

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

Daily
Outlook
AFGHANISTAN
The Leading Independent Newspaper

October 02, 2018

**Public Private Partnership:
Key to improved Service
Delivery**

Public Private Partnership is a contractual arrangement which is formed between public and private sector partners. It involves the private sector in the development, financing, ownership, and/or operation of a public facility or service. In such a partnership, public and private resources are pooled and responsibilities divided so that the partners' efforts are complementary. In such a framework, the private sector partner usually makes a substantial cash or equity investment in the project and the public sector gains access to new revenue or service delivery capacity, and this arrangement between the public and private sector differ from service contracting. Based on the successful experience of the PPP in other countries, the government of Afghanistan has also focused on improving PPP in the country. Ashraf Ghani, the Afghan President, has repeatedly urged the private sector for boosting partnerships in urban service delivery.

As in Afghanistan and other developing countries, sustainable access to healthcare and other socio-economic services and products can be accomplished through public-private partnerships, where the government delivers the minimum standard of services, products and/or care, the private sector brings skills and core competencies, while donors and business bring funding and other resources. The economists hold that, PPPs can facilitate the development of adequate infrastructure and services, and help resolve problems related to traditional procurement such as inefficiency, unreliability and poor fiscal management, and will also address other factors such as short political tenures and rent seeking behavior from various interest groups. It helps to resolve infrastructure sector through taking advantage of private sector strengths such as (i) Management efficiency, (ii) Newer technologies, (iii) Workplace efficiencies, (iv) Cash flow management, (v) Personnel development, (vi) Shared resources and platforms and (vii) Access to diverse sources of capital.

**The Key Trends the Afghan Government Should consider
Incentives for deploying the PPP model**

It shall sustain and advance projects through incentives. They can range from access to skilled resources and government oversight to budgetary stimulus through dedicated PPP funds, or other financial assistance, such as guarantees.

Standardization of principles, processes and documents

As PPP programs mature and the government grow more confident in its preferred risk exposure and procurement practices, the need to reinvent the wheel for each transaction lessens. Standardization generates more efficient procurement (including making better use of advisors) and a stronger pipeline of projects.

Retrospective evaluation of PPP projects and procurement

Midterm or retrospective scrutiny of projects is an important means of monitoring continued performance and VFM and of ensuring transparency. Project-specific evaluations can include metrics related to financial and operational performance, contractual requirements and timely reporting.

Conclusion

Infrastructure investment and development are top priorities for Afghanistan. While rapid urbanization pressures Afghanistan to develop critical new infrastructure, it needs to expand its existing infrastructure because of aging assets and sustained underinvestment. As infrastructure demand increases and fiscal constraints grow, the PPP model is considered as a viable mechanism to help the governments meet these burgeoning infrastructure challenges. Afghan government and the private sector are innovating and intervening, and lessons are constantly emerging for PPP practitioners, financiers, existing sponsors and new entrants. With this perspective, the private sector can assist Afghan government to improve urban management, participate actively in reconstruction of historical monuments and urban many other urban development programs.

**What is Foreign Policy?**

By Mohammad Zahir Akbari

Foreign policy is the management of external relations, national interests and activities at international arenas backed by domestic policies. Foreign policy involves goals, strategies, measures, methods guidelines, directives, understandings agreements and so on by which national governments conduct international relations with each other and with international organizations and non-governmental actors. All national governments by the very fact of their separate international existence, are obligated to engage in foreign policy directed at foreign governments and other international actor. Governments want to influence the goals and activities at other actor whom they cannot completely control because they exist and operate by end their sovereignty.

In the other words, no country is self-reliable and self-sufficient; all states are, somehow, interdependent in international system. In recent past, due to the growing interdependencies, there have been debates about global monetary governance. This means, foreign policies need to seek its right goals and measures that are intended to guide government, decisions and actions with regard to external affairs, particularly relations with foreign countries managing foreign relations calls for carefully considered plans of action that are adapted to foreign interests in the complicated world systems. Government officials in leading positions include presidents, chief execution officer, foreign ministers, defense ministers, finance ministers and so along with their closest advisers are usually the key policymakers.

