

In the Name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Kind



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Afghanistan Transportation Sector

The principle role of transport is to provide or improve access to different locations for businesses and individuals, for both freight and personal movements. For the business sector, this includes connections between businesses and their suppliers and between business and their markets. For the household sector, transport provides people with access to workplaces, schools and shops. It connects them to social, recreational, community and medical facilities for personal and leisure activities.

Strategic Context

Afghanistan provides access to trade along north-south and east-west Asian corridors, through central Asia. As a "Geographic center of gravity", Afghanistan has the potential to play a special role in the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) program, which supports investments in roads, energy and trade. Roads and rail links connect Afghanistan to the outside world and can connect Asia's four different regions to each other. Internally, without other available transport infrastructure modes, roads predominantly connect Afghanistan provinces, cities, towns and villages.

Sector Performance, Problems and Opportunities

Afghanistan's transportation system is comprised of inland waterways, air, rail, and road transport modes. Inland waterways are limited to the Amu Darya and its tributaries with the only formal operating inland port at Shirkhan Bandar. The country has some 60 airports and airfields spread across the country including two international and 22 domestic airports, which meet International Civilian Aviation Organization class 4 categorization standards.

Government Sector Strategy

Multiple government ministries are involved in the operation and regulation of the transport sector namely; MPW, Ministry of Transport, Independent Authority of Civil Aviation, Ministry of Urban Development(MOUD), Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), Ministry of Interior Affairs (MOIA) and other local authorities.

Corruption in Transport Sector of Afghanistan

Corruption in Afghanistan has been described as "a symptom of poor governance". Corruption has pernicious effects on business in Afghanistan. Government regulations serve as a deterrent to moving business activity from the informal sector, where most of the economy remains. Informality restricts the growth of firms and economy as a whole. One reason not to grow is to maintain low level of visibility from fear of government predation. Much of the economy is based on imports, which gives government opportunities in transportation and customs. Variation in the levels of corruption for business in these two areas is difficult to forecast and manage, which discourages growth. State-owned enterprises and mentalities remain and choke private sector activities.

Corruption not only deters private investment, but also distorts government-directed investment. Practice may result in investment that do not meet defined public purposes and are conducted without transparent processes.

Given the extremely weak governance capacities in Afghanistan today, a "foundational" package of assistance is required, one which provides and prioritizes activities through an anti-corruption lens, and which attacks corruption by reforming or strengthening base governance conditions directly related to root causes of corruption, including:

Salaries

The Afghan government recognizes that wages paid to most civil servants, particularly those in sub-national government, are severe and for many barely sufficient to provide for a family much above poverty level. As a result, a "tolerance" for dealing with corruption associated with low paid government workers has developed and become wide spread, notwithstanding the corrosive nature of corruption even at the lowest levels of government.

Skills Sets

Civil servants need to be better trained and better managed if they are to be part of the solution to corruption, not part of the problem. In particular, training, coaching, and longer term professional development are required in technical areas, management, and leadership for positions directly related to anti-corruption initiatives.

Systems

Properly developed and operational zed systems (MIS) for financial, human resource or project management can help shed light on government operations. When integrated within a strengthened management capacity in key control ministries and agencies.

Society

Advocacy for anti-corruption initiatives via civil society, and governance oversight and civic awareness via the media are fundamentally important in combating corruption. Anti-corruption efforts can be sustained only through a collective partnership of government, civil society and media.

Transportation sector plays pivotal role in terms of accessibility. And considering the geopolitical location of Afghanistan it can connect the four regions of Asia to each other. To realize this, Afghanistan shall take tackle corruption and eliminate the root causes of wide spread corruption in the public sector.



