



AFGHANISTAN INDEPENDENT HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION STRATEGIC PLAN (2019-2023)



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The Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission

The Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) is an independent National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) that was established on 6th June, 2002 on the basis of a Presidential Decree and the provisions outlined within the Bonn Agreement. With the adoption of the Afghan Constitution in 2002 and enshrining of Article 58, the legal foundation of the AIHRC was established. According to Article 58 of the Afghan Constitution: "Every individual shall complain to this Commission about the violation of personal human rights. The Commission shall refer human rights violations of individuals to legal authorities and assist them in defense of their rights."

In 2004 the Law on the Structure, Duties and Mandates of the AIHRC was approved by the President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and is comprised of (4) chapters and (35) articles. Accordingly, the AIHRC is structurally comprised of (9) commissioners who are appointed by the Afghan President for a term of five years. The Commission is led by a single Chairperson who is also appointed by the President and selected from amongst the (9) commissioners.

The AIHRC has (8) regional and (6) provincial offices with the headquarters located in Kabul, Afghanistan. The (8) regional offices are located in: Bamyan, Kabul, Balkh, Kandahar, Herat, Gardez, Kunduz and Nangarhar. The (6) provincial offices are located in Daikundi, Badakhshan, Ghor, Faryab, Helmand and Uruzgan. The differences between our regional and provincial offices are within their geographic reach of operation. This means, the regional offices cover more than one province whilst the provincial offices are in charge of just the province within which they are located. The total (14) AIHRC regional and provincial offices cover all 34 provinces of Afghanistan within their operational duties.

The AIHRC operates under the mandate of protecting, promoting and monitoring human rights within Afghanistan. It is amongst one of the country's most trusted independent institutions with membership into the Asia Pacific Forum (APF) and an "A" status member within the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI). The Commission works with national, international, government and non-government organs to move the human rights agenda forward, raise the level of human rights standards and observance and ensure the government commits to adhering to the practices of international humanitarian law.



Foreword

Message from Dr. Sima Samar, Chairperson of the AIHRC

Developing from scratch the human rights agenda in a country that has gone through over forty years of successive conflict is amongst the most challenging yet important tasks in Afghanistan. Since its inception in 2002, The Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) has been at the forefront of promoting, protecting and monitoring the human rights situation in Afghanistan. Now in our seventeenth year of operation, it gives me great pleasure to present, on behalf of the AIHRC, the fifth AIHRC Strategic plan encompassing 2019-2023.

The AIHRC is one of Afghanistan's most trusted independent institutions both in the eyes of Afghan citizens and the international community. The commission is a leading National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) with membership into the Asia Pacific Forum (APF) and has proudly maintained "A" status accreditation with the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI). These successes are a result of the AIHRC's continued efforts in raising public awareness on human rights and breaking down systematic and institutional silos to ensure a multi-dimensional approach towards a long-term commitment in furthering the human rights agenda in Afghanistan.

The commission has been a positive proponent of change within Afghanistan. Some of the notable achievements the AIHRC has accomplished has been being the driving force behind the criminalization of Bacha Bazi, the commission's active monitoring of Afghan prisons and juvenile detention centers which has led to a reduction in the instances of torture cases, our activism against forced virginity testing which led to its criminalization and the advocacy of the AIHRC leading to Afghanistan ratifying the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). In addition to this, human rights is now a topic that is

widely discussed throughout Afghanistan; from within the household to the policy making processes. This being said, the commission faces critical challenges that hinder the advancement of human rights within Afghanistan. High numbers of civilian casualties, a culture of corruption and impunity, widespread poverty, weak rule of law, the management of internally displaced people and returning refugees, access to employment and upward mobility, the persistence of extremist ideologies and the continued marginalization and violence against Afghan women and girls are amongst some of the continued obstacles which hinder the social, political and economic development of Afghanistan.

Although the protection, promotion and preservation of human rights is not the job of a single entity, the Afghan State has the unconditional responsibility to the citizens of Afghanistan in uphold the universal principles of human rights. It is a collective responsibility that should be honored by all citizens who must respect the values of freedom, dignity and rights. Peace cannot be achieved without justice and justice cannot be attained until the cultures of corruption, impunity and nepotism are eradicated from their roots. The AIHRC underscores the fundamental need for the Afghan State and Afghan citizens to stand united, bonded by a shared and strong commitment to the values and principles of human rights, which can be disseminated and employed through a sustainable strategy benefiting all citizens.

Dr. Sima Samar
AIHRC Chairperson



Message of the AIHRC Executive Director, Mr. M. Musa Mahmodi

Afghanistan continues to undergo immense transformation which shapes the social, political and economic development of the country. Despite the complex setting the AIHRC operates within, the commission has successfully been able to move forward the human rights agenda and address the localized needs of Afghans within all thirty-four provinces. The 2019-2023 AIHRC Strategic Plan has taken a reinvigorated look into best-practices for promoting, protecting and monitoring human rights in Afghanistan that will both benefit and bolster the human rights and freedoms of all Afghan citizens within a free and democratic climate.

In preparing this Strategic Plan the AIHRC has employed a decentralized method to develop the newly outlined goals and targets. This process entailed localized consultations with stakeholders from all thirty-four provinces including the participation of government bodies and officials, civil society organizations, media outlets, women's groups, Ulema Councils, university professors and local and district community leaders. The views and proposals of these stakeholders were transferred into the creation of regionally based action plans that would be able to deliver concentrated programs and services to citizens. The core pillars of our strategic objectives are leadership, promotion and protection which will shape the AIHRC's five-year trajectory.

The AIHRC is proud to report that given the feedback of over 1000 stakeholders, the commission continues to be amongst one of the most trusted institutions operation within Afghanistan. The levels of public awareness of human rights has increased national due to the human rights educational workshops offered by the commission. In addition to this the monitoring and advocacy of the AIHRC has led to measureable and tangible changes within Afghan prisons, hospitals and orphanages. Furthermore, the AIHRC's legitimacy has

been strengthened by retaining our independence and our national and international legal support.

These achievements have allowed the commission to take a realistic look into affording Afghans equal distribution of resources and power which building upon an Afghan led and owned development process. Part and parcel of this is rooting human rights into each level of Afghanistan's development process and continuing to build upon the sincere commitment of ensuring all citizens are aware of their human rights, have equal access to justice and are able to fulfill their full potential as human beings.

In realizing that on a national level, structural and institutional changes continue to be barriers in realizing human rights within Afghanistan, the AIHRC will continue to vanguard practices of transparency, accountability and inclusion. The organizational culture of the commission has been constructed to foster an atmosphere of effective cooperation, inclusive idea sharing, welcoming constructive feedback and ideas within a framework of working with integrity and the commitment to universal human rights. Knowledge sharing, and capacity building will be core pillars of moving the commission's mandate forward and permeating within each level of society. Given this fact, it will be a collective effort with international and national partners in continuing to strengthen, uphold and observe human rights within Afghanistan. The AIHRC has and will continue to function as an independent institution working with and for the people of Afghanistan.

M. Musa Mahmodi
AIHRC Executive Director

Acknowledgements

As the Chair of the AIHRC, I would like to extend my gratitude and thanks to all stakeholders involved in the consultation process of the AIHRC's 2019-2023 Strategic Plan, which includes government bodies and officials, civil society organizations, media outlets, women's groups, *Ulema* Councils, university professors and local and district community leaders. Their commitment and participation have allowed the AIHRC to deliver a meaningful, targeted and effective five-year human rights agenda to serve and benefit the people of Afghanistan

I would also like to thank and acknowledge the participation of all AIHRC program coordinators, regional and provincial managers and staffers for their information sharing and participation in the decentralized approach in bringing together the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan. I commend and appreciate their commitment and key insights into the areas within which they work in and risk their lives on a daily basis.

