These often overlap rather than compliment training services offered by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSAMD) and the Ministry of Education. Training provided by some actors is not designed on principles of financial sustainability, for example, paying students to attend classes, is often highly costly, therefore not easily replicable for national actors, while at the same time donor funding for Afghanistan is rapidly declining. A market approach to implementation design is fundamental to longer-term sustainability of such programs and development of a vibrant vocational training sector, that meets the labor needs presently constraining the growth of the national economy.

Recommendations:

To the government

1. More financial investment is needed to provide pathways to technical and vocational education, life skills, and better linkages to work and the labor market for the youth. Additionally, investment is needed to double the number of literacy learners from now below 500,000 learners to at least 1 million annually in next four years and also at the same time the number of qualified teachers should be increased.
2. TVET is an effective and efficient tool for empowerment, enabling youth and adults alike to escape the trap of poverty and contribute to their community's economic and social wellbeing. TVET has to respond to the demand for skills and competencies of the labor market to create competent, motivated, and adaptable workforce capable of driving economic growth and development. This needs higher investment to update the curriculum and to train qualified TVET teachers.
3. The current TVET curriculum should be revised in order to ensure it is more competence-based and at the same time standardized throughout the country. The NGOs and the private sector (for example Chamber of Commerce) should be strongly involved in the process.
4. Identifying and formalizing the role of Mullahs (religious clerics) and the village councils for literacy programs and using Mosques for literacy courses in the winter.
5. The government should keep on cooperating with partner NGOs, the private sector and the Chambers of Commerce who can assist in ensuring that quality

education and lifelong learning opportunities are available for all and can assist in opening up better relations with the labor market.

6. Entrepreneurship should be promoted: Ministry of Education should mainstream entrepreneurship in the national curriculum as a key factor in economic development and be augmented by existing service providers operating in the NGO or private sectors. This effort should be coordinated with all other line ministries.
7. Better delineation of roles and responsibilities of the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labor, and appropriate support to each according to their role. Under the Citizens Charter programme, all sector Ministries are required to use the Community Development Councils as the gateway for development and governance activities. Given the fact that 75 percent of the Afghan population live in rural areas, improved coordination between the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labor on how CDCs can be engaged in vocational training will help towards creation of economic opportunities at the village level, which is currently a large pocket of unemployment.

To the international community

1. The international community should give the implementation of the SDG 4 priority for the development of Afghanistan through pledging more funding to literacy, vocational training and lifelong learning for youths. Investment in children and youth will provide hope and a new perspective for the young generation and will encourage them to actively contribute to the economic development of their families and contribute skills and competences that are needed in the labor market.

E. Teacher Availability, Training and Motivation

Current Situation and Key Facts:

The current teacher-student ratio in Afghanistan is 45:1, which is slightly higher than the official policy of TSR which is 40:1. The current percentage of female teachers is 33% and very few of those are in rural areas (current rules prevent the recruitment of capable and experienced female teachers with less than grade 12 education).^{xx} As a result, less girls are allowed to attend school due to a shortage of female teachers.

Recommendations:

To the government

1. Pedagogical training for the all new hired teachers especially for the young teachers should be developed: it would better prepare the teachers to teach more effectively, follow active learning principles and adopt a student centered approach that would enhance the education services quality and students interest in school and education.
2. Ministry of Education and international donors should develop a plan to retain and provide capacity building initiatives for female teacher's and reinforce in-service training/capacity building programs.
3. Better coordination between the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Higher Education should occur in order to help align the curriculum of future teachers to needs and vice versa.
4. Better management of teachers and the subjects that they are taught. Subjects they are responsible for teaching should be based on what they have studied or have experience in.
5. Training of teachers should be done at the provincial level because it is very unlikely that teachers who have studied in Kabul and main provincial capitals will teach in rural provinces.
6. The government should work on reinforcing an online education system which would make educational opportunities accessible for a larger amount of children.
7. In order to address capacity building for female teachers in the provinces, alternative learning opportunities should be explored. One solution could be distance teacher training courses with practical teaching at District level for 12 grade young girls who graduated recently.

