Annotated Bibliography:
Multi-agency Reporting on Anti-corruption in Afghanistan

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Prepared by: Obaidullah Abdi
Afghanistan Public Policy Research Organization (APPRO)
Kabul, Afghanistan
www.appro.org.af

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Introduction

This annotated bibliography is compiled as part of the Citizens' Forum Against Corruption (CFAC) project, part-funded by the European Delegation – Afghanistan and implemented by Afghanistan Public Policy Research Organization (APPRO).

The bibliography is intended to assist multiple actors with projects or programming on anti-corruption in Afghanistan. The compilation will be updated twice per year, with the next update scheduled for January 2019. The additions to this bibliography for each round of updates will be marked as "New".

Reports from: USAID & DI. Advancing Effective Reforms for Civic Accountability (AERCA)

Available from: https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/fact-sheets/advancing-effective-reforms-civic-accountability-anti-corruption

The goal of USAID's Advancing Effective for Civil Accountability (AERCA) is to assist Afghan institution in becoming more responsive and effective in the delivery of the core government services. The long term objective is to mobilize civil society organizations with capacities in social accountability, advocacy for reform in electoral process and bolstering civic mechanisms of oversight and accountability. Over the long term, AERCA will contribute to Afghan efforts to build effective and competent public institutions that are responsive to citizens.

Democracy International (DI) implemented USAID's Afghanistan Electoral Reform and Civic Advocacy Project from May 2011 through December 2015, supporting an Afghan led electoral reform process, specifically through support to civil society, and conducting public opinion research on governance and elections topics. AERCA's overall goal is to assist the Afghan government to quickly become more responsive and effective in the delivery of core government services.
The following summaries are the highlights of the project monthly and quarterly reports:

Highlights of the First Quarter Report, 2016: In this quarter under the 3 components of this project a youth survey was completed and a survey of members of parliaments has been implemented as well. Among the other component of this study, second round of elections reform advocacy conferences were held in Herat, Bamyan, Kandahar, Kunduz, Khost, Nangarhar and Balkh.
 The post-election accountability website (govmeter.tolonews.com) has been officially launched and DI and Impassion have conducted a series of accountability and social media trainings for CSOs to engage civil society in the monitoring of the government's commitments and familiarize them with the website.

Highlights of the Second Quarter Report, 2016: MP Survey final report has been completed and translated, findings were also circulated. The Survey of Afghan Members of parliament is the survey to examine the attitudes on issues such as electoral reform, security, reconciliation with the Taliban, and the National Unity Government performance. The findings suggest that MPs are pessimistic about their country's future, disappointed with the NUG, and troubled by the Islamic State and other security threats. View infographics here. During this quarter a focus on the role of women in combatting corruption by a campaign has been worked on.

Highlights of the Third Quarter Report, 2016: Planning, mobilizing, and launching the new AERCA program took up most of this quarter. DI designed a program implementation plan and work plan based on the Political Economy Analysis of Afghanistan's service delivery capacity that was conducted in the second quarter. The plan was submitted to USAID and approved. The work plan contains three major activity components: 1. Improve Afghan Government Delivery of Selected Public Service 2. Engage Afghan Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Social Accountability For Improvement of Selected Public Services. Rapid assessment and mapping of selected government services for subsequent reforms were implemented which includes:

- Tazkera (National ID): Ministry of Interior

- Drivers's License: Ministry of Interior
- Small Business License: Kabul Municipality
- High School Certificate: Ministry of Education

Highlights of the Fourth Quarter Report, 2016: In this quarter, meetings have been held with relevant government officials of the selected services to ensure coordination and participation of these entities with DI's team and project. And specially coordinate and help in regard of the networking infrastructure and other supplies at MoE for new reforms at certification processes. For boosting effectiveness in service delivery DI officials initiated meetings with Federation of Crafts and Traders (FACT) union of Afghanistan and acquired their inputs for reforming business licensing procedures at the Kabul Municipality.

Moreover, the DI team developed an anticorruption strategy outline to assist the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) in drafting its anticorruption strategy.

Highlights of the First Quarter Report, 2017 (October-December 2016): DI worked to simplify process simplifying of different services including PRD, KM and MoED. This reform is expanded to other provinces such as Herat and Nangarhar. Notably, the endeavor has led to make the services more responsive to citizens. In regard to school certificates in Ministry of Education, awareness raising workshops were held in provinces. Data has been collected in 22 municipal districts and data has been collected on over 10,000 businesses. At this quarter, the service delivery process simplification work have been expanded to other institutions such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), Ministry of Refugees and Repatriates (MoRR), MoI's Deputy Ministry for Policy and Strategy, and Small Taxpayers Office (STO).

Highlights of the Second Quarter Report, 2017 (January-March 2017): The findings of the Census Enumeration and Registration of Businesses for several municipal districts of Kabul City have been presented to the Kabul Municipality (KM) Steering Committee. Additionally, the team conducted a pilot survey of the displaced street vendors in the Thirteenth Municipal District to determine the social and economic implications resulting from the displacement. Reform working group meetings were held with MoFA, STO to discuss and map the entity's public service delivery processes. Under the component two, seven new CSOs have been selected for the new round of accountability in service delivery to local communities towards the end of this quarter. Under Component Three, the action plans developed for the five revenue ministries have been tracked. In addition, a consultant has been hired for the preparation of a strategy for the Oversight Commission on Access to Information (OCAI), and began work on an Access to Information portal for OCAI.

Final Report; Advancing Efforts for Reform and Civic Accountability, The final Report, January 2016-September 2017: The report is the follow-up to previous reports and provides summary of the different initiatives undertaken by USAID and DI to ease the process in Population Registration department and licensing fees process in Kabul Municipality. Under the component 1, the processing time and steps required to obtain a National ID (tazkira) and Business license were reduced and the steps decreased. Component 2**:** after transition of DI from electoral reform post 2014 to anti-corruption the project awarded 9 sub grants to several Afghan CSOs to monitor selected NUG's commitments made during the 2014.

Component 3 strives to provide ad-hoc in-kind support and consulting to reforms for government in anti-corruption initiatives undertaken by government. Under this component 5 revenue generating ministries will be targeted and through this provided assistance.

USAID's Political Economy Assessment – Field Guidance

From:https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2496/Applied%20PEA%20Field%20Guide%20and%20Framework%20Working%20Document%20041516.pdf

In this guidance note, USAID's methodology for conducting PEA of development projects is examined. This field guidance note could be a good source to assess the different factors affecting development projects and outcomes. The note defines PEA as a field research methodology developed by donor agencies to explore ways in improving the aid effectiveness and sustainability of programs in recipient countries. PEA is particularly concerned with how power is used to manage resources and, as such, is especially valuable for exploring a 'lack of political will', which is often blamed for undermining reform and hindering progress. PEA aims to examine the set of factors which impacts a nation's development and governance factors which includes politics, rules and norms, social and cultural practices, belief values and historical geographical determinants. Additionally, USAID defines PEA how stakeholders in a given arena shape decisions by certain degree of influence exerted, as the number and quantity of incentive compels them and taking into account the bounties which awaits them.

USAID states PEA can be applied at various levels, country level; cross sectoral in health, education and etc. Ideally, PEA framework is developed to provide a project design to aid money and development projects. The PEA framework is based on a 'different theory of change', one that argues that success is more likely if projects build on what is working well locally rather than importing foreign technical solutions. There are no quick fixes. For knowing when to conduct a PEA, initially a country-level PEA should be conducted. Subsequently a sector-level or problem-level should be conducted. It is also mentioned in the text to conduct a PEA whenever the project goals are not met.

How to do a PEA: PEA begins with a literature review of the country/sector/problem under study. Followed by devising a set of guiding questions based on interactions with people from various background included in the city. Questions can be finalized through a 2-day workshop however prior or during the workshop, the team will start organizing protocol and initial appointments. An initial list of informants will be drawn up during the workshop. Key information can be draw from informants and workshops and then it can be jotted down in the report. When making appointments and later when doing interviews, it is important to ask for any literature the informant is willing to share – e.g., reports, reviews published pamphlets, unpublished etc.

In the case of Afghanistan, the political economy and powerholders should be also considered when designing the PEA questionnaire. Further the diversity serving the geospatial location of Afghanistan should be further explored. In Afghanistan there are many actors and factors affecting anti-corruption endeavors. The methodology developed by USAID can be developed and Afghanized for producing practical solutions.