Afghanistan : Drought and climate change effects

By Mohammad Zahir Akbari

As the water sources are heavily dependent on annual rainfall and snowfall but lack of snowfall in the winter season has intensified concerns over increase of droughts and climate change effects in Afghanistan. Officials from the National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA) believe that Afghanistan has suffered enormously from the impact of climate change in the world and the level of the country's underground water table has dropped considerably. As a result, lack of rain and snowfall this year threatens the grasslands and agriculture sector in the country. "We will lose our water resources if there is no rain and snow, also our agriculture sector will be harmed and this increases poverty," said Malikyar, deputy chief of NEPA. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Agriculture Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) informs of a stockpile of 240,000 tons of wheat in case of a drought in the next solar year. There are several factors that strengthen droughts and also influence water quality such as climate change, agricultural activities, increasing population, types of water supplies, embedded technology in water management sector, wastage of water, quality of sanitation activities, storage of raw water in dry season, quality of canalization network. In relevance to population growth and decreasing agricultural lands, the authorities are responsible to undertake certain measures such as prevention of water losing in traditional agricultural sectors and urban water system network, changing the consumption patterns, regulated plans for drought combating. But climate change factor we need to draw national and international attentions as it is beyond capability of solitary official unit. Each decade, Afghanistan has lost 2 percents of its rain and snowfall due to Climate Change. Study indicates that average temperature across Afghanistan has increased by 0.6°C since 1960. This general warming across Afghanistan is line with a pattern of rising temperatures across the region in which Afghanistan is located. On a local level, Kabul winters are now definitely not as cold as it was a few decades ago and its negative impacts are evident on both shallow and groundwater levels. Consequently, thousands of wells have dried up while the number of population is increasing due to continued droughts, unemployment and security issues. The water table has dropped unprecedentedly, and thousands of settlements face severe water crisis. In addition, most of the shared water points and wells are contaminated, leading to illness. In Kabul city, with estimated population of 7 million people, 80% of them lack access to safe drinking water, and 95% lack access to improved sanitation facilities. Thus, other cities still do not have access to clean drinking water despite billions of dollars invested by the international community to help Afghan nation. Overall, there is a unanimous concern that the level of rain and snowfall has significantly decreased compared to previous years

posing serious harm to rained wheat crops in the country. Farmers say that the lack of rain and snowfall this year threatens the grasslands and agriculture. While Agricultural products form a core component of Afghanistan's national economy. The country needs over six million tons of wheat every year from which, 4.5 million tones are produced inside the country and the remaining 1.5 million tons are imported from abroad. Recently, Toby Lanzer, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Afghanistan, has also raised concerns over a possible drought in Afghanistan next year, pledging the UN's all out support to Afghanistan in case there is a wheat shortage in the country.

These follows several decades of steady droughts across Afghanistan's northern, northeastern, central and western provinces could lead to a large-scale food crisis. According to Oxfam, nearly three million people are facing severe food shortages as a result of drought in 14 provinces out of 34 provinces. Eighty percent of the non-irrigated wheat crop, which people rely on for food and income, has been lost. "The issue is very serious. Every other year drought or other natural disaster puts millions of people into food insecurity," Abdul Majeed Qarar, spokesman for the Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock Ministry, said. Therefore, the government and humanitarian community should act quickly to ensure this does not degenerate into farther disasters. Delays will just make things harder for families already struggling to cope with chronic poverty. Unfortunately, the very real threat of climate change and its deeply negative impacts on Afghanistan find no place in Afghanistan's national and sub-national plans of development; not even at least in theory if not in action. If one looks at the Afghanistan's National Development Strategy adopted in 2008, it makes no mention of climate change and provisions to tackle it on a long-term basis. But then again, Afghanistan's National Development Strategy has largely been a failure so far; it has remained good only on paper with Afghanistan able to make no meaningful stride towards getting itself closer to achieving the plan's vision.

Providing social security would be difficult to achieve without ensuring food security for the people of Afghanistan. It is hunger and unemployment that are partly responsible for driving the vicious cycle of war and conflicts in Afghanistan. It is imperative upon the government of Afghanistan to renew its commitment to moving forward and gradual implementation of Afghanistan National Development Strategy as the country's second most important national document after the Constitution. However, National Unity Government has paid more attention to water infrastructure rather than previous government but within ANDS, the country's agricultural sector must be given priority and climate change effect should not be neglected.