The commission would like to give the members of our donors a special thank you for their continued support and constructive feedback which have been essential in constructing the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan. I would like to extend my sincere gratitude for the continued support of donors who have made the mandate of the commission possible over the years and have shown unwavering commitment to the AIHRC and the Afghan people.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AIHRC	Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission
ALP	Afghan Local Police
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANP	Afghan National Police
ANSF	Afghan National Security Force
AP	Action Plan
APF	Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions
BSA	(Bilateral Security Agreement (between the GoIRA and the USA
CS	Civil Society
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DCC	District Coordination Council
ECC	Electoral Complaints Commission
IEC	Independent Election Commission
ED	Executive Director
GoIRA/GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
HR	Human Rights
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
HRSU	Human Rights Support Unit
ICC	International Coordination Committee of National Human Rights Institutions
IDLG	Independent Directorate of Local Governance
IEC	Independent Election Commission
IHRN	International Human Rights Network
MERU	Monitoring Evaluation and Reporting Unit
MoE	Ministry of Education
Mol	Ministry of Interior
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MoWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
MPs	Members of Parliament
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
NDS	National Directorate for Security
NPP	National Priority Programs
PEST	(Political, Economic, Social, and Technological (an analytical tool
PESTLE	Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal, and Environment
RBM	Result Based Management
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SC	(Steering Committee (joint donors and AIHRC committee
SP	Strategic Plan
STEP	(Social, Technological, Economic, and Political (an analytical tool
SWOT	Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats
TMAF	Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan

Definitions

Baseline	The status human rights situation, achievements, activities, knowledge, public awareness, laws, norms, behaviors and policies as they are, before the strategic interventions of the AIHRC
Target	Specifies a particular value for an indicator or the result to be accomplished by a specific date in the future; it indicates what an achievement will be reached within a certain period of time, in relation to one of the expected results. Targets provide a tangible and meaningful point of discussion with beneficiaries, stakeholders and partners
Objectives	Desired end results pertaining to programs and/or activities that are specific, measureable, achievable, realistic and time bound
Indicator	A unit of measurement that specifies what is to be measured along a scale or dimension but does not indicate the direction or change. Performance indicators are neutral and do not include targets
Data Collection Methods	.Data collection methods represent how data about indicators is collected
Data Source	.Individuals, organizations or publication from which data about your indicators will be obtained
Performance Measurement Framework	Used to systemically plan the collection of relevant data to assess and demonstrate progress made in achieving expected results. Ensures performance information is collected on a regular basis and helps to track the achievement of expected results. It is developed and monitored through consultation with partners, other donors, local stakeholders and sometimes beneficiaries
Outcomes	.Short to medium term effect of programs, interventions and outputs that bring change
Output	.Direct products or services resulting from performing activities
Responsibility	Identifies who is responsible for collecting and validating the data and includes individuals, organizations, documents or reports from which the data is obtained
Result	.A describable or measurable change in state derived from a cause and effect relationship
Results-Based Management	A strategy of management and performance, concentrating on outcomes, outputs, activities and inputs aimed towards achieving end results

AIHRC Key Indicators Since 2002

A total of 706,533 Afghans have been trained in the area of human rights

Over the course of 17 years, about 249,618 minutes of radio programs and 65,390 minutes of television programs have been broadcasted in relation to human rights and AIHRC related topics

,More than 4,985,892 human rights magazine, leaflets and educational publications have been printed and distributed

A total of 52,861 human rights complaints were filed, addressed and followed up by the AIHRC

A total of 48,720 cases of violence against women were registered and followed up by the AIHRC

Detention centers have been visited and monitored 24,289 times by the AIHRC

Approximately 7,487 unlawfully detained civilians have been released from jail with legal intervention by the AIHRC

,Approximately 50 private jails have been closed under the advocacy and leadership of the AIHRC's legal intervention

Interviews have been made with 77,312 citizens in connection to their access to human rights through field human rights monitoring

Interviews have been made with 54,243 children in different parts of the country in relation to their access and observation of human rights

A total of 98 human rights research and thematic reports have been prepared and published by the AIHRC

The AIHRC has conducted 5 national inquiries which have led to tangible systemic and institutional change within Afghanistan

A total of 16 annual reports regarding the activities and achievements of the AIHRC have been produced and published

Approximately 92 mass graves of war victims have been discovered and investigated by the AIHRC

Executive Summary

The **Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC)** is an independent and influential institution in the areas of protection, promotion and monitoring of human rights. The Commission is amongst one of the most respected and trusted institutions within Afghanistan and internationally.

The Commission has created (4) Strategic Plans to date, each of which are used as an organizational tool whereby objectives, goals, and programs are specifically defined and categorized. The AIHRC has developed a five-year strategic plan (2019-2023) which presents the new set of objectives. The three objectives for the 2019-2023 Strategic Planning period have been outlined as: **(1) Leadership (2) Promotion and Empowerment and (3) Monitoring and Protection.** The implementation of this Strategic Plan will be done by means of utilizing a result-based approach which will seek to achieve the outlined goals by means of effective implementation mechanisms.

The AIHRC will continue its leadership role of advancing the national human rights agenda

The Commission, for the 2019-2023 Strategic Planning period has set forth three key mandates in relation to its strategic objective of leadership. The human rights discourse must continue to be strengthened nationwide. This is to be achieved through active engagement, commitment and participation of stakeholders at the local, national and international level through the effective and strategic use of partnerships, opportunities, best practises, and mass media. The AIHRC will continue to work towards setting the human rights agenda in Afghanistan, ensuring it is widely reflected at the international level. Furthermore, the Commission will continue to have a committed and meaningful presence at the national and international level.

The promotion of human rights and the empowerment of Afghan citizens are two key objectives that must continue to be advanced over the 2019-2023 period

The AIHRC is committed to empowering Afghans with the knowledge, skills, understanding and capacity to observe, respect and improve the situation of human rights in Afghanistan. The Commission is able to do this through its education and promotion initiatives. Human rights concepts and values will continue to be advocated by the AIHRC, and to be included in national policies and programs, and within the curriculum of education and training centers throughout Afghanistan. The commission believes that the capacity of individuals, government agencies, civil society organizations, media outlets are to be enhanced, which will enable each actor to become a catalyst for change enabling the observation of human rights by Afghan citizens. Furthermore, innovative and quality human rights services are key area of focus and development the AIHRC will be looking to incorporate, taking into consideration national and international standards.

The AIHRC will continue to monitor the performance of public and private institutions and government bodies to ensure that the human rights and freedoms of Afghan citizens are protected, promoted and observed nationally.

The AIHRC, in protecting human rights and preventing human rights abuses, will continuously employ targeted and effective monitoring, using new technologies and methodologies. The objective is to see a further reduction in the number of human rights violations such as acts of violence against women and girls. Part of the monitoring process entails advocating for the amending, and modifying the laws, regulations and legal instruments through legal guarantees, conducting investigations and presenting recommendations to the appropriate national and international actors. An overarching objective is to see international humanitarian law and human rights law be widely observed, respected and practiced nationwide, especially within government and institutional settings.

Introduction

Now in its sixteenth year of operation, the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) continues the difficult journey of building an Afghan society free of fear, want and discrimination. Having earned the trust of the Afghan people the AIHRC brings forth yet another impactful five-year (2019-2023) strategic plan which will advance Afghanistan's progression into a fair and developed society based on peace and human rights values. Monitoring, protection and promotion of human rights remain the core areas of focus for this strategic plan.

The AIHRC has successfully implemented three successive strategic plans which have placed the commission as an effective leader in human rights advocacy. Based on our domestic know-how, lessons learned, active engagement with local and international stakeholders and our contextualized result-based approach, the AIHRC has moved forward in institutionalizing international human rights values in Afghanistan. This strategic plan has been brought together through a meticulous set of community sourced consultations with over 1000 Afghans, including women and youth, emphasizing the participation and inclusion of all citizens within the process.

The foundation of an effective, dynamic and innovative strategy requires realistic foreshadowing into the future which can provide practical and alternative solutions that will meet the needs and demands of the Afghan people. Our overarching achievable goals and objectives are at the forefront of this strategic plan. It remains in line with the core vision, goals, mission and values and principles initially outlined by the AIHRC since our inception. The commission strives to source dynamic methods and modes of thinking that can lead to innovative change benefiting Afghans. This begins with outlining achievable markers that will reinforce Afghan citizen's conviction within the universal principles of human rights.