DFID (2009). Political Economy Analysis

From: https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/events-documents/3797.pdf

Political economy analysis is concerned with the interaction of political and economic processes in a society: the distribution of power and wealth between different groups and individuals, and the processes that create, sustain and transform these relationships over time. (Collinson, 2003; DFID, 2009, Duncan and Williams 2010; OECD in DFID 2009). In a section DFID defines the 3 typologies of PEA analysis conducted

1. Macro level country analysis: understanding the political and economic systems of a country, how these enable or hold back overall development, and to identify strategic entry points for country programming. It examines the general sensitivity to the country context by examining such issues as historical trends, the interaction at the national level of political economic and social processes, and international influences.
2. Analysis focused on particular sectors: understanding the incentives and institutions operating within a sector, with a view to informing the design of sector programs
3. Problem-focused analysis: understanding and resolving a specific problem that may be encountered in a particular donor program.

U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre. Political Economy Analysis of Anti-corruption Reforms

From: https://www.u4.no/publications/political-economy-analysis-of-anti-corruption-reforms/pdf

This paper strives to answer the query on the political economy analysis of what the principle sources of corruption are to understanding the better questions of "how" and "why" – with a view to developing more effective anti-corruption agencies. PEA is a tool developed by donor agencies such as the USAID, DFID and SIDA for assessing the underlying drivers of corruption, rent-seeking and the process that promote or block governance reforms initiatives in developing countries. Through this studies, both the formal and informal dimensions of economic and political process that are likely to affect anti-corruption reforms will be examined. Political economy analysis diagnoses different actors, factors, structures, and informal institutions. Systematic analysis of stakeholders as well as desk review of all the relevant literature is quite essential, further World Bank also institutes field research to understanding the ground realities in the process.

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Key methodologies in PEA are shared by DFID's "Drivers of Change" and SIDA's "Power Analysis". The expert answer brief guides analysts to utilize the aforementioned methodologies for exploring the link between the various actors and factors affecting the political will or lack and strategically how change occurs in a given context.

U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre. Political Economy Analysis of Anti-corruption reforms

From: https://www.u4.no/publications/political-economy-analysis-of-anti-corruption-reforms/pdf

The World Bank Experience is the study commission for assessing the feasibility of establishing anti-corruption agencies in different countries. This study and a follow-up report takes into account the cases of ACAs in different jurisdictions for example Hong Kong, Singapore, New South Wales, the United States and other country experience. Further the study explains the failure in curbing corruption through the establishment of ACA can be explained by absence of legal foundations (laws) for its success; 2) lack of independence from interference from political leadership and 3) the lack of oversight and reporting mechanisms.

The USAID Democracy and Governance Assessments is used to assess the current state of democracy and governance structure within a country and introducing prospects for their improvement. The assessment focuses on critical contextual aspects of countries' political economy and institutions that may enable countries to advance the governance agenda including the fight against corruption.

The Strategic Governance and Corruption Analysis (SGACA) developed by the Netherlands provides a framework to help analyze the governance and corruption climate of a country according to country-specific criteria. This study can be a good source for understanding the different approaches for PEA studies. A framework for analyzing underlying factors and drivers of corruption in Afghanistan can be developed. For example understanding the PEA of aid-ineffectiveness.

OECD DAC Network on Governance. Lessons Learned on the Use of Powers and Drivers of Change Analysis in Development Cooperation (2005)

From: http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/doc82.pdf

This review summarizes studies conducted in Bangladesh, Bolivia, Kenya and Tanzania. The review found that most of the Power and DOC studies were initiated by country office, to assist with the design of country level strategies and programs. For SIDA and DFID, country offices have taken the lead, with varying back-ups and guidance for headquarters. By contrast, the impetus for World Bank Institutional and Governance Reviews (IGRs), and for political analysis in Africa, has come from headquarters, and ownership by country office has been variable. Studies initiated in different countries have been mainly used by those who have commissioned them. The studies have helped to structure existing knowledge, provided a shared language and understanding of the impact of political and institutional context, and stimulated thinking about process of change. In some countries there is evidence of positive impact on country strategies and programs, especially at sector but the study lacks an operational impact.
In the meantime DOC is also influencing the donor policy, by emphasizing the importance of political factors shaping development outcomes. Political economy analysis can contribute positively to improved aid effectiveness and relevance highlighting the risks of alternative strategies and

investments, and demonstrating how political considerations and a more incremental approach can improve implementation.

While implementing DOC, a number of challenges and opportunities emerge:

- Having a shared understanding, overcoming differences in understandings undertaken by donor in accordance to ground realities
- Moving from high level analysis to operational strategies and programs
- Reconciling tensions between longer term political processes and incremental change with short-term spending and accountability imperatives

Word Bank. Political Economy Analysis (Sector and Project-Levels)

From:https://saeguide.worldbank.org/sites/worldbank.org.saeguide/files/documents/2_Political%20Economy%20Analysis%20(SL-PL).pdf

In this brief the nature and scope of the activities associated with PEA conducted to World Bank module is defined. Political economy is the study of both politics and economics, and specifically the interactions between them. For development outcome purposes, PE studies how power and resources amongst actors are distributed and how they are contested amongst these actors. PE analysis involves more than a review of institutional and governance arrangements. It also considers the underlying interests, incentives, rents/rent distributions, historical legacies, prior experience with reforms, social trends, and how all of these factors effect change. In a section it is mentioned PEA analysis is also carried out to assess the social responsibility of politicians and their willingness to engage or disrupt social reforms and development outcomes in a society. Thus reflecting the interrelatedness of PEA with assessing the establishment of anti-corruption reforms in a country. Social accountability is also affected by level of engagement by citizens and the civil society actors involved in policy dialogue.

Project level analysis is carried out to improve project design, sector involvement and anticipate and lessen project risk and improve the likelihood that funds can be disbursed and used optimally and that development objectives are achieved.

In this brief problem-driven approach to PE analysis looks at the problems, its institutional underpinnings, and drills into the drivers that explain why the problem is there and what can be done. The variables underpinning the problem driven approach is mentioned specifically.

Overview of Corruption in Public Sector

USAID Afghanistan (2009). Assessment of Corruption in Afghanistan

This report looks at the factors contributing corruption in Afghanistan and the roles played by government, international community and civil society. It also looks at the existing institutional framework, anti-corruption laws, regulations and policies for combatting corruption. The report also

strives to draw attention of US policy-makers to seek a focused agenda for exploring ways for future interventions of USAID in anti-corruption assistance.

Corruption was emerging a mainstream issue by the time this report was published. National Corruption Survey (NCS) conducted by Integrity Watch Afghanistan (IWA) in 2006 shows that 44 percent respondents felt corruption had "some" to "extremely high" impacts on their families, the average cost of bribes reached up to 100 USD for all families. The "Azimi" report published by Supreme Court justice which serves as the first National Anti-Corruption Strategy as the cross cutting issues paper for ANDS, explains the causes of corruption such as weak institutional capacity of public administration, weak enforcement of the laws and regulations; poor and/or non-merit based qualifications; low salaries of public servants; dysfunctional justice sector and insufficient law enforcement. A major source of corruption is related to the amounts of illicit funds flowing subject to opium industry.

While this report was being developed, corruption was not a cross-cutting issue affecting delivery of different government services. With exception to introducing measures for tackling administrative corruption, actions to tackle the grand corruption which was being accrued by political elites are not stated. Corruption was not traced specifically to relevant agencies and offices where the occurrences were witnessed. It seems that people did not anticipate the overarching issue of corruption in Afghanistan. Progress in fighting corruption was limited and less documented. The report provides a good example of early interventions by government and stakeholders in anti-corruption issues.

USAID Afghanistan (January 15, 2009 – March 1, 2009). Assessment of Corruption in Afghanistan

From: https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADO248.pdf

This report analyses and assess anti-corruption institutions and laws which were enacted prior to 2009. It specifically aims to showcase the developments in transparency, accountability efforts of the government at that stage. This report also lays the criteria for USAID's future assistance for supporting government anti-corruption with a focus on:

- Building governance capacities in transparency and accountability
- Reducing corruption where it directly impacts the people of Afghanistan
- Changing the culture of corruption that subverts governance at all levels

The report also summarizes the rationale for helping the anti-corruption strategy of the government.

