Independent Joint Anti-Corruption

Strategic Plan (2019 – 2021)
DRAFT

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INDEPENDENT JOINT ANTI
CORRUPTION MONITORING
AND EVALUATION COMMITTEE
(MEC)

PREFACE

The Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (MEC) was established in 2011 following the London and Kabul Conferences in 2010 to monitor and evaluate the progress made in fighting corruption by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the International Assistance Community. Over the last five years, MEC has used its Vulnerability to Corruption Assessment (VCA) tool as the principal means of assessing corruption risks within the Afghan ministries, departments and agencies and in the international aid programs. MEC has issued over 400 recommendations with benchmarks, as well as produced special reports, focus papers and press releases on salient issues. It has also held numerous press conferences, and conducted outreach activities in Kabul and the provinces to disseminate its findings.

MEC has now established an enviable reputation not only within the Government of Afghanistan, but also among the international assistance community and the people of Afghanistan. It is now seen as a strong anti-corruption voice in the Afghan landscape. This, however, has also raised high expectations that MEC must now deepen and broaden its engagement.

MEC has responded to this challenge by launching a three-year strategic plan to set out the new pathways for future engagement. This process has involved doing an internal assessment of MEC's strengths and weaknesses, an extensive survey of stakeholder expectations, and consultations with all interested parties, including international donors and senior government officials. The present strategic plan for the next three years draws on all these inputs and lays out the direction and the priorities that MEC will embark on. It will be executed within the constraints of MEC's mandate.

The strategy is presented in two parts. Part 1, this document, lays out MEC's full strategy, which requires additional financial resources beyond the current agreed donor funding levels. Part 2 shows the extent to which the strategy can be implemented within the existing funding from current donors.

Respectfully,

Barry Salaam

Chair – MEC DD. MM. 2018

1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to present the new Strategy of the Afghanistan Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (the MEC) for 2019 – 2021.

Corruption is considered one of the major problems of the Afghan people along with security and unemployment. The 3 huge problems are constantly mentioned as the biggest challenges for the country to develop and for its people to live in peace and pursue economic prosperity. These challenges are positively correlated, complement and reinforce each other. Furthermore, all 3 major problems are considered to be increasing in the past years, despite enormous efforts by the Afghan Government. Deep corruption allegations have surfaced in education, health, defence, public services, election and other sectors in Afghanistan. The other common denominator that all 3 problems have is that the government is considered to have the sole responsibility of solving them. However, MEC's Strategic Plan is based on the recent international research in the anti-corruption field which prescribes a holistic approach and the involvement of a number of stakeholders, from community representatives to schools and education institutions, scholars, religious bodies as well as Government and International Donors.

The National Unity Government has made several attempts to organize the Anti-Corruption efforts into a systematic framework with some tangible results. The reform of the public procurement, the establishment of the Anti-Corruption Justice Sector (ACJC) and the prosecution of dozens of high-level public officials are some of the examples of these efforts. However, the overall perception of corruption in the public sector has not changed significantly.

The people of Afghanistan need to see the change in this fight, and that change will only come when our systemic efforts lead to effectiveness and impact in the lives of the Afghan people.

MEC governance, organisation and mandate

MEC consists of a directing Committee and a Secretariat. The Committee is constituted of six experts on anti-corruption (three Afghan three international Commissioners). The Secretariat comprises a staff of 58, of whom 42 are technical staff. MEC presently has an annual core budget of $2.3 million and is supported by international donors, currently United Kingdom and United States.[1]

Based on Article 5 of the Committee's ToR, as enshrined in the Presidential Decree 115, MEC has the following duties and authorities:

1. Monitoring and evaluating the anti-corruption efforts in Afghan government organizations and entities of international community in Afghanistan.

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[1] In addition, other donors provide project funds for specific MEC studies, MVCAs and other projects. In the past, Denmark, Norway, Canada, USA and Germany have supported MEC trough bilateral funding agreements. Germany is also funding two positions in the MEC Secretariat through the Centre for International Migration and Development (CIM).

