



Report  
The 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference of COAR  
**2019**

**COAR**  
(Citizens' Organaization for Advocacy and Resilience)



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## **Introduction**

### **COAR at the services of people for 30 years:**

By the end of 2019, COAR completed a total of 30 years serving its people through humanitarian and Development program, and celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in a conference.

Besides remembering and appreciating the humanitarian contributions of COAR, the conference also focused on previous experiences, lessons learnt, and discussing the Way forward. the main objective of the workshop was to discuss localization of Humanitarian Aid and the celebration of the International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development in Afghanistan. the representatives of private sector, government, and civil society were invited to analyze and discuss the aforementioned topics and establish close coordination between all the three sectors.

NGOs community should be supported by the private sector and Government to reach to the Affected People in the country .

As a promising and committed national Non-Governmental organization, COAR took this measure for the first time. all the participants emphasized on the perusing and Continuation of the process in future as well.

COAR, being one of the 10 top national NGOs, has spent 30 years at serving the people of Afghanistan. The organization was established in 1989 by a number of knowledgeable and intellectual Afghans in Peshawar while several fractions in Kabul continued to shed blood of the Afghan people, no infrastructure left, and nobody dared to bring a change or to help the people in need. It was due to this conflict and crisis that COAR and other similar organizations started to operate on the other side of the Durand line and extended a helping hand and sympathy to the people in need.



COAR started its humanitarian journey with seed funding of \$1000 from Norwegian Afghan Committee (NAC), and gradually continued to expand its humanitarian assistance in various sectors such as:

Livelihood, Education, health, WASH and irrigation Engineering, working with refugees, Returnees and IDPs based on the urgent needs ,recently started advocacy related activities as well .

COAR implemented agriculture and livestock projects and relevant research, constructed tens of schools and other construction projects, delivered trainings to school teachers on technical topics and teaching methodology, trained school principals and teachers on management, installed hundreds of hand water pumps to potable water wells, provided emergency relief to thousands of destitute families. COAR established a higher education institute called 'Sharq Institute of Higher Education', founded Gorbati Radio & Television Network,

conducted public awareness sessions on various matters, particularly regarding natural disasters and mitigation, made remarkable efforts in the developing Afghan capacities, provided for the basic needs of refugee returnees, and took notable steps in reducing poverty. The organization abided by its unwavering commitment through difficult and crisis-like times and continued to serve the Afghan people for 30 years.

Hence, previously known as 'Coordination of Afghan Relief', and today known as 'Citizen Organization for Advocacy and Resilience' (COAR) Will continue to remain firmly committed and Will continue to deliver humanitarian assistance in cooperation and coordination of its national and international partners to have prosperous & self-sufficient society here in Afghanistan.

Regards,

30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration  
Conference  
Public Relations Committee

## **Key Objectives of the Conference**

Having completed a total of 30 years of serving the people by end of 2019. in honor of celebrating its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, COAR also celebrated the International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development and indulged in detailed discussions with the following objectives:

- Assessing 30 year long History and defining a clear path for the future;
- After serving at national level for 30 years, making preparations for internationalization;
- Inspiring and encouraging national organizations towards self-sufficiency;
- Establishing and strengthening coordination between the private sector, Government organizations and civil society;
- Calling for and acquiring the support of the private sector for the Humanitarian organizations
- Localization of Humanitarian Aid

## **Opening Speech**

**Founder and Senior Advisor of COAR Dr. Mohammad Naeem Salimee:**

Dr. Salimee said the opening remarks and welcomed all the participants, and as the founder of the organization thanked all the employees, the CEO and board members. He added that the celebration of the International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development was a good omen and that he feels immensely proud having Committed team and spent the past 30 years of his life working for the war-afflicted people of Afghanistan through COAR.

Dr.Salimee said, "My personal and professional life has changed on multiple fronts since the day when I started my humanitarian journey with my COAR colleagues. I have learned important lessons, and gained numerous experiences – we, the COAR family, have obtained the membership of various national and



international aid and humanitarian networks, and all this pride comes as a result of the steadfast commitment and support of all the colleagues. I am proud and I strongly believe that every bead of perspiration that trickled down on the foreheads of COAR employees helped create a breath of relief for affected people of country. These are the heroes who have honest and public service in their blood and they will be rewarded for their services in this life and the life after.