The agenda for assistance of USAID is to:

- Develop technical and human capacity of HOO
- Improve sector specific priorities in each of them and strengthen their credentials.
- Educate civil society, public and the media in social audit, investigative reporting and other efforts to hold government accountable.
- Increase the enforcement abilities of the HOO in eliminating corruption
- Anti-corruption programming can be made more robust through pilot efforts to combine the approaches above in a province and as well as by integrating USAID and USG approaches across the portfolio by a full-time manager for a whole of government approach.

The report provides recommendation at stage when international aid had reached its peak and was disbursed in huge amounts to economy. The money was fed into economy despite a weak rule of law and weak oversight for spending the money. Institutional arrangement for fighting corruption was also weak and held no capacity, given the PEA of anti-corruption issues.

Integrity Watch Afghanistan (2014). Fighting corruption in Afghanistan, A focus on Asset Registration and Access to Information

From: https://iwaweb.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/2-Fighting-Corruption-in-Afghanistan-A-Focus-on-Asset-Registration-and-Access-to-Information.pdf

For reviving the fight against corruption and holding senior government officials accountable. Integrity Watch Afghanistan argues assets registration and information about earnings of government officials should be fostered. This policy brief argues that the legal framework for enforcing this mechanism is in place however certain parts of the law is contradictory. For example the constitution rules the registration before and after taking over the government position. But the anti-corruption warrants only to register "when-needed". This article thus limits the scope.

HOO despite receiving technical and capacity building assistance still lacks the ability to verify and investigate suspicious assets of officials and report to the President's office. HOO does not either make the findings public to anyone and there is no mechanism for investigating illicit enrichments.

SIGAR (Sep 2016) Corruption in Conflict: Lessons learned from the U.S experience in Afghanistan

From: https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/lessonslearned/sigar-16-58-ll.pdf

SIGAR has published the lessons learned report to promote SIGAR's mandate which is to promote economy, efficiency, effectiveness and leadership on policies to prevent and detect fraud, and abuse. The report draws on important lessons and takeaways from the US experience in corruption with Afghanistan since 2001. Report aims to provide a brief on US efforts to fight corruption and the extent to which they were effective:

1. Corruption undermined U.S mission in Afghanistan by fostering denunciation against the Afghan government and providing trajectory to material support to the insurgency.
2. US government maximized corruption by injecting billions of dollars into an already corrupt system with no oversight mechanism and flawed contracting practices.
3. U.S government sluggish efforts to recognized the scope and magnitude of this problem and how it is undermining U.S reform policy in Afghanistan
4. Despite recognition of corruption, U.S government goals and political objectives trumped against anticorruption actions.
5. No serious commitment from Afghan government and U.S counterparts in the early years to profile corruption as crosscutting issues for development of Afghanistan.

Afghanistan was a country in transition from conflict to becoming a stable government with various actors having self-interests which were in contradiction to nation priorities. When US government led the fight against insurgents, they empowered and partnered with warlords. Notwithstanding the consequences of such partnership, revealed as then warlords became politicians and engaged rampantly in corruption. By 2005 US agencies were alarmed of the importance of corruption as strategic threat in Afghanistan.

A major takeaway for US government in this report would be to make the fight against corruption a top-priority in states in transition from war. Further limit alliances with malign powerbrokers and incorporate anti-corruption issues into security and stability goals, rather than just as administrative. Corruption has increased to unprecedented levels after the Zahir Shah regime, toppling of Taliban and it is gone beyond the control of government to contain this menace. Key drivers of corruption have been continuing of insecurity, weak systems of accountability, the drug trade, a large influx of money and poor oversight of contracting and procurement related to the international presence. Alternatively, incapacity of government workers to manage many small projects resulted in contracts being sub-contracted to many individual and thus this mechanism increased the overhead cost, approximately by 20% of the budget.

The lessons report by SIGAR provides a reservoir of anti-corruption related efforts and developments from the outset of US interventions in Afghanistan. SIGAR also pinpoints at shortcomings and flaws in efforts as well as the contributing factors. Political economy of aid money disbursements and the major impediments restricting from satisfactory impact of aid is also described comprehensively. SIGAR pinpoints to limited efforts initiated by the U.S to root out corruption from the beginning, to some extent it was not considered a strategic priority because back then Afghanistan lacked everything. The international community, government and institutions had to constitute actions for building schools and helping Afghanistan in nation building. However, the ill-impacts of alliance with warlords and powerholders who were accused of violence should have never been considered. U.S government had the experience of similar expeditions in countries with similar problems and lessons learned from different parts of the world should have been reinvigorated in Afghanistan.

Integrity Watch Afghanistan, Global Witness and Transparency International (2016) Letter to President Ashraf Ghani on fighting corruption in the security sector

From:https://iwaweb.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/President-Ghani-letter.pdf

According to IWA, TI and GW corruption in security sector is vast and is destructive as it kills people and undermines growth. Up to fifty percent of some security units are reportedly composed of so-called 'ghost soldiers'. Promotions and hiring is nepotistic and some high-ranking officials are allegedly involved in narcotics, illegal mining and illegal checkpoints. The signatories suggested for fostering internal accountability, boosting external oversight and transparent bidding of contracts and hiring of personnel.

This text perfectly summarizes all the necessity measures to combat corruption. Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Defense should aggressively revise the plan in fighting corruption. International community reiterated on this need in Warsaw conference on Afghanistan. Corruption in security sector is like

putting the lives of people at stake and under threat. Government should urgently address it and secure firm intention to combat it.

MEC (Oct 2016) Impact analysis

From: http://www.mec.af/files/MEC_Impact_%20FINAL%20(English).pdf

Through this analysis MEC is summarizing the impact of different studies conducted to curb corruption and vulnerabilities inherent to the service delivery in different government institutions. Since 2010, MEC already had an impact on in four different areas which are:
- Identifying corruption vulnerabilities and pushing for amendments
- Addressing abuses based on solid research in public sector
- Drafting new laws and amendments to existing laws
- Other ways such as the influence of the MEC's prominent Committee members on anti-corruption landscape in the country.

MEC also argues their impact has been vast and includes reform to different sectors of government which includes education, prosecution, health, public finances, procurement and among others, reforms in administrative procedures of government process.

MEC (2017) Assessment of Corruption

From:http://www.mec.af/index.php/news-events/anti-corruption-news/90-mec-s-assessment-of-corruption-in-2017

MEC provides a summary of anti-corruption efforts and status of the fight against corruption by government in 2017. On the positive side, efforts such as the efficient operation of ACJC was on high note. Where several corruption related cases were tracked and it demonstrates the government commitment to demolish the culture of impunity. Further the MoD also announced dismissal of 1400 officials whereas MoI also dismissed 700 staff, of whom 12 are generals. MEC also praised the government in increasing technical capacity of National Procurement Authority (NPA) and as per report by NPA, this entity has assisted the government in saving USD 350 million. On the other hand the passage of Strategy for fight corruption was also well praised.

On the negative side, several vulnerabilities still persists which undermines governments effort in provision of services and ensuring rule of law. To start ministry of Haj, it is reported by 8 AM about USD 2 million is lost as result of graft. Further as result of political interference the development projects are not been implemented effectively. Mines and their extraction are still merged in corruption and incapacity of MoMP in this regard adds up to the menace. UNAMA in April said that man "non-merit based appointments were made possible, in part by Presidential Decree No. 82, which shifted responsibility of grade 1 and 2 senior officials from IARSC to individual ministers. Meanwhile problems in revenue collection in MoF and standards check for delivery of medicine in MoPH still persist and serious impediments are in place for these mechanism.

Looking ahead in 2018, MEC will follow the implementation of anti-corruption strategy. It will also entail monitoring of efforts in tracing the money and trail and measuring the evolution of the ACJC. Moreover, MEC will follow closely activities of different ministries.

Asia Foundation (2017) A survey of the Afghan People

From: https://asiafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/2017_AfghanSurvey_report.pdf

This survey conducted since 2004 aims at gathering people's perception of security, the economy, governance and government services, elections, media, women's issues and migration. It is a longitudinal study conducted annually. In 2017 people's perception has slightly reversed and they think Afghanistan is on the right track to reform, further still migration is an overarching issue and people will leave the country if they are given the chance to do so.

More than half (56.2%) believe the NUG is doing a good ("very good" or somewhat good"), a 7.1 increase over 2016 (49.1%), however the confidence in public institutions is still low and people majority rely on religious leaders (67.3 %) followed by media (65.7%) and community shuras/jirgas 65.7 %. Another prevailing issues of distrust on government is the corruption, it is consistent with the result of last year and 83.7 % of respondents report it a major problem. While 69.8% of respondents says corruption is a major problem in their daily life.