2. Issuing recommendations to the government and international organizations for bringing reforms, and ensuring transparency and accountability.
3. Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness, transparency and accountability of the international community aid.
4. Monitoring the status of implementation of issued recommendations.
5. Providing Quarterly reports on the status of implementation of Committee's recommendations and overall situation of corruption in the country and submitting it to the President, Parliament, International Community and the Public through a press conference.

MEC's mission, vision and core values

MEC's vision is **"An Afghanistan with effective institutions accountable to its people"**

MEC's *mission* is that **"MEC is committed to independently and impartially help the people and the government of AFG in preventing corruption and embedding a culture of integrity"**

MEC has the following *core values*:

Independence: taking decisions and actions without the influences of any person, group of persons or authority;

Impartiality: non-partisan; neutrality and fairness;

Integrity: working in an honest manner; cultivating the confidence and trust of stakeholders, particularly the Afghan people;

Commitment: we are committed to our mission and to achieving results;

Public Trust: we build the trust of our stakeholders, particularly the Afghan people by being transparent and publishing all we do.

2. A Retrospect to the 1ˢᵗ Strategy and Lessons learned

Since its establishment, MEC has been successful in becoming a recognised part of the national anti-corruption landscape. It has competent staff and a robust product in the form of its "Vulnerability to Corruption Assessments" (VCA). The Afghan people, the media, the government and the international community all trust its voice and regard it as impartial.

In terms of institutional development, MEC went through a cycle of maturity, starting from scratch with an unclear legal mandate and ambiguous authority. The legal mandate was amended and clarified in 2016 through PD 115 and a 3-years strategic plan was developed for the years 2016-2018 which articulated MEC's vision, mission and its strategic objectives as well as an action plan for implementing the strategic objectives.

After the approval of the previous Strategic Plan 2016 – 2018 by the donors, MEC immediately started its implementation. New positions (e.g. Technical Director, Senior Legal Advisor) have been created at the secretariat in order to cope with the changed requirements. MEC has started engaging with different government and non-government stakeholders in order to enhance their sensitivity for the fight against corruption and seek cooperation for the implementation of MEC's Strategy. MEC has initiated the "High-Level Anti-Corruption Forum" to engage with reform minded government officials. The forum is a platform to bring together "hidden champions", make them aware of the importance of their work and how it can have an effect for the overall AC agenda and to encourage and motivate them in their respective fields. Six High Level AC Forums has been organised by MEC from 2016 – 2018 with an average participation of 22 officials from all government institutions.

MEC has also conducted several forums with other stakeholders, including with media representatives, election observers, business representatives and women working in high-ranking government positions. Additionally, MEC has been continuing engaging with the Parliamentary AC Caucus during every quarterly committee mission.

Along with the previous Strategic Plan, MEC also introduced its new Ministry-Wide VCAs and the concept of "active Follow ups". In the two-and a half years, MEC has conducted 5 MVCAs (MoPH, AGO, MoE, MoMP and MoI)[2] and produced 12 active monitoring reports, with two provincial visits for each monitoring report.

Additionally, when the government assigned all ministries to develop their anti-corruption action plans in 2016, MEC, in order to fulfil its monitoring responsibility, started a review process of the Ministries AC Plans. In 2017 and 2018, MEC has reviewed the AC Plans of 11 Ministries and issued 121 recommendations.[3]

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[2] The MoPH MVCA report was released in June 2016 although the research period had started in late 2015. The MoI MVCA report has been finalized as of December 2018, but the release might be in January 2019.

[3] MEC stopped the ACP reviews of the Ministries in mid. 2018, as the responsibility to monitor the ACPs and its implementation was assigned to the Special Secretariat of the High Council of Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption, based on the National AC Strategy. The 11 ACP Review Reports along with the recommendations were handed over to the Special Secretariat.