This strategic plan aims to take a realistic look into the future of Afghanistan and by doing so, outlining tangible outcomes. It will focus moving forward the following key deliverables:

- Monitoring and protecting citizens against discrimination, injustice, corruption and violence;
- Protecting human rights standards in the process of ensuring national peace and security;
- Monitoring and protecting victim's rights, civilian casualties and humanitarian law;
- Women's rights, the rights of children, people with disabilities, internally displaced people (IDP) and other vulnerable groups;
- Monitoring the human rights situation in detention centers and ensuring the rights of prisoners are observed;
- Monitoring, protecting and mainstreaming civil and political rights, such as the right to vote in elections, the right to freedom of expression, the right to freedom of opinion, the right to freedom of association, and Article 20 of the Convention on the Civil and Political Rights;
- The right to be free from want, hunger, violence and a degraded environment;
- And finally, all human rights that the commission is bound to monitor, protect and promote based on its vision, mission, mandate and duties;

Despite the structural challenges, the commission has been able to successfully implement its previous strategic plans for the past fifteen years. The AIHRC is aware of the obstacles and threats which include insecurity, corruption, weak rule of law and judicial system, the culture of impunity, prevalent harmful traditions, patriarchy, informal justice mechanisms, institutionalized and systematic discrimination, drug trade and trafficking, poverty, illiteracy, radicalization and the rise and presence of non-state actors. Learning from our past accomplishments and shortfalls, the commission is able to take a holistic look onto how to best reach deep into Afghan society, bridging together rural and urban divides. The AIHRC is looking to renew stakeholder trust and commitment, so that collectively we can promote human rights within our post-conflict, developing nation.

Situational Analysis

The current human rights situation in Afghanistan is framed within a juxtaposing setting, which indicates both an atmosphere of fear and hope. The AIHRC's vision in developing a democratic, developed society in which human rights are respected and observed has never been so achievable yet at the same time more difficult than in today's current socio-political situation. The commission's achievements in the area of monitoring, protection and promotion of human rights have led to measurable changes. For instance, in the areas of state policy and legislation, the structural functioning and behavior of public servants, rule of law, justice and accountability, the rights of women, children, prisoners, persons with disabilities, minorities and vulnerable groups within Afghanistan.

The both widening and deepening acceptance of human rights within Afghanistan is indicative in the many advancements made throughout the years. Afghanistan's membership in the United Nations Human Rights Council, the revocation of Afghanistan's reservations to the Convention Against Torture (CAT) and the ratification of the United Nation's Optional Protocol of CAT are amongst some of the many meaningful steps that have been taken to reinforce the state's commitment to human rights. In addition to this, Afghanistan submitted its second set of reports to the Committee Against Torture and took a leading role in co-sponsoring resolutions and statements pertaining to human rights. Furthermore, the improvement of the law in Afghanistan has been significant. The ratification and enforcement of the country's criminal code, which includes the criminalization of a wide range of criminal acts and violations against human dignity and human rights standards (crimes against humanity, genocide, war crimes, cybercrime, environmental crime, Bacha bazi, torture, crimes of obstructing justice, forced virginity testing and propagating hate) and the approval of anti-harassment towards women and children, law against human trafficking, law against the recruitment and use of child soldiers and notably the action plan for the implementation for Resolution 1325 are the major achievements in this area. The establishment of mechanisms

to protect human rights is another significant achievement. This includes the establishment of the Anti-Corruption Judicial Centre (ACJC), the Commission for The Prevention of Torture, the creation of a Deputy of Attorney General in charge of prosecuting violence against women, and the establishment of a tribunal on violence against women.

The AIHRC monitoring and research reports indicate that the conduct of public servants has improved in comparison to previous reporting periods. For example statistics show that complaints against police have decreased by 34 per cent, due to stronger and effective monitoring and improvements in the capacity of governmental institutions. These achievements are part and parcel due to the influence and leadership of the AIHRC which has strengthened its presence and role at the national and international level. The commission has successfully retained its credibility throughout the years by maintaining "A" status within the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI). Furthermore, Dr. Sima Samar, Chairperson of the AIHRC, was elected to be the Chair of the Asia-Pacific Forum (APF) affirming both the commission and country's progress as active participants in advancing human rights.

The lessons learned from successes and failures in the AIHRC's monitoring, protection and promotion are an effective means for delivering and implementing a targeted and viable strategic plan that will benefit the Afghan people. Conducting national inquiries on systematic human rights violations such as our national inquiries on Bacha Baazi, rape and honor killings, child labor and victims of terrorism are amongst the valuable lessons that the AIHRC has learned from. The outcome of the commission's national inquiries led to change of policies, amendment of laws and provided new tools and sights to a great pool of stakeholders. Similarly through the dissemination of information by means of our online open data system the AIHRC not only educated citizens but also provided a valuable dataset accessible to a wide audience. The AIHRC has held 10 national and international conferences which

have reinforced our commitment to growing the human rights interchange of ideas and norms. In addition to this, the implementation of extensive educational and awareness raising initiatives has allowed the commission to widen our stakeholder base and include young Afghans as human rights ambassadors within their respective local communities.

At the core of our success is our effective mechanisms of monitoring, protecting and promoting human rights. The AIHRC is the only independent body operating in Afghanistan that actively seeks to have representation in all 34 provinces of Afghanistan and is present in some of the most remote and volatile regions of the country. Given such a wide scope of activity, the commission is able to stay abreast on the general situation of human rights throughout the country and follow up with cases of human rights violations. A great achievement of having such visibility within Afghan society is the range our advocacy work is able to reach and influence through education and meticulous stakeholder mapping.

Despite the vast improvements and human rights achievements, the AIHRC's mandate still faces serious challenges. The continuation of successive years of war, fragmented national security, weak rule of law and deeply felt human insecurity are among only some of the serious hindrances towards the institutionalization of human rights in Afghanistan. Our mandate is made even more difficult through the constant conflict-based violence, which has led to severe civilian casualties in recent years. According to the AIHRC's findings, over the past nine years (1388-1396) 64,104 (23,130 killed and 40,974 injured) civilians including women and children, became victims of armed hostilities in the country. Thus, this newly thought-out strategic plan will be employed to address the known and unknown challenges the commission will face in the upcoming five years, taking into account the lessons learned from the past and the positive experiences of the previous period of strategic planning.

The Theory of Change

The AIHRC has employed the theory of change, based on evidence and facts, throughout the process of implementing our mandate. Investing in citizen trust is one of the core working components the AIHRC has been able to strengthen, resulting in the commission being a leading trusted institution amongst Afghan citizens. This is made evident by citizens from every sector and strata, even those who do not support the vision and mission of the AIHRC, referring to it as a trusted institution. Even members of opposing groups, government agencies, and known human rights violators have come to the AIHRC to file complaints and seek a secure means of reporting human rights abuses. Strengthening citizen's trust through effective monitoring and reporting mechanisms is one of the priorities of the AIHRC's change theory.

Capacity building and the establishment of sustainable knowledge sharing mechanisms is a priority for the commission. The AIHRC plays a leading role in the provision and sharing of information for national and international actors. The commission is the only Afghan institution that has developed an online data storage and sharing system. This allows the commission to store all reporting and investigation in a secure system that is free from corruption and models a free flow of information, equipped to support international knowledge sharing initiatives. Our capacity building initiatives have extensively worked towards enabling citizens to understand and exercise their rights, to take advantage of the protective mechanisms available to them. This means actively engaging with and including civil society organizations, youth groups, academia and governmental bodies in our mandate and moving forward the human rights agenda in Afghanistan. Enhanced credibility of the AIHRC has enabled the organization to implement its activities in 34 provinces of the country through 14 regional and provincial offices, and through continuous monitoring, collecting, recording and reporting precise and accurate information that are used by national and international institutions.

The AIHRC has focused on manifesting institutional and systematic changes through revised national laws and policies, which are amongst our important achievements. Protecting and promoting human rights through the amendment of laws and policies can ensure a long-lasting observance and protection of and respect for human rights. This also includes supporting human rights defenders through partnerships with civil society organizations, which can ensure the success of the AIHRC in the field of human rights protection and development. Human rights defenders are societal watchdogs and active protectors of human rights, victims of human rights abuses and maintaining open access to justice. Notably, the Afghan government's accountability has considerably improved in the area of human rights protection, development and reinforcement due to the effective monitoring and strong investigation mechanisms of the AIHRC.

Vision

A just democratic and developed society where human rights are observed, respected and protected.