A survey of the Afghan people gathers the views and opinion of the citizens in regard of recent development in the country. It is an excellent study for understanding shifts in people's perception toward different pillars of government and looking ahead in the future.

Corruption in Mining sector

USIP (June 2017) Industrial-Scale Looting of Afghanistan's Mineral Resources, United States Institute of Peace Special Report

From: https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/2017-05/sr404-industrial-scale-looting-of-afghanistan-s-mineral-resources.pdf

This special report published by USIP and co-authored by William A. Byrd and Javed Noorani looks at the looting of Afghanistan's mineral resources. The report perfectly summarizes the Political Economy revolving around the Mineral reserves of Afghanistan. Focus of report is to answer the question "what needs to be done for increase government control and direct benefits towards government? And what can be done about this situation?

Minerals are openly extracted and is carried out visibly through highways out of Afghanistan. Corruption in government agencies has boomed the illegal extraction and local power holder has formed a nexus with militants to extract and transport it out of Afghanistan. Acting minister of Mines has limited authority and resources to revive the ownership of the mines and transfer benefits back to the people. Over the medium term, a political consensus is needed that part of the proceeds of mineral exploitation goes to the government budget and that ownership arrangements of mining companies are transparent. In addition, a system of monitoring flows of some of Afghan minerals outside the country – as conflict minerals should be considered. The report also states there is pervasive favoritism and corruption occurring in the bidding process and who serves to be the ultimate tender holder. Mining companies that obtain contracts tend to be owned by politically connected persons, including and in many cases

Members of Parliaments. Ownership pattern is quite opaque and still the beneficial ownership of bidders are concealed and local militants are associates of bidders.

The report also distinguishes between lootable and nonlootable resources in accordance to policy literature on resource exploitation. Richard Snyder lists four elements, the first two of which are essential, the second of which frequently occur, that make for a lootable resource:

- Low economic barriers to entry and relative ease of extraction. For example the alluvial diamonds.
- Ease of transport and easy to conceal and smuggle.
- Geographic dispersion, they are scattered in remote areas.
- The legality of some lootable resources.

Hence the report goes further to explain the nature, scope and magnitude of looting happening chromite, gold, coal, talc, nephrite, rubies and emeralds and lapis lazuli.
Afghanistan is endowed with abundant mineral resources like copper and Iron, numerous medium-sized and smaller deposits of precious gemstones such as emeralds and rubies, gold, silver, chromite, talc and nephrite. Contractors who are contracted with government is extracting minerals on industrial scale and there is not control mechanism for controlling the outflow. In the same vein government is being deprived from royalties and taxes. Surprisingly, these minerals are transported openly and it partly finances the Taliban as well.

Thenceforth in light of findings of this study, authors suggests appointing an effective leadership with the political space to carry out urgently needed reforms; temporarily stop issuance of new mining contracts until reforms are made in bidding and decreasing risks of looting; focus on improving implementation of existing contracts; enforce beneficial ownership; instituting monitoring and initiate transparency.

This study is useful for understanding Political Economy of Afghanistan's mines.

Corruption in Taxpayer's office in Afghanistan

Afghanistan Public Policy Research Organization (May 2017) Re-conceptualizing Corruption in Afghanistan: An Institution of Bad Governance

From: http://appro.org.af/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/2017-05-08-Reconceptualizing-Corruption-in-Afghanistan.pdf

APPRO provides an overview of corruption as a cross-cutting issues in Afghanistan and puts the corruption in Taxpayer's offices under the spotlight. This baseline report was carried out to assess the interactions and the level of corruption in tax assessment, payment, and collection processes at the Revenue Department of the MoF. It looks in depth into the reasons provoking tax payers to pay bribes and engage in corrupt practices in Taxpayers (NGOs and private sector) offices in Kabul, Herat, Mazar, Kandahar and Jalalabad.

The report starts by providing brief overview of Corruption as a cross-cutting issues is always conceived as a deeply engraved phenomenon in government. Further APPRO indicates 3 pillars which constitute and sustain corruption was never materialized in research conducted so far:

- Private sector and I/NGOs, willing to pay gratuities and bribes to minimized transaction costs.
- General public: somehow trying to please corrupt officials and despite legal rights submitting to corruption
- International donors: releasing staggering amounts of money into dysfunctional and weak economy that had little or no absorptive capacity.

Analysis concludes that addressing systemic corruption through increased oversight by civil society, monitoring of the aid money by international donors, administrative reform in the form of increased youth participation in government and political parties placing anti-corruption high on their agenda and election strategy.

APPRO through interactions with stakeholders in the anti-corruption agenda of Afghanistan, realized that corruption persists in taxpayer's office and yet no major initiative to curb this malpractice has been done. Therefore, the baseline research was carried forward to assess the tax clearance process in Small Taxpayers office (STO), Medium Taxpayers office (MTO) and Large Taxpayers office, and special focus was given to MTO.

Regarding the tax returns procedure, following conclusions were drawn from literature and data analysis:

- Willingness to pay bribes is to speed up the process (files fast tracking)
- Operations of Komishenkars (fixers) for clearing dues is on high demand, because many tax paying entities without power, connection or patience give in.
- Reports of intimidation and fear of taxpayers from officials was also reported.
- Over bureaucratic and unclear process for the clearance is also amongst the contributing factors.
- Methods of asking for bribes have become simultaneously more blatant and complicated
- No proper mechanism for reporting corruption and further fear of being prosecuted by corrupt officials.
- Lack of awareness of legal provisions of law remains low and many taxpaying entities do not even have copies of law on their premises.
- Lack of digitization and other measures to hold officials accountable.

Policy Papers and Strategies with a Focus on Anti-corruption

GoIRA (2017) Afghanistan's National strategy for combatting corruption

From: http://mof.gov.af/Content/files/AFG_AntiCorruptionStrategy_Eng_.pdf

The National strategy for combatting corruption was approved by High Council on rule of law and anti-corruption on 29th September. This policy document aims to demonstrate the government's firm commitment to fight corruption and revive trust on government.

The Afghanistan's anti-corruption strategy is built on the premise that the drivers of corruption are fragmentation, institutionalized capture and impunity. Through this paper, government deliberates its commitment to fight corruption with zero tolerance.

Strategy sets 5 priorities: (i) provide political leadership and empower reformers; (ii) end security sector corruption, especially in MoI, (iii) replace patronage with merit in the civil service, (iv) prosecute the corrupt; and (v) follow the money to make the funding flows more transparent, traceable, and subject to audit under a national charter of accounts. For each of the pillars, action plans have been developed and government will carry it out between 2019/20.

It is also expected to increase the accountability of government officials through enforcing compliance, supporting parliamentary leadership and creating an independent Ombudsmen. High council on rule of law will be the agency responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy and ensuring the strict neutrality and providing credible communications to public concerns will be the responsibility of the High council on law, justice and anti-corruption, with support from the civil service commission and the AGO.

MoF (Oct 2017) Afghanistan on the road to Self-Reliance

From:http://mof.gov.af/Content/files/SOM%20main%20paper%20with%20annexs%20final%203%20sep2015(1).pdf

This is a highlight of the progress made on Brussel conference commitments on fighting corruption and establishing the rule of law, by NUG to the international community.

Progress regarding AC has been the approval of Afghanistan national strategy for combatting corruption, the establishment of ACJC and the trial of 1,100 cases of corruption and repatriations of USD 1.4 million from trials.

On the service delivery side, Afghanistan has made notable strides forward and the launch of the flagship Citizen Charter National Priority Program. The program is projected to reach 2,500 communities including disbursing USD 40 million in grants to community development councils. Afghanistan's revenue also surpassed revenue target set as per the benchmarks and collection stood at USD 76.5 million.

Afghanistan has recently made public the progress made in 2017. The AC strategy was developed in consultation with civil society, however a serious impediment towards curbing corruption is the lack of availability of independent authority who can detect, prevent and send people for trials in cases of corruption. Similarly, the upsurge in revenue generation for fiscal year 2017 has been in part because of introduction of new taxes such as BRT, airplane congestion taxes and the broadening of telephone top-up cards.