MEC's Communication and Advocacy Strategy has been adapted in 2017 and implemented vigorously ever since. MEC was able to enhance its visibility significantly through its outreach activities and social media presence. MEC has been holding corruption awareness raising forums for students in universities in Kabul and provinces. Overall, since the adaption of the previous Strategy, MEC has conducted 17 Corruption Awareness Raising forums in universities, in Kabul and 8 other provinces. MEC has also been engaging with Civil Society Organisations (SCOs) in Kabul and provinces; 12 SCO forums have been held during the implementation period of the strategy in Kabul and 8 provinces. The input of the provincial CSOs has proven expedient for the verification of data and information collected in the active follow up process. Alliances with provincial CSOs have therefore been useful for MEC and its leverage beyond Kabul.

MEC's engagement in the Social Media and its outreach in the digital community have increased considerably and its homepage has been redesigned which provides information in a more user-friendly way. MEC's Facebook Likes increased from 28,500 in 2016 to 191,000 in December 2018. The number of Twitter followers was up from 400 followers in 2016 to 3,700 in December 2018. MEC's weekly Facebook outreach has grown from an average of 6,500 before the implementation of the Strategy to 124,000. The download of MEC's reports has increased from 900 per month to 1,100 per month in 2018.

One of the targets MEC has committed to in the previous Strategy was to improve the gender balance at the secretariat level and facilitate hiring female staff. MEC has amended its HR Policy accordingly to allow preferential treatment of female applicants in the recruitment process and announce certain positions for female candidates only. As a result, the number of female employees has increased from three in 2016 to sixteen employees in December 2018. This is a ratio of 38 percent, comparing to 9% in 2016.

A second amendment to the HR Policy was needed to allow MEC to hire interns in order to give fresh graduates and students access to the job market and at the same time support MEC's technical and operational teams with their daily work. MEC has launched its internship program in 2017 and has hired 11 interns as of December 2018. Three of these interns are currently working and learning at MEC in Finance, M&E and HR units, while most of the remaining 8 former interns found a permanent job in public institutions or private companies.

MEC's finance team has been stengthened and supported through recruitment of a Senior Finance officer as well as international trainings in budget and financial management for both the Head of Finance Department and the Senior Finance Officer. The new finance team has developed a new Delegation of Authority Policy and a Payrole Guideline. Additional layers of control has been put in place to ensure the intended use of donor funds and compliance with MEC's bilateral agreements as well as with the applicable National Laws. Coordination and systematic exchange with the technical teams as well as with senior management of the secretariat has have been introduced. As a result, MEC's finance team is in a better position to fulfill all the reporting requirements associated with multi-donor funding model of MEC. The constant reduction in the number of audit recommendations is a good example of the robustness of MEC's finance department.

Despite the overall successful implementation of the Strategic Plan 2016 - 2018, MEC has also faced some challenges and setbacks in the past two and a half years. All of MEC's commissioners who were involved in the development of the previous Strategy have ended their tenure during 2016 and 2017. While the appointment of new commissioners has brought fresh energy and a different and more relevant skillset, it also coincided with some loss of

institutional memory. This effect was also reinforced by the high turnover of the secretariat staff. MEC has been working closely with its donors on finding a solution to for this phenomenon and the resulting loss of institutional memory.

Furthermore, MEC has also faced serious challenges in occupying key international positions, which adversely affected the implementation of the Strategy. The newly created Technical Director Position could be occupied in August 2017, fifteen months after the adoption of the strategic plan. The hired candidate stayed at MEC for 8 months, before resigning due to worsening security situation in Afghanistan. A new Technical Director was appointed in June 2018. The Senior Policy Advisor position was vacant for most of the strategy implementation period.

For the implementation of its projects, MEC was planning to hire international subject matter experts. This has proven to be more challenging than anticipated, especially in 2018 as the security situation in Afghanistan and particularly in Kabul has become more risky for international citizens. This resulted in cancelation of two large projects and the delay in release of two additional reports, as the international consultants resigned and left the country before completing the reports.