Mission

Leadership, monitoring, promotion and protection of human rights through:

1. Monitoring the situation of human rights in the country;
2. Promoting human rights through the empowerment of individuals;
3. Protecting and advocating for human rights and freedoms through an effective investigation mechanism which addresses human rights abuses;
4. Holding the government accountable in following through on its commitment and constitutional obligations to affirming the human rights agenda;
5. Supporting, partnering and coalition building with civil society organizations, human rights defenders, academic institutions, media, religious scholars and influential figures;
6. Monitoring, investigating and protecting the human rights of Afghan women, children, persons with disabilities, victims and minorities;

Principles and Values

Human dignity: The AIHRC has based its work on the pillars of human dignity as one of the fundamental rights based on Islamic Guidance and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which belongs to all human beings and should be protected and respected under all circumstances and conditions.

Justice: The AIHRC is committed to working towards universal justice for all Afghans so that no citizen is deprived of access to justice.

Equality and Non-Discrimination: The AIHRC

considers equality and non-discrimination, which includes gender equality, as the cornerstone of a sound, healthy and prosperous society. This commitment recognizes that discrimination and inequality exacerbate human rights abuses and violations and must be combatted at each level of Afghan society.

Freedom: All human beings are born free and deserving of freedom, insofar as they do not violate the fundamental freedoms and rights of others.

Commitment: The AIHRC is committed to human rights advocacy, rule of law and good governance all which require consistency and sincere efforts.

Transparency and Accountability: These interconnected concepts form the cornerstone of the decision-making mechanisms and the administrative system of the AIHRC. While emphasizing clear and transparent rules and regulations, the AIHRC remains committed to both horizontal and vertical accountability. Each member and employee, with regard to the AIHRC's work procedures, is responsible to carry out their functions in good-faith.

Consultation and Participation: The AIHRC considers consultation and participation as key elements in strengthening the sense of ownership both internally and externally in order to preserve relations with civil society, media, staffers and all other relevant stakeholders.

Respect and Mutual Understanding: Based on a firm belief that mutual respect and understanding is a vital step towards the acceptance of human rights, the AIHRC is in favor of the implementation of the principle of diversity.

Legality: Legality is at the core of the AIHRC's mandate and it must at all times be preserved and strengthened in order to protect and safeguard fundamental human rights and freedoms.

Meritocracy and Gender Equality: Equal opportunity to talented and competent individuals in the AIHRC's hiring process with affirmative action in favor for women, people with disabilities.

Impact and Outcomes of the AIHRC Programs and Activities since 2002

The activities and achievements of the AIHRC, which are reflected within the annual reports, are implemented with a result-based approach. Below is a list of notable impacts and outcomes:

- Human rights have now become a national dialogue and are discussed in conferences, radio-television programs and policies.
- People's awareness of human rights is enhanced, and they are now sensitive to human rights violations such as issues of rape, honor killings and physical abuse which are reflected within Afghan media and social networks.
- About 7,000 complaints are filed each year, with an increase in registered cases meaning there is an increase in human rights awareness and the work of the AIHRC. The increase in citizen awareness is supported part and parcel through AIHRC training programs implemented by the Commission each year, with more than 30,000 Afghans receiving awareness annually through numerous and different educational programs.
- Following the signing of an agreement with the Ministry of Education in 2005, the Afghan Ministry of Education's curriculum are reviewed by the AIHRC, which resulted in modifications of curriculum based on human rights norms and values. Also, human rights topics and issues are now being included in the textbooks. As a result Afghan school children are getting familiar with basic human rights concepts throughout the country, being introduced to human rights norms at a young age.
- As a result of ongoing monitoring, training and advocacy by the AIHRC, cases of torture within prisons have dropped dramatically throughout the country's prisons. The Law on the Prohibition of Torture has also been enforced by a Presidential Decree.
- Positive changes have been made to police behavior and practices through monitoring the performance of the police by the Ombudsman Unit and the implementation of the AIHRC's International Human Rights Law training programs for national police officers. The number of complaints filed against the police with the AIHRC were as follows: in 2014, 407 complaints; in 2016, 311 complaints; in 2017, 268 complaints and in 2018, 221.
- As a result of the advocacy work by the AIHRC, the Afghan government ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2012.
- A revised and newly introduced Afghan Penal Code was recently enforced, whereby based on the efforts made by the AIHRC, the human rights norms and values are to some extent considered, and various cases of human rights violations have been criminalized.
- A national inquiry on the victims of war and terrorism resulted in the preparation of War Victims' Compensation Act, currently the draft of this Act has been finalized by the Afghan government. In addition, as a result of the AIHRC's advocacy, the Afghan government designated 21 August as the International Day of Remembrance and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism.
- There is a reduced and declining trend of illegal prisons operating within Afghanistan which is a direct result of ongoing AIHRC monitoring, intervention, and advocacy. There are no private jails in the areas where the AIHRC is operating.

Strategic Objectives

Strategic Objective One: Leadership

The AIHRC as an independent and influential institution in the areas of monitoring, protection and promotion of human rights is respected and holds a leadership role at the national and international level.

Issue: In a society where the courage to stand up against tyranny, crime, and human rights violations have become increasingly difficult due to corruption, a weak rule of law, resorting to intimidation and violence. The AIHRC remains a respected and influential vanguard, setting the human rights and freedoms agenda in Afghanistan.

Objectives

- Human rights discourse in Afghanistan through active engagement, commitment and participation of stakeholders at the local, national and international level and utilization of the opportunities, mechanisms, procedures and mass media is strengthened and safeguarded;
- The Afghanistan human rights agenda is set by the AIHRC and widely reflected at the international level;
- The effective and meaningful presence of the AIHRC at the national and international levels is continued and maintained.

Strategic Objective Two: Promotion and Empowerment

Human Rights is promoted within society, institutions, national programs and with individuals. Afghans are empowered to exercise and enjoy their human rights and public institutions are able to fulfill their duties and obligations in regards to respect, protect and observe human rights.

Issue: Afghanistan celebrates seventeen years of consistent progress and achievements in the realms of education, good governance, freedom of expression and association and women's rights. However,

understanding and realizing human rights faces real challenges. There remains individuals, officials and institutions doubtful of human rights. There are unrelenting invasions of dangerous ideologies, rise of radicalism, hate mongering, divisive policies and violence looking to undermine the foundation of human rights, tolerance and respect for diversity and rule of law in Afghanistan. This is especially evident within the rural regions of the country. The AIHRC is committed to maintaining the achievements gained over many years of diligent advocacy and further legitimizing human rights within these vulnerable districts. The commission plans to do this by continuing to be an active agent in developing and promoting human rights and enhancing the capacity of individuals and institutions at every level of society.

Objectives

- The knowledge, skills, understanding and capacity of individuals and institutions in observing, respecting and improving the situation of human rights in Afghanistan is enhanced by the AIHRC's education and promotion initiatives;
- Human rights concepts and values are included in national policies and programs and within the curriculum of education and training centers throughout the country.
- The capacity of individuals, government agencies, civil society organizations, media outlets is enhanced and becomes a catalyst for change and the enjoyment of human rights by Afghan citizens;
- Innovative and quality human rights services are provided by the AIHRC with both national and international standards being considered;

Strategic Objective Three: Monitoring and Protection

Human rights and freedoms of Afghan citizens are protected, respected and observed within national laws and policies, and by the performance of respon-

sible institutions resulting from the effective and continuous monitoring of the AIHRC.

Issue: In the absence of effective and functioning government institutions, human rights violations will continue to occur and destabilize Afghan society. Afghan citizens are routinely being subjected to acts of intimidation, coercion, violence and systematic harassment. This includes, the imposition of arbitrary extortion under various names, illegal taxes, settlement of claims and cases through informal justice, cruel and extrajudicial punishment and violations of human and Islamic values. Furthermore, corruption has affected the sense of security and trust in public institutions for Afghan citizens. Thus, an effective monitoring and protection mechanism is crucial in combating the listed features eroding the democratic ideals of Afghanistan. The AIHRC's effective, objective and continuous monitoring will protect the observance of human rights and humanitarian law through legal and practical measures.

Objectives:

- The AIHRC's continuous, targeted and effective monitoring, using new technologies and methods, protects human rights and prevents human rights abuses;
- The impacts of human rights violations of individuals and vulnerable groups, including women, children, and disabled people, are identified and addressed by the commission's investigation and verification system;
- Human rights are protected by enacting, amending, and modifying the laws, regulations and legal instruments through legal guarantees, conducting investigations and presenting recommendations to the appropriate national and international actors;
- Protection and monitoring programs resulting in the observance of international humanitarian law and human rights law by defense and security forces during armed conflicts;

Strategic Objective One: Leadership

The AIHRC is respected and plays a leading role as an independent and influential institution in the field of monitoring, protection and promotion of human rights at the national and international level.