Open Government Partnership Afghanistan (OGP-A) National Action Plan January 2018 – August 2019

From:https://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Afghanistan_Action-Plan_2017-2019_EN.pdf

Afghanistan's joined the Open Government Partnership initiative in December 2016, government is striving to realize commitments of administrative reform and realization of democracy in Afghanistan. Government is looking forward to end the era of closed governance and moving to open governance whereby the government is accountable to the people. Alternatively people is equally empowered to contribute to key decisions. Thus, the first OGP national action plan is prepared and under implementation through the years 2018 – 2019. At the end of this term, Afghanistan will be reviewed and assessed based on Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) of OGP. It is expected that by fulfilling these commitments government will showcase the accountability, transparency and public participation mechanisms are enhanced in public sector, and thus public service delivery is improved.

The decision making module for OGP is two pronged for National Action Plan. Based on procedures proposed by OGP secretariat and enforced by a decree through President Ashraf Ghani, there are working committees and the general assembly and then the cabinet who will endorse the NAP through a resolution. The OGP Multi-stakeholder forum which is composed of state and non-state has actors from government, civil society and the private sector. They have the ultimate duty to finalize the NAP commitments before it is approved by the cabinet. CSOs were selected through a democratic process by a selection committee. The selection committee were elected by civil society representative in an event held in the month of July.

Pursuant to several consultation meeting and review by technical committees. The cabinet approved 11 commitments for OGP-A and is to be implemented through years 2018 – 2019. All the commitments have relevance to one or several of the areas prioritized by OGP.
Commitments:

1. Revising and implementing the Mechanism of Public Partnership in Inspection process
2. Amendment of the Law on Processing, Publishing and Enforcing Legislative Documents
3. Establishing special courts to address Violence against women crimes in 12 provinces of the country
4. Developing Public-Police Partnership Councils
5. Registering, Publishing and Reviewing Assets of 100 High-ranking government officials
6. Developing and Implementing a scheme for establishing Health service Accreditation Entity in Afghanistan
7. Developing Urban Improvement and Rehabilitation National Policy
8. Developing and approving a Protection Policy for Women under Conflict and Emergency situations
9. Developing and Implementing Civil Society Monitoring Plan for Transparency and Quality of Education and Higher education
10. Preparing, approving and Implementing the Plan for Establishment of Joint Committee of State agencies and civil society for overseeing the implementation of Anti-corruption strategy
11. Evaluation of information units, preparing Plan to strengthen the Information Mechanism in 60 governmental agencies and its implementation.

MoPH. Anti-corruption Strategy 2017-2020, laying the foundations for zero tolerance of corruption in the health sector

From:http://moph.gov.af/Content/Media/Documents/MoPHAnti-CorruptionStrategy2017-2020-finalJune2017882017165850738553325325.pdf

This document secures MoPH's commitment to tackle corruption perpetuated in different levels of this ministry. MoPH has further established a committee to oversee the implementation of this strategy composed of external stakeholders. This MoPH strategy is based on four major elements of fighting corruption through: increasing regulation, prevention, prosecution and public engagement. Public engagement component is more aimed at empowering the public to oversee the health service delivery and foster community based monitoring of health services.

Corruption risks identified in this document are 1) health regulatory management, 2) delivery of health services, 3) product distribution and storage, 4) marketing of health products, 5) procurement and 6) financial and workforce management. By pointing to these risks, MoPH will seek to provide mitigating measures such as; ensuring staff and health practitioners adhere to utmost high standards of integrity and endorse good governance; health service providers and managers deliver high quality services to patients in accordance with established standards and good practices; ensure active oversight and monitoring by Health Shuras; civil society organizations help raise awareness about standards and accountability mechanisms for beneficiaries; law enforcement agencies and the role they play for sanction and prosecution; health product providers conduct their business with a high standard of integrity.

Third Annual European Union Anti-corruption conference in Afghanistan (May 2017). Intensifying the Fight against corruption in Afghanistan, Post conference report,

From:https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/20170510_post_eu_anti-corruption_conferecen_report.pdf

On 8 May, the anti-corruption conference held in Presidential palace was held to strengthen the fight against corruption and reaffirm the government's commitment. President Ashraf Ghani inaugurating the conference, underlined "the fight against corruption, does not only require courage, but also the know how to analyze the problem and the way to deal it." President's Ghani's focus was on having a quality strategy to lead this work, because a weak strategy itself yields corruption.

A Major takeaway from President Ghani's speech: Deepening and broadening of reforms in seven areas: institutional arrangements to fight corruption; transparency and openness in security sector; ensuring the integrity and independence of justice sector; transparency and oversight of the extractive sector; customs taxes and business environment; procurement transparency and improved civil society participation in governance and access to media. Among other points he stressed on increasing ministries revenues and accountability of NGOs.

Anti-Corruption Institutions in Afghanistan

4.2: Afghanistan's Anti-corruption Policy and Legal Framework Instruments and agencies

This chapter summarizes the legal and policy framework of Afghanistan's AC efforts outlined in Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF), National Priority Programs (NPP),

Afghan Compact and National Transparency and Accountability program. Following the London Conference 2006 on Afghanistan and the development of Afghanistan Compact; certain benchmarks were agreed by international community and Afghanistan to curb recent developments in the persistence of corruption. UNCAC to be ratified and adopted by 2006 and monitoring mechanism to be constituted by the end of 2008. Following this, Afghanistan National Development Strategy was developed and corruption as one of the cross-cutting themes in this national policy document. Anti-corruption agencies: many committees, commissions and institutions has been established to address the growing trend to fight corruption in Afghanistan. High office of oversight was established to oversee the implementation of Anti-corruption administrative corruption strategy law, HOO's duties are very broad and among other involve advice to president, conducting research, overseeing the implementation of ACPs and ensuring the compliance of rule of laws.

Transparency International (2017). Bridging the gaps: Enhancing the effectiveness of Afghanistan's anti-corruption agencies

From: https://www.transparency.org/whatwedo/publication/bridging_the_gaps_enhancing_the_effectiveness_of_afghanistans_anti_corrupti

This report is a holistic explanation of implications of Anti-corruption Agencies and compares different aspects of the current agencies with similar models in Asia. It was National Unity Government's commitment in London Conference however the government abstains from implementing it, given that such institution is against the articles of Constitution of Afghanistan. But for increasing of PEA on anti-corruption issues, analyzing the effectiveness of independent ACAs is a good source.

Transparency International analyzed Afghanistan's current Anti-Corruption Agencies (ACA) system and proposes 3 reform models that could lead to a more effective, independent and sustainable ACA system:

Option 1: Establish a new independent ACA to replace all ACAs: this option is backed more in favor of the success of this model in other countries who submerged in corruption. In the longer term this option will be the strongest model as it will have all the duties of investigating, preventing and corruption education.

Option 2: set up a two agency models through consolidating the current ACAs under the Anti-corruption Justice center and the High office of oversight and anti-corruption (HOOAC) under new name.

Option 3: to some extent the weaker model, maintain the current multiple agencies with reforms to the current ACAs. Reform to current ACJC and rebranding the HOOAC with increased coordination and sustaining of relationships with High Council of Governance and Rule of Law.

Further this report also proposes the 3 models should be equipped with strong legislative framework in the shape of anti-corruption law which should include considerations of independence especially in removal and appointments of staff and senior officials. They should be staffed, budgeted and provided with resources appropriately.

This report also notes the major duties of ACAs in different countries and based on comparative study in 14 countries found that "ACAs commonly perform these functions: investigation, prosecution; education

and awareness raising; prevention and coordination. Whereas investigation is the most important function.

Limitations of Afghanistan's ACAs: Based on empirical evidence drawn from the Philippines who had a similar setup ACAs, Afghanistan current system of addressing the occurrence of corruption faces similar challenges. First, too many bodies with mandate for prevention of corruption however, in practice they had less coordination and to a major part competed in getting recognition and sometimes turf wars.