MEC, as a small and dynamic institution, has learned its lessons from the above challenges and setbacks and has tried to identify and assess the risks associated with the implementation of its New Strategic Plan. MEC will also take appropriate measures to mitigate these risks to the extent possible and monitor the materialization of these risks on a more systematic basis.

As the previous Strategic Plan is expiring in December 2018, with this New Strategic Plan 2019 – 2021, MEC intends to lay down its strategic direction for the next 3 years. The New Strategic Plan was developed in consultation with the donors and other stakeholders. As its predecessor, the New Strategic Plan is based on current international research in the Anti-Corruption Field. MEC

3. The new Strategy

There is no blueprint for eradicating corruption. Yet, despite the difficulties of tackling corruption, a surprising number of countries have had considerable success, often from a low base or in a fragile environment.

Drivers of change

Understanding why some countries have made progress in tackling corruption, whilst others have not, has been the subject of considerable research. Of interest is not least the EU funded ANTICORPP programme, which has from 2012 - 2017 examined countries across the world for factors that explain their success. The findings[4] are relevant for anti-corruption policy and practice worldwide. The research suggests that there is one factor – political drive against corruption – that is relevant to all cases. In addition, there are six other main ***drivers of change*** against corruption, of which three or four are relevant in each country. The seven drivers of change are:

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[4] For an article presenting findings, see Alina Mungiu-Pippidi et al, *Journal of Democracy*, Vol 27(1), pp 95-109, January 2016.

1. ***Informed citizen pressure and public anger***. Public pressure and protest has been a major feature in almost all the countries achieving success against corruption.

2. ***Bottom-up citizen initiatives***. Grass roots citizen initiatives, including their requirements for social accountability, are the basis of some countries' successful anti-corruption reforms. Empowering citizens and fostering collective action among strategic groups within the society is another version of citizen initiative.

3. ***Modernisation of government processes,*** gradually reducing the scope for discretionary choice and corruption. Examples include: Civil service employment; public sector procurement; public financial management and; the provision of services. This explains about half of the variation in control of corruption. Included in this are improvements in public reporting, and in internal and external control mechanisms. In some countries, a powerful focus on modernising just a single area of government – e.g. land reform – was the critical success factor.

4. ***Investigations, prosecutions and sanctions***. Showing that the culture of impunity can be beaten, and thus building the confidence of potential reformers, has been a major part of progress against corruption. Examples of measures include replacing the majority of judges in situations of endemic corruption.

5. ***Human agency***. Much change has come about because of groups of committed people who are working to change the system, or to have equal access. Such 'human agency' as it is termed, mattered a great deal in all succeeding countries, according to the research. As the research puts it: "Without educated and autonomous professional groups fighting for good governance because it is in their best interest, sustainable progress in fighting corruption will not occur".[5] However, there needs to be a critical mass of such people.

6. ***External international support***. International support for anti-corruption efforts has been critical in many countries. The international support covers a broad range of interventions: From paying government employee salaries on an interim basis, to donors using their leverage to improve institutional endowment.

7. ***Political determination***. Strong political drivers against corruption - limiting the scope for corruption and the building of supportive reform groups among government officials and political groups - are major enablers of successful reform. Usually, the heart of this is through creating incentives that make key groups want to support the reforms because they will benefit in some way – whether financially, through improved reputation or political recognition.

Besides identifying the principal drivers of change, the research also yielded another useful finding from the more successful countries. A governance order can be changed, but such change will occur gradually and 'punctuated equilibrium' will be the rule – unexpected events will upset the current equilibrium and these are an opportunity for a new and better balance to be achieved. For a body such as MEC, this means that it is extremely important to be alert to such dynamic situations and to adjust accordingly.

Four of the seven drivers of change - citizen initiatives, prosecutions, external assistance and political change - are not relevant to MEC's mandate. MEC's strategy is to apply its mandate of 'Monitoring and Evaluation' to the other three of these seven drivers:

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[5] Ibid, p105

1. Informed citizen pressure and public anger

MEC will speak more on corruption matters and will be instrumental in shaping the public debate on corruption. It will do this through the knowledge it gains from its inquiries, its Vulnerability to corruption Assessments (VCA), its monitoring across a broad range of government institutions and activities, and its dissemination efforts.

