



Independent Joint Anti-Corruption
Monitoring and Evaluation Committee

August

2017

Progress Monitoring Report

**Ministry of
Refugees and
Repatriation**
(MoRR)



Executive Summary

Kabul-Afghanistan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2016, revenue-generating ministries of Afghanistan were required to develop individual Anti-Corruption Plans to ensure transparency in their operations and, most importantly, increase their revenue. Later, other non-revenue generating ministries have also followed suit and developed anti-corruption plans, including the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR). The Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (MEC) has started reviewing each of these plans and is releasing here its first review of the MoRR's Anti-Corruption Plan (ACP).

MEC's review was carried out in June and July of 2017. MoRR's plan consists of nine actions across three priority areas. The Ministry was cooperative with MEC in this effort and approximately 20 interviews were conducted, together with a number of document reviews. MEC's findings are expressed in two broad areas: the general scope of the MoRR's Plan; and the detailed progress of the action items in the ACP.

Previously, MoRR had no plan about how to tackle corruption. Nevertheless, the current leadership of the Ministry has set a clear roadmap about how to fight against corruption by developing an Anti-Corruption Plan.

While the Anti-Corruption Plan of MoRR appears to be too narrow, the Ministry is progressing in this fight.

Completion of the Plan

Of the nine actions in the Plan, all of them are in-progress as their deadlines are not immediate. Moreover, so far, some of the challenges in the Plan remain intact.

Specific findings

MEC received good cooperation from the Ministry in all MoRR priority areas:

1. ABROGATION OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 104

The MoRR is proposing an immediate abrogation of the Presidential Decree No. 104 which has turned into a source of illegal income for corrupt officials.¹ In many provinces of Afghanistan, the committees that are vested with the authority to distribute lands to refugees, misuse the vague terms of the Decree for their own personal gain.² In one instance, a government official in eastern Laghman province misinterpreted the Decree and allocated the lands to illegible applicants. The case has been readily followed up by the Headquarters of MoRR in Kabul and it has been sent to the Attorney General Office (AGO).³ To prevent further corruption, MoRR has set up a technical team and developed a procedure that clarifies all stages of land distribution, and they have put forward strong requirements to ensure a transparent allocation of shelter to refugees across the country.⁴

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF SCOPE PROGRAM

Many people interviewed by MEC complained about aid quality and distribution of aid to fake beneficiaries in the provinces. Currently, 90 local NGOs receive funds from international humanitarian agencies and provide aid to refugees, Internally Displaced Persons and persons affected by natural disasters.⁵ However, in most cases, the aid does not reach to eligible beneficiaries. To curb corruption, MoRR and the World Food Program (WFP) have launched WFP's beneficiary management application SCOPE to collect the data of returnees at the Torkham border crossing.⁶ MoRR will register and store detailed information of every returnee and provides him or her with an electronic card.⁷ The expectation is that SCOPE would assist MoRR to more closely monitor the aid distribution process, particularly shelter allocation and prevent ad hoc delivery of humanitarian services.

3. PROMOTION AND DEMOTIONS

Respondents stated that lack of staff engagement has led employees of MoRR to become less interested in their jobs.⁸ Low pay and lack of both penalties and incentives have invariably prompted the staff to either show up late at work or behave in an unprofessional way with applicants.⁹ Interviewees cited taking bribes and gifts as the worst consequence of lack of staff engagement in MoRR.

To turn around the trend and encourage the staff of MoRR to accomplish their duties and responsibilities with great integrity and vigor, the leadership of the Ministry has set up a team to evaluate the performance of the staff and report their findings and recommendations.¹⁰

Gaps in scope

Several well-known areas of MoRR are missing in the ACP. The Plan does not cover the following crucial issues:

- Overlap in the functions and Terms of References of MoRR's Directorates
- The HR organization of MoRR has not been included in the ACP
- Selection of eligible staff for scholarships and fellowship programs offered by the Indian government and European countries
- Timely announcement of training opportunities before their deadlines approach

Formation of proper mechanisms and units in MoRR for soliciting funds from International Donors.

It should be noted that the initial draft of the Anti-Corruption Plan developed by MoRR encompassed all the above-mentioned topics. Nevertheless the Administrative Office of the President advised MoRR to narrow the plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

No.	RECOMMENDATIONS
1	THE LEADERSHIP OF MORR SHOULD ESTABLISH A FUND-RAISING UNIT INSIDE THE MINISTRY TO RUN NEW PROJECTS
2	NEW TORs SHOULD BE DEVELOPED FOR DIRECTORATES THAT HAVE OVERLAPPING FUNCTIONS
3	THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS DIRECTORATE OF MORR SHOULD BE ASSIGNED TO ANNOUNCE SCHOLARSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS TO THE STAFF OF THE MINISTRY BEFORE DEADLINES APPROACH
4	THE POSITION OF HR DIRECTORATE HEAD SHOULD BE ANNOUNCED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE
Priority Number 1	
5	PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 104 SHOULD BE REINDED
6	LAND DISTRIBUTION FILES SHOULD BE REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY BOTH CENTRAL AND PROVINCIAL COMMITTEES
7	PERIODIC MEETINGS SHOULD BE HELD BETWEEN PROVINCIAL AND CENTRAL LAND DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEES
Priority Number 2	
9	THE WFP'S SCOPE INITIATIVE OF MORR SHOULD BE SUPPORTED BY BOTH GICoA AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO PREVENT FURTHER CORRUPTION IN DISTRIBUTION OF HUMANITARIAN AID TO RETURNEES AND INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS IN AFGHANISTAN
10	MORR SHOULD FACILITATE MORE TECHNICAL TRAINING FOR THE STAFF OF MORR TO TAKE THE LEAD OF SCOPE IN THE LONG TERM
11	SECURITY INSTITUTIONS IN AFGHANISTAN SHOULD FACILITATE PROVIDING BIOMETRIC MEANS TO MORR FOR DIGITAL REGISTRATION OF RETURNEES AND IDPs.

¹ Interview with the Minister of MoRR, Kabul, May 27, 2017.

² Interview with the top-level managers of MoRR, June 18, 2017.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Focus group discussion with top-level managers of MoRR, June 18, 2017.

⁵ Interview with managers of MoRR, Kabul, June 21, 2017.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Interview with the staff of WFP, Kabul, June 20, 2017.

⁸ Interview with low level staff of MoRR, Kabul, June 21, 2017.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.