Box 1: Objectives 1.1, Indicators & Actions

Objective 1.1: Human rights discourse in Afghanistan through active engagement, commitment and participation of stakeholders at the local, national and international level and utilization of the opportunities, mechanisms, procedures and mass media is strengthened and safeguarded.

Indicators:

- Degree to which human rights are observed throughout the peace process, which includes the presence of women and victims of human rights violations
- Degree to which the AIHRC's presence and reflection of its views appears in the national and international press
- Degree of commitment and maintenance of human rights priorities in the policies and programs of relevant national and international organizations and institutions working in Afghanistan
- Degree of progress of Afghanistan's engagement and interaction with the International Criminal Court (ICC) and other prominent human rights and treaty bodies within the United Nations system

Actions:

1. Launching two national programs on peace, women and human rights in coalition with civil society organizations, academic institutions, national and international organizations
2. Conduct a survey measuring women's participation in local decision-making processes including development projects, budget preparation and provision of public services
3. Reflect and publish statements, announcements, reports and positions of the AIHRC through regular use of press conferences, media interviews, and publishing articles at the national and international levels
4. Active participation, presentation of commission viewpoints and positions at international meetings, conferences and dialogues
5. Provision of practical and enforceable recommendations to the Government of Afghanistan, the ICC and other human rights mechanisms on women, victims of human rights and the prosecution of human rights violators
6. Conduct national and international conferences covering pertinent human rights issues in cooperation with international institutions including the United Nations, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and other regional and international institutions

Box 2: Objectives 1.2, Indicators & Actions

Objective 1.2: The Afghanistan human rights agenda is set by the AIHRC and widely reflected at the international level.

Indicators:

- Degree of change in relation to the occurrence of violence against Afghan women, in comparison to the situation of women in neighboring countries
- Mechanisms established by the Afghan government for the protection of victims of human rights violations
- Degree to which the government has paid attention to the improvements of the human rights situation of children, persons with disabilities and IDPs
- Degree to which the right to the healthy living environment is observed and protected by the government. Additionally, sustainable mechanisms are created to prevent excessive use of water

Actions:

1. A national campaign raising public awareness on the elimination of violence against women
2. Conducting national inquiries on violence against women, children, persons with disabilities, victims of human rights violations, IDPs, protection of the environment and access to potable drinking water
3. Collecting data on the implementation of SDGs by the Afghan government especially on goal number five: gender equality and goal number sixteen: peace, justice and strong institutions
4. Present findings on major human rights issues at national and international conferences

Box 3: Objectives 1.3, Indicators & Actions

Objective 1.3: The effective and meaningful presence of the AIHRC at the national and international levels is continued and maintained.

Indicators:

- Degree of change in relation to the occurrence of violence against Afghan women, in comparison to the situation of women in neighboring countries
- Mechanisms established by the Afghan government for the protection of victims of human rights violations
- Degree to which the government has paid attention to the improvements of the human rights situation of children, persons with disabilities and IDPs,
- Degree to which the right to the healthy living environment is observed and protected by the government. Additionally, sustainable mechanisms are created to prevent excessive use of water

Actions:

1. The establishment of volunteer human rights councils at the district level in both rural and urban areas within Afghanistan
2. Active leadership and participation within advocacy and coordination networks at local, national and international levels
3. An attempt to establish a high-level presidential advisory board which will identify and prevent the appointment of a government official, at any level, guilty of human rights violations
4. Taking a leading role in managing the Commission for the Prohibition of Torture
5. Active participation of the AIHRC in the meetings of GANHRI, APF and other prominent regional and international organizations

Strategic Objective Two: Promotion and Empowerment

Human rights have been promoted at the level of individuals, communities, institutions and national plans. Individuals are able to exercise their human rights and institutions are able to fulfill their obligations to observe, protect and promote human rights.

Box 4: Objectives 2.1, Indicators & Actions

Objective 2.1: The knowledge, skills, understanding and capacity of individuals and institutions in observing, respecting and improving the situation of human rights in Afghanistan is enhanced by the AIHRC's education and promotion initiatives.

Indicators:

- Increased demand by both government and non-governmental institutions for the AIHRC to conduct human rights training programs
- The increase or decrease in the number of complaints against judicial organs and defense and security forces
- An increase in the number of human rights ambassadors and defenders within the provincial districts

Actions:

1. Conducting human rights education for defense and security institutions
2. Conducting human rights education for judges and prosecutors
3. Conducting human rights education for health care providers and educators
4. Raising awareness and engaging with women, youth and local inhabitants on cultural heritage and its preservation
5. Creating tailored human rights education for women, youth and children
6. Organizing one-day conferences to commemorate national and international human rights events
7. Producing and broadcasting radio and television programs focusing on disseminating the core ideals of universal human rights
8. Producing and widely distributing monthly human rights publications, videos and actively utilizing social media channels

Box 5: Objectives 2.2, Indicators & Actions

Objective 2.2: Human rights concepts and values are included in national policies and programs and within the curriculum of education and training centers throughout the country.

Indicators:

- The degree and scope of inclusion of human rights, women's rights, peace and justice within the educational curriculum at the primary, secondary and higher education levels
- The degree to which human rights centered subjects are taught at national and private higher educational institutions

Actions:

1. Signing a memorandum of agreement with the Ministry of Higher Education, national and private universities and institutions of higher education
2. Creating and teaching human rights-based courses in national and private universities
3. Strengthening the current MoU with the Ministry of Education to include human rights, women's rights and child rights within the educational curriculum and ensuring the current educational curriculum is in line with the principles of universal human rights
4. Prepare and develop a human rights and international humanitarian curriculum for security and defense institutions

Box 6: Objectives 2.3, Indicators & Actions

Objective 2.3: The capacity of individuals, government agencies, civil society organizations, media outlets is enhanced and becomes a catalyst for change and the enjoyment of human rights by Afghan citizens.

Indicators:

- Degree of participation and implementation of human rights activities by the AIHRC's civil society partner institutions
- Degree to which referrals are made, complaints are reported and cooperation is sought by the government and non-governmental organizations
- Degree to which human rights issues are observed or reflected in the media

Actions:

1. Holding human rights education for civil society organizations, journalists and clergy members
2. Provide three-month capacity-building trainings, research and internship opportunities for civil society activists, media and graduates of universities
3. Cooperation and partnership with media outlets, ensuring they are given accurate and substantive information about the human rights situation within Afghanistan bringing together both media and democracy

Box 7: Objectives 2.4, Indicators & Actions

Objective 2.4: Innovative and quality human rights services are provided by the AIHRC with both national and international standards being considered.

Indicators:

- Increased number of AIHRC's visitors, clients and stakeholders
- Both the external and internal evaluation results of the implementation of the AIHRC's Strategic Plan
- Degree to which the AIHRC's print and internet publications are utilized
- Stakeholder degree of satisfaction with AIHRC programming and performance

Actions:

1. Strengthen and continue to actively use the AIHRC webpage and social media outlets
2. Ensure all offices are equipped with the necessary technology needed to conduct activities
3. Review the AIHRC's organizational structure in accordance with the new strategic plan; incorporating change management techniques to ensure maximum efficacy and output is delivered
4. Review the current data collection systems of the AIHRC and develop new systems where needed, ensuring the commission is utilizing advance data collection and analysis mechanisms
5. Conduct an annual conference to review and approve the Annual Action Plan
6. Monitor and evaluate the programs and administrative activities of the commission
7. Conduct both an internal and external audit program
8. Conduct annual AIHRC staff reviews and ensure an accurate internal assessment is performed
9. Implement staff capacity building programs which will be made available to all AIHRC offices
10. Design, compile and review regulations, guidelines and other administrative documents
11. Prepare and publish the AIHRC's six-month and annual reports
12. Implement a physical inventory plan for AIHRC's goods and assets in regional and provincial offices
13. Assess the degree to which the strategic plan is implemented (to be carried out by an external evaluator)
14. Develop a strategic plan for the next five-year planning period
15. Survey and evaluate the context for establishing a National Human Rights Institute (the first of its kind in Afghanistan) and a national human rights television program

Strategic Objective Three: Monitoring and Protection

Human rights and freedoms of Afghan citizens are protected and respected in the laws, policies and practices of the responsible institutions as a result of the effective and continuous monitoring of the AIHRC.