2. Modernisation of government processes

MEC will empower government ministers and officials to make better progress against corruption by providing in-depth analyses, comparative analyses, and a perspective on the quality of the current monitoring of government institutions. In respect of its in-depth evaluations, MEC will prioritise those people and organisations that are committed to reform.

3. Human agency

MEC will devote significant resources to helping to build and empower all those engaged in the fight against corruption. MEC will also provide input to help reformers move forward on anti-corruption initiatives and strategies after MEC has completed the in-depth analyses. This includes top government officials, such as by prioritising their Ministries and following up with them on a regular basis. Building such capacity and competence - including for mainstream professionals such as auditors, technical officers, governance specialists and relevant NGO personnel - is a core part of reducing corruption over the course of the next decade. It may be that this effort will develop into a 'Centre of Anti-Corruption M&E Competence'.

MEC has organised its strategic objectives for 2019-2021 under the umbrella headings of the above three drivers of change. MEC has identified six Strategic Objectives each outlining what MEC intends to achieve as its contribution to reinforcing these drivers.

Concept of the strategy

The strategy is based on MEC aligning its efforts to the other initiatives that are also supporting these three drivers of change and other institutions mandates that are currently being redefined due to legal and institutional amendments. In addition, the strategy incorporates the following elements:

- **Broadening MEC's scope** by working at a technical level – in-depth studies in a limited number of areas and trying new innovative tools and measures which could apply to the drivers of change. In the past MEC have worked only at the more detailed level, which limits its scope and impact.

- Paying close attention to which measures are having an impact[6] and to changes in circumstances. This requires that MEC has a structured approach to **learning**.

- Implementing the strategy by steadily **building out** from MEC's current capability and capacity.

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[6] Measures initiated by MEC or others

Prioritisation

MEC's resources will always require prioritisation. When it comes to in-depth technical studies (VCAs and MVCAs), MEC will apply objective criteria for selection of Government Institutions and Processes (see Annex 3)

Beside the in-depth studies which MEC plans in its annual work plan, MEC very occasionally also receives requests for priority work from the President's office. There have been 11 such requests in the past, most of them in 2016 and 2017. MEC is currently seeking to agree a formal protocol for such requests with the President's office. In cases where the request is to a Committee member in their personal capacity, the Committee will also be informed in advance and able to discuss the request. Where such assignments are indeed personal to the Committee member rather than in their MEC capacity, MEC resources will not be provided to assist such studies. In cases where the presidential request is to MEC as an independent institution, the Committee will evaluate if there is an anti-corruption angle to the assessment at hand and whether the MEC has the personal recourses to conduct the assessment.

Prioritisation and the International Community

It is an integral part of MEC's mandate to monitor corruption issues arising in aid provided by the international community, or as a result of international community activity. To date, MEC has completed two in-depth analysis of aid effectiveness. Additionally, while conducting VCAs in government institutions, MEC also examines the international assistance that is provided to those institutions through different aid assistance vehicles.

MEC will fulfil its mandate in the new strategy as follows:

- In MEC's quarterly reports to the Public, the President and Parliament, MEC's commentary will include reference to corruption issues related to aid from the international community.

- MEC will include an examination of relevant international aid issues in its in-depth analyses. For example, in the report is on Ministry of Agriculture, MEC will include an examination of corruption vulnerabilities related to international aid in the Agriculture sector.

- MEC's workplan will include work on international community aid corruption issues according to the judgement of the Committee.

MEC and working in the Provinces

All MEC's strategic objectives have a provincial component. The Committee has reviewed the extent to which Provincial work forms a part of the overall strategy, and our conclusions are the following:

- MEC will discuss the key corruption issues with stakeholders in the provinces on a regular basis; and will follow these up in line with its regular work. Such matters might

include, for example, analysis of the proportion of budgeted funds reaching the provinces, or corruption in fuel duties at customs posts.