Reports on Corruption Risk Assessments in Public Sector

MEC (Feb 2017). Monitoring of Ministry Anti-corruption Laws (MCIT)

From:http://mec.af/files/02_02_2017_MOCIT_VCA__Full_Report_English.pdf

In this report MEC strives to assess the ministry level anti-corruption plans developed to address the areas which are vulnerable to corruption and the scope of safeguards. MEC concludes that MCIT is so far almost failing entirely to implement its AC Plan. Through this assessment MEC reviewed the framework by which the User Fee tax is managed and collected and found out that still there is no appropriate mechanism to manage it. Further there is also overlapping of duties amongst the relevant ministries in this regard. The measures to enhance electronic processing of government procedures has also not being implemented and MCIT has gone beyond the prescribed timeline for this activity. The Tashkeel of MCIT is also not reformed and there is no proper M&E in place till date.
MEC argues the main reason behind the failure in implementation of AC-Plan is the lack of genuine commitment among top leadership. Followed by the complex Tashkeel of MCIT and lack of interest in reforming their Tashkeel. To address the transparency aspect, still the MCIT has not pursued measures to adopt the RTDMS (real time data management system) for tracking of User card fees and establishment of Fraud Management systems to bring transparency in collection and increment of revenues. The report would have been even better if they would have stated those relevant ministries who are reluctant to support MCIT in initiating FDMS and why there is no political will from other ministries for the proper implementation of ACP.

Vulnerability to Corruption in the Afghan Ministry of Public Health, Third Quarterly report, April 2017

From:http://moph.gov.af/Content/files/MEC_2017_05_09_moph_3nd__followup_english.pdf

Summary of findings:

- Significant progress was noted in National Medical and Health product regulatory authority (NMHRA), which has replaced and superseded the General directorate of Pharmacy.
- New terms of reference is proposed for health Shuras to increase MoPH's accountability to the community and BPHS and EPHS implementers on a facility by facility basis. Further WB support is also sought for increased assistance.
- Third significant development in advancement of formal accreditation systems for health sector.

- Fourth, significant improvement was also encountered in complains handling of different procedures.
- Fifth: all policies were translated into local languages as well, following the recommendations proposed in the earlier report

This report would have been even better if the follow-up of the implementation of Citizen Charter national priority program had been undertaken as well. Citizen Charter is the largest program and a major portion of the Afghan national budget is allocated, expenses on health sector is a major aspect of this program. Under the citizen charter program, every community will be entitled to a basic package of health services provided based on the proposals of communities. Further, the basic package of health services and essential package of health which is allocated to rural areas has not been so far researched and scrutinized. Cross sectoral outreach of health services was also not covered. To sum up it is a good source for writing on anti-corruption issues and developments in health sector.

Surveys on Public Service Delivery

USAID & DI. A Rapid Assessment of Nangarhar Population Registration Department (PRD)

This report provides a summary of findings of field assessment of population registration department of Nangarhar. This province is the third most populated province in Afghanistan and the most populated amongst eastern provinces. There is also widespread returnees from Pakistan with an estimated figure of 118,658 returnees and the PRD receiving 400-750 applicants on daily basis for issuance of Tazkira. The processes are also unnecessarily length and frustrating. Therefore, DI will work to initiate tasks in reforming the procedures and simplifying the steps needed to obtain a Tazkira.

Such initiatives undertaken by DI proved to be essential and provided value for endeavor. Currently, applicants referring to PRD face limited delays and constraints in obtaining or reforming the procedures. It would have been prudent if monitoring mechanism could be in-place to increase efficacy of the endeavor. Because as is the norm in public entities they gradually loose the effectiveness.

USAID & DI. A Rapid Assessment of Service Delivery Improvement Opportunities in Afghan Public Sector Organizations

This assessment provides a list of service delivery organizations and individual services that are most favorable for improvement within a short timeframe based on the criteria of inclusion that this research has developed. These criteria are: the importance of the service, volume of clients served, current scope and potential for improvement, impact of service improvement on reduction of petty corruption and increase in government revenues, existence of political will for reforms and agents of change who can own, catalyze and lead reforms, alignment with Government of Afghanistan's Public Administration Reforms priorities, and avoidance of overlap with similar initiatives implemented by other organizations. In this assessment 14 public services have been identified based on the selection criteria explained above and for each of the identified services a summary of evaluation has been provided.

USAID & DI (May 2017). Customer Feedback Survey at Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat (DABS)

This report provides an assessment of the DABS's national level call centers and customer service delivery in Kabul. The findings of this report shows despite of broad-based customer service framework, citizens often find it difficult to access necessary information on some important service delivery matters on time. Survey data shows that among all current customer tools the call center is the most helpful one among customers. Regarding the quality of the services the customer service centers provide there are some limitation in information dissemination, feedback collection and customer support functions.

USAID & DI (Sep 2016) Baseline Client Satisfaction and feedback survey

The project is aimed at improving provision of basic government services and bolstering governmental and civic mechanisms of oversight and accountability. This baseline survey provides an in-depth understanding and perspectives of Afghan Citizens as business clients and end-users of the target services. In return, the survey shall also provide the rationale for programming and identification of service improvement goals and solutions. Respondents are from Population registration department and small businesses in Kabul. This report also thoroughly explores the different vulnerabilities which are in the system and the clients should proceed to go through these burdens.

Overall clients when referring to PRD and Municipality for acquiring services complain from pervasive corruption happening in the respective office. The level of satisfaction in the PRD is 42% while 58% stated they are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the overall quality of the services. When asked how frustrating their experience over the course of service delivery has been, 83% of clients reported the process has been somewhat or very frustrating.

This survey can help us in increasing efficacy in service delivery and the vulnerabilities which may block from effective service delivery.

USAID. Afghanistan Sector Accomplishments: 2015-2016

From:https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1871/USAID%20Afghanistan%20Sector%20Accomplishments.pdf

This report summarizes USAID's sector accomplishments and the outcome of assistance to each sector; agriculture, economic growth, infrastructure, democracy and governance, health, education and gender. USAID supported to enhance agriculture by assisting households and farmers in growing high-value crops and providing water to more than 38,000 hectares of farmland. USAID's assistance in economic growth helped Afghanistan gain accession to world trade organization, provided loans to 5,978 Afghan enterprises and electronic payment system of customs duties. Further assistance were contemplated on expanding the trade and increasing opportunities for jobseekers. USAID's assistance in infrastructure was concentrated on strengthening the capacity of DABs and increasing the boosting electricity generation in Afghanistan. In democracy and governance, USAID is supporting MEC, providing technical support to High Council for Rule of Law and Anti-corruption to assist five revenue generating ministries to develop anti-corruption plan. USAID is also helping the government in creating policies for youth, peace and civil society regional debates.

PEA of Service Delivery in Afghanistan

USAID & DI, Political Economy Analysis of Afghanistan's Service Delivery Capacity

This PEA is undertaken for analyzing the processes affecting the service delivery reforms in Afghanistan. It does not include the deeper process-focused analysis of particular services. Report summarizes the significant investment USAID and other donors have made in promoting good governance and combatting corruption. For enhancing the virtuous circle, USAID has commissioned this political economy analysis to understand the constraints and current opening to improve the capacity for Afghan government entities to deliver services and engage citizens.

Afghanistan's anti-corruption efforts start as early as 2004 when President Karzai signed the UNCAC. Also the same year, the law on the Campaign Against bribery and administrative corruption was enacted and created the General Administration of Anti-bribery and Corruption (GAAC). GAAC's legitimacy and capacity was majorly under question, because it was established before the constitution and at time where no benchmarks were set for spotting integrity and transparency of institutions. At that time no independent organizations to scrutinize the fight against corruption was established. Tensions were also in place with the Attorney general over investigative powers and confusion about GAAC's role.

At the July 2012 Tokyo government was accused of not having a comprehensive approach to fight corruption. Therefore President Karzai issued Presidential Decree 45, shortly thereafter, intending to convey government was indeed serious. Decree direct 33 government entities to develop strategies and plans to deal with corruption. Despite all the efforts Afghanistan is still deeply immersed in administrative and political corruption, access to information is still limited and Afghanistan is 4th amongst the most corrupt countries in the world.

This report also points out at the legacy institutions created, for example the HOO, MEC, SAO and the AGO and their lack of coordination. Further bribe seeking and bribe taking is also evident in SAO and AGO. Patronage networks and links are pervasive in different government institutions. Although reforms are happening to make the process more competitive. There is substantial overlap of duties amongst ministries and lack of coordination between.

Reforms to institute fighting corruption in government
Notable improvement includes digitization of certain processes such as the passport and the consolidation of the Procurement policy unit of MoF and the MoF contacts department under the National Procurement Authority. There is also self-starter reform success. Establishment of High Council on rule of law and anti-corruption inside the AOP. Successor to the National Solidarity Program is the citizen charter program which will collaborate with community development councils in the planning, implementation and oversight of development projects in their communities.