Box 8: Objectives 3.1, Indicators & Actions

Objective 3.1: The AIHRC's continuous, targeted and effective monitoring, using new technologies and methods, protects human rights and prevents human rights abuses.

Indicators:

- Prisoners who are illegally detained and identified by the AIHRC are released
- Witnessing a reduction in the number of cases of torture and abuse of prisoners
- Women and girls have equal, adequate, and affordable access to education and health services
- Reduction of violence against women and children
- Improved access to opportunities, services and care for peoples with disabilities, the elderly and IDPs

Actions:

1. Create an online monitoring system which is capable of receiving complaints and ensuring up to date databases are maintained
2. Continuous and targeted monitoring of Afghan detention centers, women prisons and juvenile centers, shelters, hospitals, and orphanages
3. Monitoring the general situation of human rights throughout Afghanistan and receiving complaints and petitions
4. Monitoring the situation of women serving in police, ANA, and the NDS and investigate their complaints and petitions against their institutions
5. Monitoring the practices of defense and security institutions
6. Monitoring rights to freedom of assembly, access to public services and the situation of elderly citizens and IDPs
7. Strengthening the women rights monitoring and protection program by expanding its task to monitor and survey women and girls access to health and education
8. Monitoring the election process (political rights) focusing on participation of women and four political rights and 3 principles
9. Monitor the implementation of the presidential decree on the pardon and commutation of sentences
Prepare a list of women prisoners who are charged of immoral crimes to be pardoned and or their prison time be changed to a prison substitute
10. Monitor and ensure that the national budget is both balanced and equally distributed. The budget would be reviewed on the bases gender and the needs of children.
11. The AIHRC will conduct a survey and partner with CSOs on article 19, 21 and 27 of CPRDs.
12. Publishing thematic, research and monitoring reports on thematic human rights issues, women, girls and children.
31. Provide shadow reports to United Nations Human Rights mechanisms and treaty bodies, including CE-DAW and CRC
14. Monitor how the Afghan government implements the recommendations of UN human rights mechanisms.

Box 9: Objectives 3.2, Indicators & Actions

Objective 3.2: The impacts of human rights violations of individuals and vulnerable groups, including women, children, and disabled people, are identified and addressed by the commission's investigation and verification system.

Indicators:

- Reduced/Increased number of visitors and complaints received by the AIHRC
- The degree to which AIHRC recommendations and referred cases are addressed by the relevant legal authorities
- Degree to which the cases of violence against women, children, journalists and human rights defenders are followed up by law enforcement agencies

Actions:

1. Registering, processing, documentation and the follow up of complaints of violations of human rights and violence against women, children and other vulnerable groups
2. Supporting and advocating for the victims of human rights abuses, violence against women and children and other vulnerable groups. Furthermore, introducing them to supporting institutions
3. Registration, investigation and the follow up of human rights defenders', women rights activists and CSOs complaints and ensuring their protection

Box 10: Objectives 3.3, Indicators & Actions

Objective 3.3: Human rights are protected by enacting, amending, and modifying the laws, regulations and legal instruments through legal guarantees, conducting investigations and presenting recommendations to the appropriate national and international actors.

Indicators:

- Number of laws and legal resources reviewed and approved in accordance with human rights standards
- Number of AIHRC recommendations

Actions:

1. Active participation in drafting committees to amend laws, regulations, bills, policies, and national programs Furthermore, submitting proposals for the inclusion of human rights standards within the content of these documents
2. Conduct coordination meetings with legislative bodies
3. Identify and adopt measures to prevent the implementation of laws, policies, and other measures that are not in line with the human rights obligations of the Afghan Government

Box 11: Objectives 3.4, Indicators & Actions

Objective 3.4: Protection and monitoring programs resulting in the observance of international humanitarian law and human rights law by defense and security forces during armed conflicts.

Indicators:

- Reduced civilian casualties perpetrated by security and defense forces
- Reduction in the number of child soldiers being recruited by armed conflict groups
- The number of cases of international crimes addressed by the Afghan judicial authorities
- Degree of attention paid to the protection of victims of terrorism, widows, women and girls, victims of sexual violence in conflict

Actions:

1. Monitoring the observance of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) by armed conflict groups in Afghanistan
2. Monitoring, collecting information and reporting violations committed by non-state armed groups; holding them accountable, ensuring International Humanitarian Law (IHL) is observed
3. Supporting and advocating for the victims of armed conflict, ensuring their human rights are met
4. Prepare and publish an annual report on violations of humanitarian law within the Afghan context
5. Conducting and coordinating meetings with defense and security institutions, the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross and other civil society organizations
6. Working with victims of war, with a focus on women and children, advocating for their rights
7. Embark on a new phase of Transitional Justice in Afghanistan
8. Registration, documenting and referral of international crime cases (war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide) to justice and judicial institutions

The AIHRC 2019-2023 Strategic Plan Budget

The AIHRC 2019-2023 Strategic Plan's budget has been constructed within a realistic framework complying with the commissions internationally standardized financial structuring. This budget is in conformity with the provision of JFA which allows for a transparent and easy to access flow of expenditures. The AIHRC's financial department maintains up to date and auditable account charts accounting for all commission expenditures and for practical purposes presents our budgeting under three main units of budgeting:

- 1. Program cost:** The program cost takes into account the main activities that are budgeted for program costs. Program cost does not include overhead and salaries.
- 2. Management cost:** Management cost constitutes overhead costs, including the salaries of AIHRC staff and office expenses. The management cost is the core input toward achieving the AIHRC outcomes. The AIHRC budgeting system falls in line with its long-term practice which has not changed to be expensed out against each program item(s).
- 3. Governance:** The governance cost has been incorporated in consultation with donor requests and shows all costs anticipated to cover the cost of leadership and managing activities of the AIHRC. This includes the travel and salaries of the AIHRC leadership.

The AIHRC has budgeted \$37,449,324 for the entire 2019-2023 five-year strategic plan implementation period. This means that the AIHRC will spend around \$7 million annually to achieve the objectives outlined within the strategic plan. This budget realistically frames the financial needs of the AIHRC for the upcoming five-year period and has closely consulted with the financial lessons learned from the past five-year period. A simple comparison shows that the anticipated budget for the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan is 40% less than the previous 2014-2018 Strategic Plan which was estimated at \$53 million.

The following key lessons have been taken into account:

1. The Afghan government's contribution to the AIHRC budget: The AIHRC receives around \$1 million USD from the Afghan government which has been a sign of good progress. The AIHRC expects that the share of government funding for the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan will rise to 30% of the budget, meaning that the GoIRA will provide \$10 million to the AIHRC during the period.
2. The AIHRC will work with GoIRA, SCOs: This will allow for a diversification of donor funding and will tap onto the capacities that have been built and are now ready to work with the AIHRC on the promotion of human rights within Afghanistan.
3. Implementation of strict austerity measures: In promoting sustainable use of resources, the AIHRC has implemented strict austerity measures. In this regard, the AIHRC has seized the 6% incremental increase of staff salaries and applied restrictions on expenditures. The AIHRC has also capped staff size to remaining below.
4. The AIHRC has built office buildings for 10 out of 14 offices: This has saved the AIHRC \$500,000 USD during the Strategic Plan and has allowed for a strategic use of resources and physical building resources.
5. The AIHRC will allow for a degree of decentralization of expenditures: Based on the needs and assessments of regional and provincial offices and program priorities. This will increase the effectiveness and flexibility of AIHRC budgeting and smart expenditures to increase efficiency.