Policy makers involves a means end way at thinking about goals and actions at government. It is an instrumental concept. For example, Afghan government is suffering from international terrorism need to set strategic way of overcoming the fight against international terrorism, since it is an international phenomenon, hence co-operations among states is vital, we need to ask ourselves a fundamental question alike, what is the key problem or goal and what solution or approaches are available to address it?

It is very important to see whether our foreign policy system is able to pursue the right goals and approaches in their true spirit. Unfortunately, because of certain factors like years of instability and economic and political fragility have made the country dependent on others to a large extent and, therefore, the true objectives of the foreign policy never have been achieved. Moreover, the country could not define and pursue properly its national interests and, resultantly, remained weaker in international arena. To simulate the international context as a football playground, our players are more likely to receive goals instead of making goal due poor policy and weak players.

In a deeper look, there are different factors that influence the foreign policy of a country. In the first place the size of a state's territory and its population greatly influences its foreign policy. Generally, the leaders and people of a country with small territory and population do not expect their country to carry great weight in international affairs. On the other hand, the leaders and people of

large countries are ready to assume special responsibilities. However, sometime even small states which have rich resources also leave a deep impact on world politics.

The geography of a country, including its fertility, climate, location in relation to other land masses and water-ways etc. also influence the country's foreign policy. It is a major factor in determining self-sufficiency of a country. Generally, land-locked countries, nations in the tropics and those bordering a superpower are less self-sufficient in comparison to the countries which have access to warm-water ports or are located in the temperate zones and far removed from superpowers.

The national unity, cultural and historical traditions of a country also deeply influence the foreign policy. Generally, people possessing a unified common culture and historical experience can pursue an effective foreign policy because of the support of all sections of society who share the same values and memories. On the other hand, a country which is culturally and historically fragmented cannot pursue an equally effective foreign policy. Apart from these internal factors there are certain external factors as well that influence the foreign policy of a country. The contemporary international organizations greatly influence the foreign policy of a country. While formulating its foreign policy the country has to take note of the international law, treaties and contracts. No country can ignore these factors without jeopardizing its own interests. Apart from the structure at the global level, the structures at the regional and sub-regional levels also greatly influence the foreign policy of a country.

In case of Afghanistan, the international influence has been on a large scale. As the country has been dependent on international organizations and other powerful and some neighboring countries, its foreign policy has always been under pressure. As far as the internal factors are concerned, Afghanistan's geography, due to its heartland location, mineral resources and more importantly the weak players, has been the battle ground for great games. This has influenced the country to a great extent. On the other hand, the country's cultural heterogeneity has always hindered creation of a homogenous national sentiments. Unfortunately, our leaders have frequently failed to fill the social and political gaps on the basis of social justice and pluralistic approaches.

Given the landmark features of this country, it has a great potential to become the center of regional cooperation and opportunities; it can ensure the interests all regional nations if we could follow an active diplomacy via qualified diplomats. Today, no is self-reliable and self-sufficient country in the world; in fact, all need resources which are spread over the globe. This resources cannot be exchanged without transitional road. So, this is the job of foreign policy to highlight and coordinate this role through a reliable and peaceful policy.

Mohammad Zahir Akbari is the permanent writer of the Daily Outlook Afghanistan. He can be reached at mohammadzahirakbari@gmail.com