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Process and importance of socialization

By Ahmad Karimi

Humans are social creatures by nature; they have a need or requirement to socialize with others. According to the Cambridge University Press, the definition of socialize, for the purposes of people or animals, "is to train them to behave in a way that others in the group think is suitable". This definition of the word socialize, leads into another, which is that of socialization. Socialization is a definitive part of every human's life. Socialization is defined as: "The life long process of social interaction through which we become a consistent and recognizable person, and obtain the physical mental and social skills needed for survival in society." The process of socialization is a key factor in the life of humans because socialization is contributory in the development of personality and community roles. As stated by psychologists the process of socialization starts at birth when a child begins to learn what is expected of them from their parents. The child will then go through the process of learning what is considered right from wrong, what is socially acceptable. They learn to share, and to communicate through language and actions. Socialization continues through school, friends, employment, extended family, strangers and countless other methods. In other words, socialization is a process in which people learn to be a participating member of a society through their behaviors, thoughts, beliefs, emotional traits and so forth. Individuals learn to act in accordance to their expectations and that of others. Furthermore, this constant exchange of interaction between members of the society is the building block of socialization. Sociologists say that socialization is important for both the society and individual. Society benefit because each new generation of its members conform to be part of it; thus accounting the continuation of the society. The individual also gains as he or she would develop a sense of self and have a personality that is exclusively his or hers. Besides what have been mentioned, there are some more important factors of socialization process which helps a person to become an effective member of the society. Babies are born into this world without knowing who they are and the social norms of their society. However, they will grow up to be adults who know the language, beliefs and values of the community. This process of socialization begins for everyone in the family. They are not only closely related to the child but physically also they are nearer to the child than others. The child learns respect for persons in authority. The environment of a family influences the growth of a child. Of the parents it is the mother who first begins the process of socialization. Later on this procedure and responsibility go from family to school which is the second and momentous agency of socialization. The education the child gets in the school molds his/her ideas and attitudes. Education is of great importance in socialization. The communication they receive from their teachers help to

socialize them and to make them finally mature members of their societies. Furthermore, the relation between a child and his/her playmates is one of equality. It is based on cooperation and mutual understanding. The child acquires something from his/her friends and playmates which he cannot acquire from parents. From the friends the child obtains cooperative morality and some of the informal aspects of culture like fashions, trends, modes of gratification and forbidden knowledge. The knowledge of such things is necessary from the social point of view. Moreover, the government is another vital element for the socialization process which it makes laws for the people and lays down the modes of conduct expected of them. If people fail to adjust their behavior in accordance with the laws of the government, they may be punished for such failure.

In contrast, if we compare the socialization process in Afghanistan than other countries we realize that this procedure is not being followed efficiently by masses due to many factors: firstly, most of the parents aren't educated and don't know what truly socialization is and what is the impacts of the socialization on the lives of children and how it changes the quality of their lives. Likewise, they don't have the knowledge and other information about socialization to show their children the way how to set themselves according to the norms, values and other important things which the society has. Secondly, there aren't any programs and seminars hold by government and other social organizations to give information about this issue and its effects on the personality traits, lifestyle and behavior of children. In addition, if we consider schools and in particular the respected teachers, we find out that they merely work on the education of the children and it rarely happens that they address this issue, therefore, the children aren't well-socialized. Moreover, it is clear that, Afghanistan is a traditional society and most of the families have lots of children, which makes it hard for the parents to raise them in the best way possible because when quantity increases needless to say it effects on quality. Therefore, efforts need to be done to help children, youngsters and adults to become socialized members of the society who care and cherish the values and norms that our society has.

Socialization is extremely important to children's well-being. Parents and other agents who are in touch with children should dedicate serious effort to understanding what is involved in socialization and making sure that the children receive the socialization they need to succeed in life. The societies that go towards stability and progress should solve some basic problems of socialization at all stages of childhood and youths so that the future of those societies become prosperous because of having socialized members who are committed and care about the norms, values and principles of those societies.

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