- MEC will establish its priorities in the provinces on an annual basis, subject to the security and budget constraints at the time.

- The purpose of MEC's objective of helping to build an enabling environment includes supporting anti-corruption work in the provinces – such as the 'Provincial Working Groups'. MEC is currently working with provincial CSOs and will deepen this relation in order to enable the CSOs to systematically monitor the provision of public services and hold government officials accountable.

- MEC's in-depth reports (VCA and MVCA Reports) will include evaluation of corruption vulnerabilities and issues in the provinces as well as in the central government. Similarly, the monitoring of the implementation process of the resulting recommendations will include two provinces in each monitoring period. This approached has proven effective in the past and MEC was able to verify the implementation –or in some cases the lack of implementation- of its recommendations in the provinces. MEC will continue its provincial engagement to the extent possible within security and budget constraints.

4. Strategic objectives

MEC has organised its objectives for 2019-2021 under the umbrella headings of the following three drivers of change:

1. Informed public pressure
2. Modernising government processes
3. Human Agency

Within the three drivers of change, MEC has identified two six objectives in total each outlining what MEC intends to achieve as its contribution to reinforcing these drivers. Finally, we have listed a number of activities underneath each strategic objective. These are the ways in which we will try to achieve the given objective. A monitoring framework will delineate the outputs and outcomes for each of the Strategic Objectives, along with SMART indicators and deliverables for each year of the 3 years.

Strategic objective 1: Create knowledge and understanding to improve accountability in Afghan and international institutions

Activities:

1. Conduct VCAs, MVCAs and enquiries in government institutions
2. Conduct thematic studies
3. Conduct impact assessment of MEC's targeted institutions
4. Establish and implement sector specific anti-corruption index

Strategic objective 2: Strengthen legal framework, policies and practices to prevent corruption.

Activities:

1. Develop specific recommendations for institutions covered by MEC studies.
2. Review and provide expert opinion to the development of anti-corruption legislations.
3. Assess and Monitor the implementation of anti-corruption strategy with focus on MEC's role and impact.
4. Conduct baseline (VCA and MVCA) and endline (last follow up report) study of the institutions covered by MEC.

Strategic objective 3: Advocate for reform in the state institutions to prevent and pre-empt corruption

Activities:

1. Systematic monitoring of government official's asset declaration progress
2. Produce follow up reports and monitor progress on MEC's recommendations
3. Assist institutions with tools to identify system weaknesses and risks. (monitoring and evaluation database, identify strategies to address system weaknesses)

Strategic objective 4: S Enhance channels of change in state and international institutions through civil society, media and religious bodies

Activities:

1. Initiate creating an Anti-corruption support network across the country;

2. Generate specific recommendations and tools for civil society organisations
3. Open MEC's monitoring and evaluation tools to civil society inputs.
4. Conduct media engagements and outreach programs for raising awareness and public pressure.
5. Produce memorandum of understanding on information sharing and common approaches between MEC and civil society/media and donor's monitoring bodies.

Strategic objective 5: Identify and support agents of change in state institutions.

Activities:

1. Conduct "AC high level forums" to encourage, motivate and appreciate the reform efforts of high level government officials and enhance their AC knowledge.
2. Launch annual award ceremony on best reform minded institutions/departments.

Strategic objective 6: Enhance capacity of MEC's stakeholders on anti-corruption.

Activities

1. Conduct specialized training on anti-corruption tools.
2. Build collaboration with national and international institutions to design trainings on anti-corruption.

Strategic objective 7: Strengthen MEC's institutional capacity.

Activities

1. Standardize MEC's research procedures and products
2. Enhance the capacity of MEC's staff through systematic needs assessment and on-the-job trainings
3. Develop Standard Operating Procedures for MEC's Operations and Programs

The work within this seven objective is within MEC's current mandate, in the context of "Monitoring and evaluating the anti-corruption efforts in Afghan government organizations and entities of international community in Afghanistan."