AIHRC 2019-2023 Strategic Plan Budget Summary

Table 1: 5 Year Budget Summary

No	Activity Description	2019-2023			
		Direct cost	Staff Salary per year	Staff Salary for five years ((2019-2023	Total Cost for five years (2019-2023)
A	PROGRAM COST	USD			
1	GOAL 1: LEADERSHIP	1262700	\$735,418	\$3,677,092	\$4,939,792
2	GOAL 2: PROMOTION & EMPOWERMENT	5000465	\$735,418	\$3,677,092	\$8,677,557
3	GOAL 3: PROTECTION AND MONITORING	4516100	\$735,418	\$3,677,092	\$8,193,192
Sub Total of Program Cost		\$10,779,265	\$2,206,255	\$11,031,277	\$21,810,542
B	MANAGEMENT COST	USD			
1	MANAGEMENT STAFF SALARIES & BENEFITS		\$657,487	\$3,287,433	\$3,287,433
2	EQUIPMENTS & FURNITURES	\$42,000		\$210,000	\$210,000
3	REPAIRE & MAINTENANCE	\$143,400		\$717,000	\$717,000
4	SUPPLIES & MATERIALS	\$105,000		\$525,000	\$525,000
5	STAFF TRANSPORTATION, DSA & Accommodation	\$333,000		\$1,665,000	\$1,665,000
6	COMMUNICATION	\$148,585		\$742,924	\$742,924
7	HOUSE RENT	\$63,000		\$315,000	\$315,000
8	UTILITIES	\$407,000		\$1,235,000	\$1,235,000
9	SECURITY	\$52,500	\$937,499	\$4,949,993	\$4,949,993
10	BANK CHARGES	\$45,000		\$225,000	\$225,000
Sub Total of Management Cost		\$1,339,485	\$1,594,985	\$13,872,349	\$13,872,349
C	GOVERNANCE COST	USD			
1	SALARIES & BENEFITS		\$334,027	\$1,670,133	\$1,670,133
2	TRAVEL COST	\$19,260		\$96,300	\$96,300
Sub Total of Governance Cost		\$19,260	\$334,027	\$1,766,433	\$1,766,433
Grand Total for five years (2019-2023)		\$12,138,010	\$4,135,267	\$26,670,059	\$37,449,324

AIHRC Gender Policy

Introduction

Gender equality is a fundamental human right and the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) is committed to both systematically and institutionally promoting and advocating the rights of Afghan women and girls. The commission believes that a sustainable and viable peace will come to Afghanistan once women are active participants of the negotiation and development process and within the economy. On a societal level, and in line with UN SDG Five: Gender Equality, the AIHRC believes that the state must continue to reinforce sincere efforts in ensuring women and girls are given equal access to opportunities and upward mobility such as that of their male counterparts. The commission is at the forefront of combatting violence against women, which is still a prevalent problem within Afghan society. The AIHRC is a leading independent body in the promotion of the rights of Afghan women and girls and will continue this vital mandate.

Background

The AIHRC since its inception has been advocating and working for the human rights and empowerment of the women and girls. Afghanistan has suffered through the worst manifestations of human rights abuses, particularly against women and girls, whereby a rise in extremism, influence of non-state actors, volatile ideologies and harmful traditions allow for a persistence in gender-based violence and discrimination to occur. The commission believes that making gender equality a reality is the only way forward in ensuring a sustainable and democratic peace can prevail in Afghanistan.

Since late 2001, the AIHRC has championed human rights measures and mechanisms which have been able to enactment and ratify numerous laws, national policies and legal documents which have been integral to the human rights and developmental progress made in Afghanistan throughout the last 17 years. Though the conservative environment in Afghanistan has made the journey toward achieving gender parity particularly difficult, considerable advance-

ments have taken place since the establishment of the Afghanistan Interim Administration in December 2001, followed by the Transitional Government and two elected governments. Notably, Afghanistan is a signatory to seven international conventions, ICESCR, ICCPR, CRC, CAT, CERD, CEDAW and CRPD. Afghanistan's National Action Plan (NAP) on UNSCR 1325 (Women, Peace and Security) was adopted in 2012 and has promoted significant measures towards bridging the gender divide within Afghanistan.

Structurally, women are entering and being represented within the professional sector with the support of gender quotas and targets. One notable example is the law of elections, which calls for a required minimum number of females to be represented in parliamentary and provincial council elections. In the case of the AIHRC, four out of our nine commissioners must be female. On the economic front, strong strides have been made in promoting female economic independence and empowerment. This is made evident through the creation of the Afghan Women Chamber of Commerce.

Afghanistan is a signatory to Covenant on Elimination of all kinds of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and integrated the provision of the covenant into domestic law. The EVAW law remains effective as a presidential decree signed into Afghan law. There has also been an establishment of an elimination of violence against women tribunal within 14 Afghan provinces and a special prosecutor that has been assigned to lead a team and follow up on registered cases of violence against women.

Despite the initiatives taken towards reaching gender parity, there are many challenges Afghan women and girls face. Of government employees, only 21% are women; of the number of adolescent Afghans enrolled in primary and secondary schooling only 39% are girls; only 23.5% of university students are women; and finally of the nine-member Afghan Supreme Court, there is only one female judge.

Violence and harassment against women remains a prevalent and serious issue in Afghanistan and an area that AIHRC is actively working to monitor, report, advocate and prevent. The commission's database on violence against women unfortunately highlights an increase in registered cases of domestic violence, particularly violence against women. This increase could be explained by the increase in citizen human rights awareness in large part due to the promotion, protection and monitoring work of the AIHRC, an increase in information sharing and dissemination due to media and access to social media and/or internet. Elimination of Violence against Women's Law (EVAW). In the past five years, 8298 cases of gender based violence was reported to the AIHRC and only a fraction of them were prosecuted by the legal entities of Afghanistan.

Policy Methodology

The AIHRC remains committed to the realization of gender equality, as it is a critical barrier to the social, political and economic development of Afghanistan. The commission will continue to hone the areas of protection, promotion and the monitoring of human rights in Afghanistan, particularly that of the rights of Afghan women and girls.

At an institutional level the AIHRC has ensured the rights of women and the representation of women is made a priority. The commission has ensured that alongside the Chairperson, one commissioner is assigned to assist the promotion and protection of women and girl's rights. This commissioner will oversee the implementation of the AIHRC strategic plan pertaining to the protection and promotion of women's rights, inclusion of female staff in decision making, enhancing the advocacy role of the AIHRC in the area of women's rights and gender development, developing relations with CSO/NGOs working for women's rights and examining the national policy and strategies, legislations and measures to ensure the realization of women's human rights and gender equality.

The AIHRC has a strong women's rights department which is committed to monitoring women's rights situation, promoting women rights and gender equality,

girl's right to education and protecting the rights of women to justice, public services, and economic opportunities. This unit is represented in all 14 regional and provincial offices of the AIHRC and staffed by a minimum of two employees. The commission also appoints a National Women's Rights Program Coordinator (NWRPC) who is assisted by 14 regional women rights officers. The NWRPC channels information between the AIHRC leadership, to the provincial offices. This staffer monitors the implementation of the AIHRC gender policy ensuring it is being actively pursued and incorporated within AIHRC programming and initiatives. The Women's Rights Program Coordinator and Women Rights Officers cooperate with all other program units of the AIHRC. The commission also emphasizes gender parity though the composition of departments which are comprised of both men and women.

Furthermore, the AIHRC has established a committee on the prevention of work-place harassment, which is mandated to regularly oversee the working environment, especially that of female staff members, ensuring a safe working condition/environment. This committee will also investigate complaints of office harassment, making prompt decisions to ensure the safety and well-being of all staffers. The Committee, in line with the Law on Elimination of Violence Against Women (EVAW), the Law on Anti-Harassment and the AIHRC Gender Policy will guide the AIHRC's code of conduct to ensure a secure prevention method for sexual harassment at the workplace. This code of conduct will be widely disseminated throughout the AIHRC offices to ensure that all staffers are well aware of acceptable behavior and code of conduct.

AIHRC Institutional Gender Principles:

1. The recruitment of women, based on their competency and merit;
2. The AIHRC employs affirmative action in recruiting female staff members, based on their capacity and providing the needed opportunities for female staffers to be able to perform on an equal par with male colleagues;
3. Supporting and providing higher educational and on-the-job skill building facilities for female and male staff members to promote capacity

- building and upward mobility;
- 4. Ensuring there is gender parity in staff appointments;
- 5. Ensuring equal opportunity for both male and female staffers;
- 6. Considering the gender specific needs for men and women; this includes both maternal and paternal leave after the birth of a child;
- 7. Encouraging women to take on leadership roles by promoting women to managerial positions;
- 8. Ensuring the commission's employee code of conduct is up to date and well understood by all staffers, with a particular emphasis on gender-based discrimination and harassment;
- 9. AIHRC conducts sensitization programs for staffers to prevent gender-based discrimination, to fight patriarchal attitudes, and promote, respect and empower women in the public space;
- 10. Appropriate responses to cases of harassment and abusive behaviour, particularly towards female employees by male employees;

Key Gender Policy Mandates

At the national level the AIHRC is committed to advocating, promoting the following gender-based policies:

Women's participation within the Afghan Peace Process:

The AIHRC, believes that the active participation of Afghan women within the peace process and negotiation is imperative to securing a long-lasting and sustainable peace. Currently, there is an underrepresentation of women within the peace process. Sincere commitments and assurances need to be made to ensure the presence and active participation of Afghan women. The commission believes that favorable quotas and targets must be put into place to ensure the representation of women is met and that the government and negotiating parties commit to sincerely incorporating the participation of Afghan women.