"I believe and I have experienced that if you have invested in the hearts of the needy people by serving them honestly and selflessly, you will be successful, prosperous and content in life.

"Established on the other side of the Durand line 30 years ago, the organization worked to change the lives of Afghan Refugees on the other side of the line, and in the meantime supported the IDPs on this side of the line at a time when Afghanistan was a no-man's land

and the civil war was raging and all the humanitarian aid from the international community, which was aimed to help the needy, to some extent was misused for political gains by the political fractions.

"I very well remember the day when I travelled from Peshawer to Ghazni Province for some humanitarian assistance and I was stuck at the life-threatening chaos created by the Seven fractions operating in those days in Ghazni. As time elapsed, due to the selfless efforts made by COAR and like-minded organizations, most of humanitarian aid was transparently channeled to the people in need and international humanitarian aid no longer fell into the hands of the warlords, which caused the centers of the Seven fractions to run out of funds and close down in Ghazni, Logar and Wardak Provinces. This change was not easy, but rather involved serious risks, even threats to life. All in all, we have left behind some very difficult and unpleasant times which

do not necessarily have to be mentioned here on this anniversary day.

"I am very pleased to present a 30-year report of COAR to you today. this may serve informative for you while may happy or sad memories for us.

"COAR started its journey as a one-dimensional movement, but today its services are in full force and multi-dimensional reaching to an extent that COAR is part of the leadership helm of international organizations.

"Sages believe that it is not important which path you choose for your journey in life, but what matters the most is the type of company you have on that journey; I am proud to have travelled with a united and hard-working team who share the same humanitarian goals and who have arisen from amongst the people serving the people. That said, today's COAR ranks among the top national and international organizations operating in

Afghanistan. above all, I take pride in the fact that COAR has created a special place for itself in the hearts of the people and people sincerely love and appreciate our work.

"What we have learned in the past 30 years of our humanitarian and Development journey is that a goal is only sustainable when it positively impacts the lives of grass roots and the ordinary people and when we, as humanitarian workers, fully understand the real need of the people.

"COAR was established 30 years back with a sacred humanitarian goal, and the fact that this goal was valued among the people 30 years ago and is still valuable and sustainable is a masterpiece and a stunning success.

"On this journey, sometimes all our efforts and perspirations were bursting with tears of disappointment, and at times the initiatives and efforts of the COAR made everyone immensely proud; I believe you all know that in our



country, a few decades back, there was no central government, nor was there any sympathy for the ruins of our country in the hearts of warlords. The activities carried out by the humanitarian actors such as reconstruction, establishing and building clinics, schools, improving agriculture, livestock, and struggles in demining are visible to everyone. Humanitarian organizations have been actively involved in this process towards a better Afghanistan. I wholeheartedly congratulate COAR team, for their tireless services, the people of our beloved country, and COAR team's families as they took all their familial burdens upon their shoulders to allow us to serve the people in need. "For me, trust has two parts - one is to have the courage to believe in his/her team, and addition to believing in one's team. the other part is to be honest and trustworthy to his/her people. I can clearly see these two qualities in the current CEO of COAR and I always tell people

that COAR's secret to success is an honest and diligent team, and I take tremendous pride in being a part of this team.

"At the end of my speech, in respect to the International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development, I would like to emphasize that the purpose of our gathering is not only to celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of COAR, but goal is to establish the utmost coordination between the government organs, the private sector and the humanitarian and development organizations because in unity there is strength. That in mind, we have invited the private sector representatives, government officials, and civil society members to come together and discuss, through a panel, how we can work together for common goals, and to discuss the role of national and humanitarian organizations in the economic and social development of the country, and how we, the humanitarian actors, can actively



contribute to this selfless and sacred goal.”