Paradoxes of Peace Talks in Afghanistan

By Abass Azimi

The 1979 Russian invasion of Afghanistan inflicted political instability and crises on the country. People were internally displaced and large numbers fled the country. The fall of the Soviet Union in 1989 was coupled with civil wars in Afghanistan which paved the way for Taliban's Islamic Emirates to take over. After nearly four decades, Afghanistan still suffers from armed conflict mainly spearheaded by the Taliban. The 1990s civil wars, the rise and fall of the Taliban and post 9/11 America's operation in Afghanistan need to be analyzed when we evaluate peace talks between the National Unity Government (NUG) and the Taliban. This article highlights the paradoxes of peace talks with the Taliban by setting the spotlight on. It further indicates the role of regional states, their relationships with and supports of the Taliban. Hamid Karzai, former president of Afghanistan, established the High Peace Council (HPC) in 2010 in order to facilitate direct peace talks with moderate elements of the Taliban group. The HPC contacting the different elements within the Taliban groups which were characterized as the Afghan Taliban. The efforts made by Hamid Karzai's administration ended with the establishment of Taliban's office in Qatar, aiming to initiate direct negotiation with the so called Afghan Taliban. The government side withdrew from the direct talks with groups after the Taliban office in Qatar posed as the Islamic Emirates Embassy with white flag. In July 2015, Mullah Mohammad Omar, the leader of the group backed the peace talks with Afghanistan government and called negotiation as the legitimate way of ending foreign invasion in Afghanistan. In August, 2015 Afghanistan's National Security Directorate formally confirmed the death of Mullah Omar, the Taliban announced Mullah Mansoor as his successors. The Taliban disavowed the peace talks after their leader's death. Although in post 2014, the NUG has tried to bring the Taliban to the negotiation table and create global, regional and national consensus for the peace process in Afghanistan, it failed to generate any substantial results. The Taliban carried their violence destruction by constantly attacking city centers and highways.

In 2015, the Taliban captured the capital city of Kunduz a strategic northern province, for the first time since they were removed from power in 2001. They overrun Kunduz once again in 2016. Recently, in August 2018 they coordinated a heavy attack on the strategic province of Ghazni. These events show that the Taliban are least interested in peace talks and negotiation. The group rejects ceasefire with Afghanistan government and instead insists

on having direct talks with the United States.

There are complex paradoxes of the peace process in Afghanistan which undermines the success of the process.

First, many Afghan officials emphasize that the Taliban is not an independent armed group capable of negotiating with the Afghan state. They are supported by different regional countries mainly Pakistan and Iran; both main players in fueling war in Afghanistan. In 2016, the group leader Mullah Mansoor visited Iran and while crossing the border to Pakistan was killed by the U.S drone strike. Iran support for the Taliban could be rationalized by three main reasons, countering ISIS Khurasan, complicating the U.S longest war and having control over water resources of Afghanistan. According to reports Iran provides the Taliban with Ak-47 assault rifles and facilitating cash transfers in near border areas. In August, 2018, Mullah Abdul Ghaffar Tufan, a Taliban leader who surrendered earlier accused Iran, Russia and China for providing assistance to the group and ask them to destroy school, mosques, roads and do not allow development projects to take place in Afghanistan. However, China's support for the Taliban is hard to be proven.

Second Pakistan's political and strategic support goes back to the rise of Taliban during the 1990s civil wars in Afghanistan. Pakistan created the Taliban with the supports from the gulf region. Intern-intelligence Service (ISI) trained Taliban's fighters which overthrew the Mujahidin government in 1996. According to Peter Thomsen, the former US Envoy to Afghanistan Islamabad still uses the Taliban to further its interest in the region. Ministry of Interior Affairs's spokesperson claimed that Pakistan's Military were involved in the coordinated attack on Ghazni in last August; it provided all the needed assistance to the Taliban. Since 2014 several high level visits have taken place between Afghanistan to Pakistan without resulting to any clear end.

The past experiences indicate that negotiation may take place between the government and the Taliban group. But, making happy all the players in this multi-dimensional conflict will be very time consuming, which puts the past achievements of Afghanistan in jeopardy. Achieving sustainable peace in Afghanistan is complicated, which needs strong national government, national, regional and global consensus coupled with defeating the Taliban, in the battlefield and employing a sustainable working multi-dimensional foreign policy.

Abass Azimi is the emerging writer of the Daily Outlook Afghanistan.

Chairman / Editor-in-Chief: Moh. Reza Huwaida

Vice Chairman / Exec. Editor: Moh. Sakhi Rezaie

Email: outlookafghanistan@gmail.com

Phone: 0093 (799) 005019/777-005019

www.outlookafghanistan.net

Daily
Outlook
AFGHANISTAN
The Leading Independent Newspaperافغانستان
The Daily Afghanistan Ma

The views and opinions expressed in the articles are those of the authors and do not reflect the views or opinions of the Daily Outlook Afghanistan.