5. Implementation

The first year of the strategy will be spent on the following activities:

  i.   Strengthening the organisational and technical competence of MEC,
  ii. Completing the remaining projects of 2018 in good order while detail planning projects for 2019 and prioritizing for the subsequent years.

Strengthening the organisation

MEC needs to be a stronger organisation in order to effectively implement the new strategy. The necessary strengthening is in the following areas:

  − Specific roles need to identified for staff and units.
  − Organisational capacity assessment and staff capability assessments: This process has already started and the Independent Evaluation conducted by Coffey as well as the Due Diligence Assessment of DFID have provided important inputs for that process.
  − Technical standards, methodological rigour and training.
  − Legal foundations and clearer perspective on sustainable form of MEC.
  − More robust and coherent internal governance.

Organisational and Staff Assessments, Technical Standards, Methodological Rigour and Training

In 2018, MEC has started the Staff Capability Assessment of the technical teams. This process will be continued with the operational teams of MEC as well and upon approval of the new strategy, MEC will start a systematic capacity development of the staff which will include on-job training and external capacity development programs. For the organisational development, MEC has started a review process of the internal governance structure in 2018. This process will be continued and an internal governance reform plan will be developed and implemented during 2019. Additionally, MEC has started standardizing its research procedures and adapted a number of guidelines and manuals (VCA guideline, Guideline for Developing SMART AC Recommendations, Research Handbook) to streamline its procedures. The implementation of these guidelines require a cultural transition for MEC which will be gradually pursued during the strategy implementation years. This will be accompanied by developing articulated standards for key procedures. Additionally, MEC will develop further guidelines in order to better regulate hiring subject matter consultants for its MVCAs.

Communications and advocacy strategy

MEC will be much more strategic in how it engages with the public, the media and with the government. MEC's current Communication and Advocacy Strategy is for the years 2017 – 2019. By its implementation, MEC is intending to take a more strategic approach to its current outreach and communcation activities. MEC is currently working on the establishment of a National Anti-Corruption Support Network (ACSN) which will be inagurated in 2019. The Network is intended to bring together people and institutions from the public and private sectors as well as SCOs and community representatives who are directly or indirectly engaged in the fight against corruption.

MEC's engagement with CSOs will be complemented with trainings and capacity enhancement programs for the CSOs. For provincial outreach activities, specific AC components rlated to each province will be developed and incorporated into the Awarenes Raising Sessions. MEC will establish strategic partnerships with provincial CSOs and train them for monitoring MEC's recommendations in their respective provinces.

Legal Foundation and Sustainability

MEC's current legal foundation is the presidential decree 115, as issued in September 2016 and the annexed ToR of the Committee. However, according to the new Anti-Corruption Law, as endorsement in September 2018 by Legislative Decree of the President, a new independent AC-Commission will be established and all other AC agencies will be merged to the new commission within 12 months. Nonetheless, MEC was informed that due to its unique mandate of monitoring and evaluation of the AC efforts of the Afghan Government and the International Donor Community, it will not be subject to this merger process. Thus, the new strategy has been developed on the core premise that MEC will remain an essential, semi-permanent institution of the Afghan anti-corruption landscape, and donor funding will continue to be required. MEC will closely work with its current donors and will continue to fulfil the reporting requirements and update the donors on the implementation of the new strategy. In the meantime, MEC will also explore to identify and utilize further funding sources in order to diversify its funding portfolio.

For the implementation of the new strategy and a systematic monitoring thereof, the Strategic Objectives of MEC will be broken down into projects in the annual work plans. A separate M&E framework (Logframe) with annual milestones and outputs/outcomes will be put in place in order to monitor the progress of implementation.

Annexes:
1. Monitoring Framework (DFID Logframe)
2. Risk Assessment
3. MEC's Criteria for Selecting Institutions for VCA
4. Budget and Resources

Draft