**Shamima:**  
**A resident of Shohada District of**  
**Badakhshan Province who is a**  
**beneficiary of COAR TUP projects**

**tells us her story:**

“First of all, I would like to pass my warm greetings and regards to all the staff members of COAR. My name is Shamima, a resident of Shahada District in Badakhshan Province, and I am one of the beneficiaries of COAR projects. Prior to 2016, we, as a family, lived in absolute poverty; my husband was ill and unemployed and we hardly made ends meet. When COAR launched its projects in 2016 in Badakhshan province, they have provided us a cow and 1000 AFN per month for its feed (a total of 12000

AFN per year) under a project called Targeting the Ultra Poor (TUP). An additional amount of 2000 AFN was given to us for the sanitation and safety of our children. Also, the project team regularly visited us to raise our awareness on how to take care of the cow in a proper way, and they taught us how to save money from selling the dairy products. The cow produced 10 liters of milk; we consumed 2 liters of it in the household, and turned the remaining 8 liters of milk into other dairy products (yogurt, butter and Qrout) and sold them in the local market. On average, the sale of the dairy products generated 400 AFN per day which was sufficient for the day-to-day expenses of the household, and a small amount of saving. After a year, we purchased 6 sheep with the money we had saved, and now those 6 sheep have turned into 12 sheep, and that one cow has now turned into 6 cows.

“Due to the economic problems, I had left school. The TUP project

team encouraged me to resume my studies in the nearby school, so I resumed my schooling and graduated from high school. Now, I am studying a two-year education course. I would like to thank COAR and its team for supporting orphans and widows who have lost their breadwinners and guardians fighting for this country as soldiers.

“Particularly, COAR supported the destitute people of Shahda District here in Badakhshan Province.

Since 2016, the lives and economic situation of all the target families have remarkably improved with the support of the TUP project implemented by COAR. Representing the people of Shahda District, I would like to express our hearty gratitude to COAR team, MISFA and WB for their life-changing support to us.”

### Conference Photos



Photo of the books printed in honor of the conference









## Panel Discussion and Results

The panel discussion solely focused on the self-sufficiency and role of national organizations in respect to the economic and social development in Afghanistan, and the support of the private sector combined with coordination efforts by the relevant government entities. The participants of the panel discussion were officials of the government, private sector representatives, and representatives of the humanitarian and civil society organizations. The following remarks/ideas were exchanged during the discussion:

## Remarks by the members and representatives of the civil society and humanitarian organizations:



*Dr. Mohammad Naeem Salimee,  
Founder and Senior Adviser of  
COAR*

“For a very long time, I have hoped to create a platform to discuss localization with the government, civil society and humanitarian and development organizations, and like-minded people. I frequently heard this topic in many international conferences, but I am extremely happy that we are discussing this topic at a national level today. Localization is quite a hot topic in the world these days; it questions the idea of dependence on foreign aid, and encourages local



solutions instead. The mention of this topic would always draw my attention to our country context. I would always hope to sit together with our government officials, national organizations and like-minded people to discuss this topic.

"Maybe some of you wonder why we should discuss this topic. Please allow me to say this as concisely as possible that the root cause of the adversities and harsh conditions in our country is poverty, and recently, insecurity has also sided with poverty affecting our people on numerous fronts.

"That in mind, I believe we should discuss this topic. I am not saying that our discussion will be a remedy to all our problems, but we should not lose hope. If everyone feels as if it is not up to them, then who will stand up and fight these problems? Being part of this country, I think it is our duty to take a start at some point. I believe this is the point where we can start thinking differently. Hence, this should not

be the first and last discussion; someone has to keep this crusade going so that we can achieve solid results.

"The key question is 'what do national and civil society organizations aim to achieve through such discussions?' The panel members are familiar with one another; representing the national organizations, I am not saying that we are free of shortcomings. Before I talk about our expectations, I would like to reiterate that we do have our own shortcomings and flaws as individuals and organizations. But our shortcomings do not mean that we don't even dare to discuss our strengths and draw solutions for our problems.

"So today, I would like to start this discussion by referring to the representatives of the private sector. Maybe there have discussions implying a negative perception of the humanitarian organizations among the private sector actors, saying that national

NGOs are involved in corruption and embezzlement. So what should we do? Have you ever invited us for talks? Have you ever discussed our problems publically? Have you offered any solutions to the problems we may have? Let's not forget that these individuals working in the organizations were the ones who would run around to seek and attract foreign support in those difficult times to construct roads, to build clinics and schools, to work for the agricultural sector and to implement other humanitarian and developmental public work programs. Take a look at Swedish Committee for Afghanistan as an example; it has millions of students even at masters and Ph.D. level.