Key factors affecting government service delivery
Political authority: where the power lies, how it is exercised, and what concerns those who possess it. The power to affect the process of changing how services delivered to the public may, or may not, rest conclusively with the most senior political figure, in this case President Ghani.
Analysis of Afghanistan's service delivery problems identified two distinct pockets of political interest in reform. At the very top President Ghani, Vice President Danish and their senior advisors – share an

urgent understanding of the problem. Senior level government officials in ministries were also found interested in reform but lacking direction. As both groups are collated and interested, they should be involved directly and consistently in the process of fostering planned service delivery reforms
Focus on Problems

Independent agency with limited focus on investigating allegations of corrupt behavior, records and publicizes the assets of government officials, and engages the public, then the incidence of corrupt behavior will be minimized. By identifying a limited number of government-provided services and focusing on identifiable, observable problems, defining assistance outcomes and measuring progress toward them is easier.

DI and USAID (May 2017). Socioeconomic impact of Assessment of Street Vending in Municipal district 12 of Kabul City, Report of findings

Study is aimed at (a) understanding the overall situation of street vending in District 12 of Kabul city and (b) exploring possible measures to regulate and organize street vending. The report is a good source to look at the vast amount of informal sector operating in Kabul and which can be the potential source of revenue for government. Currently, the government is struggling to keep pace with the benchmarks set for increasing government revenue. The study proposes Afghanistan-specific solutions and international best practices could be used to regulate street vending and thus turn a potentially damaging trade into dynamic, productive business.

Street vending is part of the informal sector and plays a vital role for financing the daily livelihoods of over a million Afghans in Kabul. The functions and services which they provide are diverse; some display goods, haircuts, shoe polishing and repairing, mobile screen cleaning etc. there are more half a million street vendors in Kabul. Displacement, weak or no regulation for operating, low start-up cost and the ability to be mobile is among the reason for the rapid rise of street vending in Kabul. Kabul Municipality is planning to standardize and customize street vending and thus mitigate its socio-economic impacts. Among the challenges are the harassment by police, unpleasant weather conditions and suffering from lack of basic infrastructure such as urban amenities and storage space.

Standardizing and regulating the street vending is a good idea to increase the receipts of licit money to economy. On the other hand, reduce the illicit demands and extortion of money from police or union of people with Disability (UPD) and Municipality Staff. Report states in MD 12 alone the total sales are around 1,477,130 AFN (22,000 USD) and if a fixed amount of tax or rent is levied by government, then government can provide them dedicated space and better organize trade.

Mitigating Measures for Corruption-related Issues

Eli Berman, Michael Callen, Luke N.Condra , Mitch Downey, Tarek Ghani and Mohammad Isaqzadeh (June 2017) Community Monitors vs. Leakage: Experimental Evidence from Afghanistan

From:https://lukecondra.files.wordpress.com/2017/07/iwa_14june2017.pdf

This study provides an overview of community based initiative driven in part to fight corruption. It briefs the reader with the importance of empowering people and their engagement in monitoring of delivery of government services in their localities. The study puts special focus on the outcome of training communities to oversee the process of road construction. The monitors who are unanimously selected by communities acquire training and following training, start monitoring. The study finds that trained monitors cause dramatic improvements in road quality, producing roads that are better able to endure difficult Afghan winters. Evidence gathered by this study states; results are not tangible until the 4 years after project is finished, further the road which is built will be of better quality not only in the locality of the monitors but along different villages throughout. IWA has been conducting the community based monitoring of infrastructure projects since 2007 and they have trained more than 1700 people in this regard to actively observe the construction sites. The volunteers acquire training in technical aspects of infrastructure and basic accounting skills to oversee the implementation of projects in their localities. In addition to training, IWA also establishes the semi-formal accountability mechanisms called Provincial monitoring boards, which include representatives from the MRRD, Provincial councils, IWA trained monitors, construction contractors and sometimes aid agencies. Several aspects and observations of construction related themes are discussed in these meetings.

Counter Part International (2013). Afghanistan Civil Society Assessment, Counterpart International's Initiative to promote Afghan Civil Society (I-PACS)

From: http://www.langerresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/I-PACS_II_Report_Web_Final.pdf

Counterpart International conducted a thorough assessment of challenges and ways forward facing Afghan CSOs. They also diagnosed in-depth the different skills and capacities which the CSOs are equipped with and how these credentials can be utilized further in the future. A major takeaway from this report is in spite of so many Afghan CSOs active, still few are engaged and working in governance related issues such as Fiscal transparency, Anti-corruption, accountability and rule of law. But there are several CSOs working to increase public participation and citizen empowerment, which on a positive note is a major development.

This program is initiated to enhance the capacity of the Afghan Civil Society to address community problems. The 2013 assessment was carried out to provide an overview of the current condition of Afghan CSOs and to examine changes in experiences, performance and capacity. Afghan CSOs are more functional and normally operate in 7 different areas relevant to their mandate to some extent, similar survey in 2010 found CSOs doing 4 activities. In large, CSOs operate in gender, civic participation, education and multiple vital social issues. The reach of CSOs has become widespread as well, some report to benefit 1000 or more as result of their activities. However, securing funding and lack of access to adequate resources is a constraint for their progress. 8 in 10 CSOs are worried about reduced international funding; 62 percent see lack of funding as the greatest challenge for the sector in the decade ahead.

MEC (July 2016 – November 2018). Strategic Plan (Short version)

From:http://www.mec.af/files/15_10_2016_MEC_Strategy_Short_Version_English.pdf

MEC is planning to strategically get involved with public and increase awareness as well as educate civil servants in corruption related issues. The profile for anti-corruption intervention is to lead (1) informed citizen pressure and anger towards corruption, (2) modernization of government processes and (3) human agency.

MEC's new strategy will be aligned on focusing efforts on other initiatives that are also supporting these three drivers of change. In addition MEC will broaden their scope by working at two technical levels; in-depth studies in a limited number of areas and smaller across range of institutions. Further enhanced learnings and efficiently utilizing the building out MEC's current capacities.

For doing in-depth studies, they have to prioritize, following criteria are considered:

1. Government entities who have strong commitment to reform
2. MEC will prioritize those government entities who provide government services, revenue generating or of vital importance in the fight against corruption (approach reform minded individuals and ministries)
3. Sustainability of the research and further assistance provided from donor community.

The strategy is compiled and have basic milestone in place to meet the drivers of change. Further the implementation of these strategies will be managed overtime. For reaching out the public, MEC will also work on initiating a proper communications and advocacy strategy. For our research study, it can provide us with notion of how MEC is planning to proceed with examining government entities and increasing public outreach.

UNAMA (May 2018). Afghanistan's fight against corruption: from strategies to implementation

From:
https://unama.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/afghanistans_fight_against_corruption_from_strategies_to_implementation-14_may_2018.pdf

The National Unity Government put fighting corruption high on the agenda. Notable developments included the government's anti-corruption strategy, the adoption and enforcement of the new Penal Code, the enhancement of the activities and outputs of the High Council for Rule of Law and Anti-corruption and the prosecution of the corrupt in the ACJC. President accompanied by Chief executive are committed to push government entities in the introduction of transparent measures in recruitment, stronger oversight of public procurement and more transparent national budget developed by Ministry of Finance. In addition the government showcased commitment by introducing the new penal code for prosecute corruption offences in line with United Nation's Convention against Corruption (UNCAC). the national assembly is entrenched in corrupt practices. In 2017 and early 2018 there were several allegations of corruptions against MPs but hardly any of them were investigated or prosecuted. Further the National Assembly does not have any anti-corruption plan in place and no accountability, transparency measures in place.

Danish Institute for International Studies (Feb 2018). Fighting Military Corruption in Fragile States

From:https://www.diis.dk/en/research/fighting-military-corruption-in-fragile-states

In this brief the authors defines the corruption in security sector as acute and chronic, military especially the army and the police tends to involve substantial financial aid and material resources and it is the sector which involves the action of subduing insurgents/offenders and ensuring the rule of law. In urgency of equipping personnel with short-term capacity related to combatting insurgents, however the environment where they operate is highly corrupt, and trainings will not produce effective national security forces. Studies indicate that anti-corruption measures in security sector should not be viewed as merely technical and procedural but rather an adaptive challenge which needs to be addressed between the political, military and economic structures in the country. The report recommends baby steps should be taken to start with a department for instance the procurement and looking forward at least a joint monitoring committee or related platforms from different countries could be explored as sources of inspiration for Afghanistan. On the other front, this requires strong political leadership and as well as needing donor governments prioritizing the fight against corruption.