Notes

- ⁱ Education and Healthcare at Risk, United Nations (April 2016), p.5-10
- ⁱⁱ Education Sector Analysis, Afghanistan Volume 1 (June 2016), p. 80.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Education and Healthcare at Risk, United Nations (April 2016), p.5-10
- ^{iv} Education and Healthcare at Risk, United Nations, (April 2016), p. 5-10
- ^v Building Schools: Meeting Education Infrastructure Needs in Afghanistan, Canadian Women for Afghan Women.
- ^{vi} Education Sector Analysis, Afghanistan Volume 1 (June 2016), p. 80.
- ^{vii} Education Sector Analysis, Afghanistan Volume 1 (June 2016), p. 79.
- ^{viii} Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey (2013-2014), p. 135
- ^{ix} Development Cooperation Report, Ministry of Finance (2012-2014)
- ^x Self-Reliance through Mutual Accountability Framework (September 2015), p. 6
- ^{xi} Education Sector Analysis, Afghanistan Volume 1, p. 82
- ^{xii} Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (October 2015), p. 17
- ^{xiii} The Millennium Development Goals, Ministry of Economy, (2012), p. 42
- ^{xiv} MOE EMIS Enrolment by Programme (2014)
- ^{xv} Afghanistan's Millennium Development Goals, UNDP (2012)
- ^{xvi} Education Sector Analysis, Afghanistan Volume 1, p. 10
- ^{xvii} Afghanistan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey Questionnaire, p. 128
- ^{xviii} The National Disability Survey in Afghanistan, 2005.
- ^{xix} Education Joint Annual Review: Literacy and Adult Education Review Report, Ministry of Education. (2015)
- ^{xx} Education Sector Analysis: Afghanistan Volume 1, (2016) p. 132

Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA)

SCA has been providing support in Afghanistan since 1982 and is presently managing development programmes in Health, Education, Rural Livelihoods and Disability with a total annual budget of roughly USD 40 million operating in 14 out of 34 provinces. The total number of staff is around 5,300. The SCA presence in Afghanistan consists of the Kabul Management Office (KMO), five Regional Management Offices and three Liaison Offices. In Sweden SCA has 20 staff working at the Stockholm Management Office (SMO) and around 4,000 members organized in local chapters all over the country.

SCA receives funds from various international and private donors, mainly from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

The mission of SCA is to empower individuals, communities and local organizations, primarily in rural areas and with a particular focus on women, girls, boys and vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities, so that they may participate fully in society and influence their own development.

SCA Education Programme

SCA has been supporting the education sector in Afghanistan since 1984. The support has been provided in various forms and different approaches depending to the prevailing context and pressing educational needs and available opportunities throughout the years.

Community Based Education (CBE) makes the main folder of SCA's educational interventions where establishing and supporting the CBE schools/classes including the specific mobile classes adapting the nomadic life style of *Kuchi* (nomad) children.

Through SCA's Education Programme the following activities are conducted:

- Coaching classes are supported by providing the opportunity of resuming and continuation of secondary education for those girls and women who have dropped out of schools at the secondary level in the past due to various impeding factors.
- Competencies of teachers are developed through aiming at enhanced quality of teaching and learning practices in CBE schools/classes through various in-service teacher training sessions in subject knowledge, teaching methodologies, inclusive and special education skills is an integral part of SCA educational service deliveries.
- Access to basic education for around 69,000 children (62% girls) including more than 3,800 Kuchi children (50% girls) through supporting around 2,200 CBE classes in 13 provinces (50 districts) of central, eastern, south-eastern, northern and north-eastern zones of the country.
- 2,500 teachers are supported in terms of monthly payments as well as developing their teaching competencies through offering in-service teaching competency trainings in subject knowledge, methodology and inclusive education.
- 36 district and provincial level teachers' elected councils (teachers' associations) are supported in addition to the Kabul-based National Teachers Elected Council (NTEC) covering totally 2,500 (19% female) members.