"When all these organizations first started working, they neither understood not practiced corruption; different times and situations took these on a different direction. Admittedly, we, the national organizations, do have our own problems, but if these leaders,

national and international traders allow us and consider us part of their own, and if they sit with us in formal and informal gatherings, and discuss how we can reduce and eliminate our dependence on foreign aid. Today, most of the organizations are locally and nationally funded by national traders and investors in India, Malesia, Nepal and similar countries. As a member of the organizations, addressing the government officials, national and international traders and investors, I request you to advise us. We have started this journey 30 years ago and we are still committed to this journey. We also admitted that we have shortcomings and flaws, but in general, the situation and environment took us (organizations) on another path."





***Baryalai Omerzai – Executive  
Director of Afghan NGOs  
Coordination Bureau (ANCB)***

Question: Could you put some light on what the problem is, and to what extent have you maintained coordination with the private sector?

“If we look back at the emergency and background of these organizations, especially, Afghan organizations are among the people and sufficient image building has been carried out. People trust organizations because they have benefited from the services these organizations have provided. Regarding the second part of the question, we have several types of

coordination – coordination between the organizations and the government, between the organizations and donors, between organizations and the private sector, and coordination among the organizations. I would like to specifically state what level of coordination has been maintained between the organizations and the government. Prior to 2016, when the Afghan government promised in the London Conference that the government relations and coordination with the civil society would be improved, and after the conference, the civil society and the government signed cooperative MoUs. The problem was that the government did not abide by its promises of cooperation, and everything just stayed on the paper without any notable action taken. There was no cooperation, no coordination, and no support from the government’s side.

“Although cooperation and coordination between organizations

and the new government has increased as compared to a few years back, especially in the Ministry of Economy's leading and technical committees where organizations are given an active role to play. Again, this is only at the central level; there are still many problems that organizations face at the provincial levels. The International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) has working with the government and the Afghan organizations since 2005, but unfortunately the problems at the provincial level still persist.

"Another issue is access to information.

Whenever organizations approach a government body to access certain information, the process takes so long that it affects the implementation of the project; in some cases, organizations miss certain seasons and deadlines because of this long process. That being said, the three sectors form a triangle and they should strive to coordinate for better cooperation

because all three sectors aim at services despite that fact that each is defined differently."



**Hamidullah Ahmadi -  
Coordinator at ACBAR**

"First and foremost, I would like to appreciate the 30 years of service by COAR and thank its team for their endless services.

Most of the organizations initially used to provide humanitarian services while presently they have shifted to the development sector. There are problems and challenges in each and every aspect, but it does not mean that services should not be delivered. Cooperation and coordination among the



organizations and the government bodies have always been crucial and the gaps that the government sees in the work of the organizations should be pointed out and solutions be urged for them.

“Organizations stick to the motto ‘Transparency and Accountability’ and commitment to the four international principals; I am confident that most of the organizations practically observe those principals, especially the well-known and successful organizations. “What matters now is that we should keep this coordination and continue this promising start and we should cooperate with one another in areas possible. And the current prevailing problems have to be solved and not put off for a later time so that we all can take advantage of the available opportunities.”

### **Representative of the private sector:**



**Kamila Seddiqi – National Businesswoman, and former Acting Minister of Commerce and Industries**

**Question:** Mrs. Seddiqi, you have a background in the government, organizations and also in the private sector and you are also a successful businesswoman; that in mind, where do you think the root cause of the problem lies, which has led to long distance between the three sectors in terms of coordination and cooperation, and also, how can we resolve this issue?

“Thank you! Despite being a businesswoman, I think non-profit organizations were the champions that provided humanitarian and other types of assistance to the far-

flung areas of our country in the chaotic and worst possible times in our history. These organizations provided aid to the most needy and provided employment opportunities those out of jobs, and while doing so, these organizations faced numerous types of challenges. Due to the unfavorable circumstances, these organizations were accused of corruption, but these champions continued to fight and struggled towards their common goal of serving the nation. Publically and in my heart, I have always held the utmost respect for these organizations and the work they do. My life has provided me with circumstances where I worked in the government, the private sector and organizations and I have honestly learned great experiences from the three sectors which I would like to share with you.