CMI & U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre (June 2017). Robustness and vulnerabilities to corruption in Denmark's aid funding modalities

From:https://www.cmi.no/publications/file/6271-robustness-and-vulnerabilities-to-corruption-in.pdf

Study was carried out to examine the vulnerabilities in Denmark's aid modalities directed to Afghanistan and fragile states; the task is also to look at the corruption risk according to the four aid modalities that Denmark applies in Afghanistan; being multilateral programming, multilateral trust-funds, delegated cooperation and direct funding for national bodies and non-governmental organizations. Denmark's financial assistance was supporting 50 different projects in Afghanistan and it was highly fragmented. Thus, making the oversight and management complicated and costly. Denmark restructured its development cooperation with its "Afghanistan Country Program (ACP) 2014 – 2018. It was based on 3 thematic programs, Democracy and Human Rights; Education and Growth and Employment.

Two reflections from Denmark's aid assistance and the organizations leading the initiatives. (1) Reluctance by organizations to be fully transparent to share concerns over possible corruption or identified malpractices. (2) comprehensive and thorough assessment of corruption risks and examination of leakages is not commissioned. The general consensus is that reducing corruption will require a combination of short term targeted efforts on the side of the donors and long term and systematic strengthening of government functions and capacities. Aid effectiveness can be fostered through adopting to mitigating best practices like recruitment of staff through the civil service commission on the premise that it is transparent and qualified staff are recruited. Further the internal risk management and corruption assessment mechanism within an organizations should be established and boosted. This entails evaluations, audits, appraisals and increase oversight from independent bodies.

U4 Brief (May 2017). Bespoke monitoring and evaluation of anti-corruption agencies

From:https://www.u4.no/publications/bespoke-monitoring-and-evaluation-of-anti-corruption-agencies.pdf

Anti-corruption agencies (ACA) is established to continue the fight against corruption by mainstreaming the fight through preventative and punitive measure. ACAs are often seen as a last resort to reduce corruption, but these unrealistic ways have quickly given way to perceptions of failure when the institutions have not delivered the hoped-for results. This brief draws on lessons on whether ACAs are good or bad, but on why to what extent and in which contexts they do or do not deliver results. A major takeaway from this brief is that ACAs require built-in Monitoring and Evaluations systems; the M&E unit, together with senior management should ensure that all agreed upon actions are tracked to ensure accountability for their implementation. M&E systems are important to the work of ACAs for ensuring transparency i.e. visibility and outreach are important in attracting public support. Accountability i.e. ACAs are publicly funded bodies and therefore they need to report on their activities to the public and improving policy through indications of whether a policy option is working as intended by detecting operating risks and problems.

Arne Strand, Kaja Borchgrevink and Kristian Berg Harpviken . Afghanistan: A political Economy Analysis

From:
https://brage.bibsys.no/xmlui/bitstream/handle/11250/2470515/NUPI_rapport_Afghanistan_Strand_Borchgrevink_BergHarpviken.pdf?sequence=2

The report summarizes findings from study of political economy landscape of Afghanistan. It focuses on the interactions and interdependency between different Afghan groups and individuals, the licit and illicit economy, the international community, neighbouring countries and interdependency are used to maintain and challenge power through a constant bargaining process. Post 2001, state building in Afghanistan has been hampered by the thirst and greed of powerholders to enrich themselves through the development aid. What began as a radical state-building and democratizations projects was captured by the elites and patronage networks entrusted by the international community to govern and develop the new state.

Afghanistan witnessed vibrant progress and 9 percent GDP growth rate, however the rate plummeted with the withdrawal of US troops after 2014. Although the economy shows signs of progress but the key factors influencing the Afghan economy are 1) past and on-going conflicts 2) dependency on international aid, 3) illicit economy operating within the licit and 4) the dependence on as a land-locked country. Analysis shows that the formal and informal economy is interwoven and delineating them is a formidable task for government and international community. Aid channeled to Afghanistan throughout the past 15 years fueled corruption and contributed to the development of war-aid economy in Afghanistan.

SIGAR (2018). Supplement to SIGAR's Quarterly Report to the United States Congress

From:https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2018-04-30qr-supplement.pdf

On May 10, 2018, United States Forces-Afghanistan (USFOR-A) informed SIGAR that the figures they had previously provided to SIGAR for the assigned (actual) force strength of the Afghanistan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) for its quarterly report published on April 30 were incorrect. The error in their original figures had been mostly due to their failure to account for the transfer of most of the Afghan Border Force (ABF), previously an Afghan National Police (ANP) from the ANP to the Afghan National Army (ANA).

SIGAR. Stabilization: Lessons from the U.S. Experience in Afghanistan

From: https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/lessonslearned/SIGAR-18-48-LL.pdf

US government in 2017 defined stabilization as "A political endeavor involving civilian-military process to create conditions where locally legitimate authorities and systems can peaceably manage conflict and prevent a resurgence of violence".

SIGAR claims that the stabilization efforts in Afghanistan were not tailored according to the needs and priorities of the contested areas. As a result, security forces post 2014 could not compete with a resurgent Taliban. Stabilization efforts were slow because the US government overestimated its ability to build and reform institutions in Afghanistan. "The large sums of stabilizations dollars the United States devoted to Afghanistan in search of quick gains often exacerbated conflicts, enabled corruption, and bolstered support for insurgents. It was partly because coalition forces prioritized the most dangerous districts first, thus they continuously struggled to clear them of insurgents. Monitoring and evaluation for stabilizations programs were generally poor and success in stabilized areas lasted only until the coalition left the district. But the efforts in districts controlled by government were more successful. SIGAR also suggests there was lack of political will in supporting the stabilization efforts in Afghanistan and increase funding for boosting stabilization efforts could not resolve the problem. Stabilizing efforts should be rigorously monitored and evaluated.

To conclude US efforts between 2001 and 2017 to stabilize insecure and contested areas in Afghanistan mostly failed because the government was far too quickly spending way too far in a failed economy which was fragile and unprepared to absorb. USAID, were compelled to program in these fiercely contested areas that were not ready for stabilizing programming. As a result, power brokers and predatory government officials with access to coalition projects became kings with patronage to sell and stabilization projects sometimes created or reinvigorated conflicts between and among communities. By the time coalition forces left Afghan forces and civil servants could not compete with the threats of Taliban.

Stabilization: Lessons from the U.S Experience in Afghanistan, Remarks of John F. Sopko to Brookings Institution (May 24, 2018)

From:https://www.brookings.edu/events/stabilization-lessons-from-the-u-s-experience-in-afghanistan/

Stabilization efforts were undertaken by US government to build sufficient governance to keep insurgents from returning and convincing the population that government rule is preferable to insurgent life. Since the efforts were undertaken in areas which vulnerable and the efficacy of the expeditions were hindered by less stringent measures to sustain the stability. Insurgency increased after the

Challenges posed by different actors in stabilization efforts:

Civilian Military Tensions in Washington between Department of Defense and USAID as a result of differences in delivering and coordinating at ground. Often an area was cleared by DOD and deemed eligible for USAID to start stabilization programming. However, clear meant something different to DOD than to USAID. A senior USAID official stated "It was like paving a road in an unsecure area". Further, USAID implemented all types of infrastructure projects under the guidance of military code of clear-hold-build protocol, even when USAID knew the sequencing was inappropriate and programs would be ineffective. As a result USAID under pressure from military built schools where they could not be monitored, the government could not maintain and staff them.

Civilian Personnel Issues State and USAID – the two agencies that provided the most personnel for the civilian surge did not have sufficient staffing, especially built-in staff redundancy, to enable rapid mobilization to the field. As a result temporary staff were hired and pulled from other assignments. Doing so civilian personnel numbers tripled and astoundingly by 2011 more than 20 percent of all USAID's worldwide staff were in Afghanistan. Unfortunately hires proved to be inefficient and non-productive, as a few of them had expertise and an oversight authority.

John F. Sopko suggested that the US government must improve its ability to prepare for, design, execute, monitor, and evaluate stabilization missions. Our research also found that implementing smaller projects helped programs avoid some of the common pitfalls working in the midst of counterinsurgency. Further according to a 2010 U.S. Embassy assessment, it was also easier to ensure community buy-in and ownership of small-scale infrastructure projects than it was for large ones.