"The problem between the three sectors is lack of coordination. By working closely with the president of our country, I learned that the

president has good intentions regarding relations and coordination and constantly urges government bodies to explore ways of creating coordination and relations. If COAR had not organized this event today, I would not have been part of this discussion here today. This initiative itself paves the way for the government to put trust in the non-profit organizations and for the private sector to provide all the necessary support. If the government supports the private sector, I am confident that we have such national businesspeople that are quite interested in this trend. Some businesspeople don't even take loans from the banks because they believe that interest is impermissible (Haram) in Islam, and all of them believe that they should give to charity and give the Zakat of their property and wealth to charitable causes. So let us think out of the traditional box and make everything systematic and coordinated.



"Recently, important steps have been taken in favor of the private sector. In 2005, through an interview with the New York Times, I expressed my concern regarding our country saying all the focus is on the development project, and our people do not think about self-sufficiency and economic independence, which is a risk for our country and in the past we used to have local solutions and localized approaches that supported self-sufficiency. If as a result of today's discussion and similar gatherings we do not create effective coordination and think differently, then today again, I will be saying that I am concerned about my country. The only difference between today and those times is that no attention was paid to the private sector back then, but today the situation has improved to some extent.

"So I suggest that we create coordination and in a similar way to Turkey, we need a coordination body through which the national

businessmen would contribute and this coordination body will channel funds to the best performing organizations. And this body could in the meantime provide some kind of privileges to the contributors by giving them tax concessions or other methods."



**Mohammad Younus Mohmand –  
National Businessman and Deputy of  
ACCI**

**Question:** What do you think , was the problem that the private sector and organizations were not involved in discussions with the government so far? How can the private sector work with organizations so that organizations no longer depend on foreign donors?

"Thank you! As you are all aware, the 40-year long war in the country

has flooded almost all the values of our country as a nation. If we look back 20 years back, these non-profit organizations have worked really hard and addressed people's problems. But unfortunately all the organizations don't have the same transparent and successful track record. Once in the times of President Karzai, 1700 licenses of organizations were cancelled, and even the organizations themselves did not explore why this was done. Similar to the non-profit organizations, we, from the private sector, have always extended our support in times of need such as building hospitals, and providing emergency assistance.

"So we support every sector and everyone who works for the people, especially in terms of education. I promise that we will form a joint committee which will also involve members and representatives from organizations and the private sector to explore how we can better coordinate and assist the national

organizations. As an example, Afghan Red Crescent Society is almost entirely dependent on the private sector. I think that organizations should also help people with their jobs and employment. There is a Pashto proverb which implies that to empower people, don't distribute fish to them, and instead teach them fishing. So in the end, I promise that the private sector is supportive of organizations and we will work together Inshallah."



**Abdul Rahim Sayedi – Former Director General of the Private Sector**

**Question:** Mr. Sayedi, would you please tell us regarding the registered Private Companies in



Afghanistan and in the meantime tell us about your tenure in as a Director General, what policies did you help put in place to provide incentives to volunteers and organizations that provide non-profit services?

"Many thanks for organizing this event. I would like to congratulate and appreciate the honorable team of COAR for providing the 30 years of humanitarian and charitable services that without a doubt, was a valuable support to our poor and marginalized individuals.

"Responding to the first part of your question, over 100000 businesses and Companies have been registered, but around 400 of them are active and operating. The rest of them are the ones that may or may not have operated for a while after registration, it has been a long time since stopped operating.

"Regarding the second part of the question; the Ministry of Commerce and Industries, as the name implies, is registering commercial companies

and trading companies doing business; indeed, every organization and every sector has its own particular definition and particular area of work. So organizations have their own scope and areas of operation, while the private sector is again a separate area and has its own definition.

"But to say about voluntary actions, then no sector and no one should leave their people alone, and this issue differs depending on people, societies and the circumstances, especially in communities and countries like Afghanistan where the main problem is poverty.

"But the sector whose root and basis is voluntary work and supporting people; there are the organizations in this sector that work for themselves and also the public. But the private sector also does not distinguish itself from this sector and has periodically signed off on its own citizens and provided assistance. There is a very fundamental role and the thing here is production and

consumption. Investors should produce and people should spend it. And this is the type of work and service that will move the business machine around.

"This can be a problem in Afghanistan or in most communities that many times such kind of work does not continue and it must go through a period of hardship, unrest, troubles, wars and other misery. Who creates all this and everything? The answer is two types of people, either good leaders or good investors. And an investor is not just someone who is trading or investing, but also someone who has a new mindset and a new plan. Unfortunately, we do not have, or probably have very few of such people in Afghanistan.

"As I mentioned earlier, the work done by organizations in the recent two decades was so successful and good that there could be two reasons for their success, first because they were directly in contact with donors or financial

supporters and did not obtain second and third hand funds, secondly, these organizations had very good technical capacities in terms of human resources, which unfortunately disappeared in the past five or six years, which is commonly termed as brain drain. But it is the government's duty to provide a suitable and enabling environment for each sector to work in, and to empower it.

"Finally, we want to make the most of all the available human capacity in Afghanistan. We cannot talk about the high and low salaries of government and private sector or institutional staff as this disagreement can be a bit expensive. How much logical and fair the salary of a government servant is! Therefore, on the basis of one of these discussions, we cannot set limits on the reasons why the employees of the organizations are getting paid salaries.

"So in order to solve the problem, I think that if the organizations and



the government can meet the needs, for example there may be a project that needs to be implemented in Nangarhar or implemented in Badakhshan. Organizations do not have sufficient capacities to operate all over Afghanistan and in every region. Organizations should be categorized according to their specialization and capacity based on specific policies and criteria for supervision. It should also be a comprehensive idea that there are people from the government, organizations and the private sector who should join forces and work together. If we do not unite and work together, neither will war come to an end, nor will poverty be eliminated. And the middle class is slowly moving towards a crisis, so the government, organizations and the private sector have to work hard to eliminate poverty and other problems that have to be solved as soon as possible. All of these sectors are not interdependent, but they are each other's working partners as

they are thought and cannot live without each other and cannot perform their functions well.

“Overall, if there is transparency, not only the private sector, but also the public people will support and fund the organizations, for example, if 20 million people contribute one dollar each, then the contribution of the people to Afghanistan's reconstruction will be 20 million dollars and this has been proven.”

#### **Representative of the government:**



**Sayed Ali Saadat – Director of  
NGOs Department in the  
Ministry of Economy**

**Question:** Could you also please tell us what the main problem is? For now, national organizations provide services with foreign funds, but what

is the government policy for this in the future and how can the government support organizations? "Thank you very much! I would like to mention two topics in a very brief way. I have worked with organizations for eleven to twelve years and I have been working with the government for three years, so I know more precisely about the performance of the organizations, the government is interested and thinking of gradually replacing international organizations with national or domestic organizations, and over time the roles and functions of foreign organizations will decline and national organizations on the contrary will grow and can deliver all the services to the public properly. But unfortunately, recently the actions of organizations were such that the government was not able to maintain its own control and supervision over the organizations to cooperate with them on the one hand and to ensure transparency

and accountability on the other hand. We are not in a good position when it comes to the performance of the organizations and could not say at which stage we are now regarding such changes, but the government certainly intends to channel services to national organizations, but how will the accountability for all these responsibilities be ensured?

"This is a question that we must be answered, how can organizations not use the financial resources of the private sector? The answer is very simple; many of our organizations have been converted to such entities that if someone wants to earn good income, then they should join these organizations, so I don't think the private sector and businesspeople will source fund such an organization whose salary scale is much higher than the funder itself, and maybe this high admin cost could be one of the reasons why have not been able to attract



funding from the private sector in Afghanistan.

“Let’s be honest that any salary that a director or a deputy director receives at an organization may be more than the profits of a medium scale monthly profit. So how can we expect that every businessman to fund our organizations? If a person is paid 30000 AFN to 40000 AFN in organizations per month, their counterparts in the government are paid 10000 AFN to 12000 AFN. That is a big difference, and the question is for how long will this go on?”



**Engineer Mohammad Sadiq Hasani – Director of Planning and Policy at the Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority**

**Question:** Afghanistan is a country that is affected by natural disasters

from time to time; could you please tell us how the government, private sector and organizations support your administration in such difficult times?

“Thank you very much! First of all, I would like to congratulate COAR on its 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Now, I would like to talk about natural disasters and voluntary work for a bit. In general, all the three sectors are interdependent and they play a vital role in the economic, social and other aspects of development in a country. In the past years, all the three sectors, specifically Non-governmental organizations, were very active and helpful, but again, all the three sectors have had their own shortcomings as well.

“The major problem that I have noticed during the past 10 years of my career of disaster management is a serious need and a lack of coordination, and to add, the previously devised plans and strategies have not been reviewed and updated and the government is

behind the clock in this regard. While the truth is that every sector should regularly review its plans and strategies to contextualize and tailor them to the needs of time, people and circumstances.

"In principle, the Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority is a policy-making and legislative administration especially in terms of coordination. While such administrations are very successful in other countries, we here in Afghanistan, unfortunately have a lot of problems."

### **Resolution/ Memorandum of Understanding**

Monday, 23 December 2019  
coinciding with 2<sup>nd</sup> Jadye 1398 of the Solar Calendar

The four sides (the Afghan government, humanitarian and development organizations, civil societies and the private sector) in Kabul Serena Hotel discussed the economic and social development of Afghanistan which was organized by COAR on the occasion of COAR's 30<sup>th</sup>

Anniversary. The following are the key points of the discussions:

1. Prior to this discussion, there used to be some level of coordination between the private sector, government, civil societies specifically non-governmental organizations, and this somewhat insufficient coordination has also brought of about great results, but it is also worth mentioning that there are numerous opportunities available but we have not fully taken advantage of these opportunities. That is why, it is deemed necessary that these sectors should continue to further support each other through a formal framework and mechanism.
2. As known it all, in 2016, thousands of humanitarian workers gathered in Istanbul Turkey and one of their major topics for discussion was



localization. And there are still global and national conferences held, including in Afghanistan, which emphasize on one key statement:

**As local as possible, as international as necessary!**

This means that as much as possible, we, Afghans, need to take part in the economic and social development of our country and all the work that we Afghans can do ourselves should be kept going skillfully and precisely. The international community can support us in areas where our local capacities may not be able to respond and address issues.

3. As it is clear to everyone that all our problems such as poverty, immigration, unemployment, drug addiction, high crime level and other tens of menaces

are deeply rooted in war and conflict. So in order for all Afghans to live a life of prosperity and dignity, we request all the sides involved in the armed conflict to start and expedite making efforts for ending the armed conflict in Afghanistan. This is not only what the participants of this gathering demand, but it is what the entire Afghan nation demands.

In order for our today's cooperation and gathering to have fruitful results, we propose that a joint committee comprising of the government officials, private sector, civil society organizations and representatives of the people be formed so that this committee can work in this regard with a well-defined mandate. This committee should organize at least one or two such conferences in a

year to discuss collective achievements and challenges of the three sectors.

Bundle of thanks to all the participants, and we sincerely hope that the common goals of this memorandum of understanding be achieved!

### **Conclusion**

On 23 December 2019, COAR celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary through a conference in which the representatives of the government, the private sector, and the civil society organizations participated.

Besides remembering and appreciating the humanitarian contributions of COAR, the conference also focused on previous experiences, lessons learnt, and discussing the path forward, but the main objective of the workshop was localization of Humanitarian Aid and the celebration of the International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development in Afghanistan. That in mind, think tanks and representatives of the private

sector, government, and civil society were invited to analyze and discuss the aforementioned topic and establish close coordination between all the three sectors, and this way, NGOs would also gain the support of the private sector in addressing the needs of the country. As a side topic, the conference also focused on the topic of 'localization' and the self-sufficiency of the Afghan national organizations and obtaining the support of the private sector in strengthening the national organizations towards self-sufficiency. As a result of the discussion, the following points were agreed upon:

- Hosted by the ACCI, a joint committee will be established with a view to continue and follow up the discussion initiated in today's conference;
- The mentioned committee will meet once or twice or as frequently as need be;



- ACCI will provide space and venue for the meetings of the committee;
- After the initiative by COAR, ACCI will host the first meeting of the committee;
- The mentioned problems/challenges and others will be discussed and solutions will be sought and proposed;
- The committee will make efforts to establish and strengthen coordination among the three sectors (government, organizations and the private sector).

### **Preparation for the Conference**

On the occasion of its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, COAR board was consulted, and having obtained their approval for the mentioned conference, the initiative was discussed in the Internal Management Committee meeting. Getting a positive feedback from the meeting, a committee for the organization of the event was established; the committee

consisted of the following individuals:

Mahmooda Taqwa as the chair of the committee, Hashmatullah Rohani as a member, Pamir Patang as a member, Saadullah Maseeh Maroofi as a member, Fahim Hakimi as a member, Ghulam Hazrat Mayar as a member, Roya Najeeb as a member, Engineer Abdul Halim Halim as an advisory member, Samira Noori as an advisory member, Matiullah Sahar as a sub-member, Abidullah Haidarzai as sub-member, Mahmood Alemi as sub-member, and Eng. Basheer Baheer as sub-member.

In addition, Pamir Patang, COAR board member shared his advice with the mentioned committee. The mentioned committee first chose to title the event as "International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development" because COAR team didn't deem it necessary to celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the organization only, but also intended to celebrate and discuss such a topic

that has real value for people which will bring about a change.

After the title of the event, specific date of the event, venue, list of participants and agenda were prepared. In the meantime, 7 volumes of books were published for the event to be distributed to the participants.

Diaries and coffee mugs imprinted with the logos of COAR and CEN network were made and presented to the participants of the Conference. A thirty-year report of COAR titled 'From one wheel to multi-wheels' was printed and distributed to participants, which highlights topics such as the background and history of COAR, the need for the establishment of Afghan organizations, the existence of capacities for the implementation of humanitarian and development among the national organizations, and whether the Afghan people and organizations have the ability to make decisions for their future.

The preparation for the conference also included the production of a 15-minute long video which presents highlights of the 30-year long activities of COAR, its projects, and a brief history of the organization. The video was shown to the participants during the conference.

Having well prepared in all forms, COAR organized a magnificent 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary conference on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2019 in Kabul Serena Hotel.

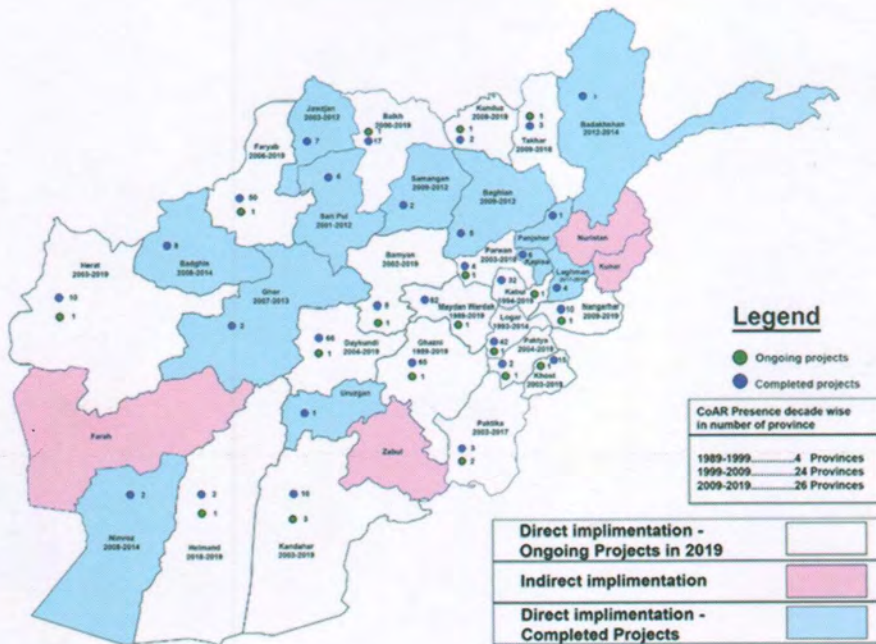
Finally, we would like to thank every single member of the committee that organized this splendid event with the utmost dedication, and special thanks to Pamir Patang who has recently joined the COAR Board of Director (BOD) and provided advice on the better organization of the conference.



**Citizens' Organization for Advocacy  
and Resilience – COAR**



**WE BELIEVE IN LOCALIZED APPROACHES  
IN OUR WORK**



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