The importance of including Afghan women into the peace process and negotiations stems from the historical and immediate past practice of the Taliban

regime, which denied Afghan women their very basic human rights. The exclusion of women within the social, political and economic sectors of Afghanistan is still dominant in the geographic areas that are controlled by Taliban forces and emerging non-state actors. In an effort to avoid a short-term gain and quick-fixed approach towards attaining peace, it is fundamental that human rights, particularly women's rights and freedoms, are safeguarded and put to the forefront of the negotiation agenda.

Afghan Women in Leadership:

Within the Afghan context, only 21 per cent of government employees are women. The AIHRC believes that the government of Afghanistan must aim to achieving a gender balanced cabinet which is representational of Afghan society. Ensuring the representation, empowerment and participation of Afghan women in leadership roles includes that Afghan women and girls are equipped with the needed resources and tools to succeed in the workplace. This begins with creating a balanced setting, beginning with the institutionalization of equal access to leadership opportunities for Afghan women and the needed spousal support for Afghan women to be successful in the workplace.

The Afghan government, through strong politically willed initiatives, must continue to incentivize Afghan women to be active participants in the political life of the country. This means to continue employing favorable gender quotas and targets which increase the number of women in political and public-sector leadership roles. These gender quotas and targets must be implemented with the aspiration of not needing them in the immediate future due to a normative shift in Afghan society that accepts the active and meaningful role of women in leadership positions. The AIHRC will work towards ensuring this leadership transformation materializes within Afghanistan because a lack of Afghan women in meaningful decision making and leadership roles undoubtedly destabilizes representational state development and offers little incentive for future generations of Afghan women to pursue such roles.

Promotion of Afghan Women and Girls in Sciences, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM):

Of Afghans enrolled in university institutions, only 23.5 per cent of these students are women. An even lower number of Afghan women are enrolled in STEM programs and/or degrees. Afghan women and girls must be encouraged to pursue careers in these academic streams. All humans are equal and should be afforded the freedom to choose and have access to any field of study and practise of their choice. Gender equality and education are amongst the key components of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and are imperative for the future of Afghan women and girls, ensuring they are given an active and meaningful role in decision making and solution building process.

Globally, women are underrepresented in STEM fields due to environmental and social barriers. This includes, but is not limited to, gender-based stereotypes, the environment of such departments within academic institutions and the lack of familial and/or community support for women to pursue such fields. Thus, promoting and empowering women to pursue STEM studies and/or careers, we combat gender-based stereotypes and discrimination. The all-female Afghan robotics team is a promising sign that there is a real need to promote STEM within Afghan society.

The AIHRC believes the Afghan government and particularly the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) must work towards promoting and empowering Afghan girls to pursue STEM. Afghan public and private sector enterprises within the STEM sectors must be incentivized to hire Afghan women and should be required to have a female staff quota. The commission, by means of our MoA with the MoE and MoHE, will monitor the number of girls graduating from secondary schooling to pursue STEM higher education, create a campaign to encourage and recruitment of more Afghan girls to take on STEM majors and to promote positive perceptions of women in STEM.

Inclusive Development

Gender parity is not only a core universal human right, but also a key pillar in developing a healthy and functioning state economy. The incorporation of Afghan women into the formal sectors of the Afghan economy will strengthen the country as a whole. Although Afghanistan faces many challenges as a conservative society and the tradition of gender separation, Afghan women are slowly being integrated into the workforce.

Afghan women need to be given the tools to financially and economically succeed. This entails women being empowered to join the formal sector of the Afghan economy and to be given equal opportunities to that of their male counterparts. Given the successive years of conflict in Afghanistan, many women have been left widowed and the sole breadwinners of their families. Many are unable to enter the workforce due the heavy gender stereotypes placed upon the role of Afghan women. Thus, educating Afghans and highlighting that women are equally valuable not only to their families but also their communities and the Afghan economy.

The culture and traditions of Afghanistan must evolve towards women being included and accepted in the formal economy. This would ensure that both men and women advance together. Ensuring a gradual incorporation of women into the Afghan economy will also narrow the gap between the urban and rural areas of the Afghanistan. The AIHRC is committed to promoting, advocating and empowering Afghan women to actively enter the workforce and to pursue both meaningful and quality roles. The commission will monitor the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, violence against women, instances and occurrences of harassment, the structural violence women face and barriers prohibiting the entry and promotion of women in the formal economy. The AIHRC is committed to advancing Afghanistan's gender mandate in line with the goals and principles of the UN SDGs.

Elimination of Violence Against Women

Since the fall of the Taliban in 2001, the human rights of Afghan women have significantly improved. However, violence against Afghan women and instances of abuse, harassment and structural violence continues to be barriers threatening the human rights of women in Afghanistan. The Elimination of Violence Against Women (EVAW) law is a progressive step Afghanistan has made in ensuring women and girls are protected from violence. The AIHRC firmly promotes a zero-tolerance policy towards any acts of violence, threats and intimidation against women and girls.

The AIHRC will continue to monitor the instances of cases of violence against Afghan women throughout the country, investigate and follow up on cases of violence against women, referring such cases to the appropriate justice mechanisms and produce annual reports on the condition of women which will include policy recommendations. The commission will continue to promote the empowerment of women and will diversify CSO partnership to ensure initiatives pertaining to education against violence against women, rehabilitation programs for domestic violence survivors or those at risk and advocating for alternative sentences for women who have been sentenced to jail-time. Furthermore, the AIHRC will actively and regularly engage with the police, the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Women's Affairs and justice mechanisms to ensure the capacity, performance and resources of the government and judiciary are in place to fight for the elimination of violence against women.

Empowering, Promotion and Monitoring of Women's Reproductive Rights and Access to Health Care:

Women must have ownership and independence over their bodies. The AIHRC believes that women and girls must be educated and empowered with regards to their reproductive rights. In line with SDG 4: Quality Education and SDG 5: Gender Equality, the commission believes teaching girls about their reproductive rights and options is imperative in raising a self-aware future generation of Afghan women. Given the commission's MoU with the MoE, a formalized curriculum must be created where girls are educated about their reproductive rights.

The phenomena of child marriages is a risk to women and girls reproductive health. The AIHRC through monitoring, protection and prevention will ensure that appropriate mechanisms will be put in place to eliminate the occurrences of child marriage and that the health system plays a role in this. Ensuring that women and girls have equal and adequate access to health care must be made a priority. Afghan women are usually not made a priority within their household due to the patriarchy prevailing in the extended structure of Afghan families. Therefore, many women suffer from poor obstetric health, sustain prolonged illnesses and are not treated on time risking fatal circumstances. This puts many children at risk of being orphaned and being socialized with the notion that women's access and right to proper health care is not of importance. The AIHRC also will train and monitor health professionals, ensuring that they do not administer virginity tests and that they report instances of virginity testing. This is an important step in building upon the AIHRC's success in criminalizing forced virginity testing and ensuring the law is being widely practiced and respected.

AIHRC Child Policy

Introduction

The rights of children are a vital mandate that the AIHRC is committed to monitoring, protecting and putting in place measures that promote their human rights. Children are a demographic within Afghanistan whose needs, rights and best-interests are often overlooked, with poverty exacerbating their ability in realizing their potential as human beings. The commission has made it a priority to include the rights and best interests of children into the policy and programming of the government as part of their responsibility. The AIHRC has taken a leading role in outlining Afghanistan's guiding principles on child policies. The commission's two national inquiries on Bachi Baazi and Child Labor have already produced results in both criminalizing Bachi Baazi and policy development on the prevention of child labor in Afghanistan. The AIHRC has a nation-wide program on the protection, monitoring, and promotion of child rights which it will continue to strengthen and implement throughout all thirty-four provinces.

Background

The AIHRC has been an active institution in leading and setting the human rights agenda within Afghanistan, which includes the rights of Afghan children. The commission has a vigorous child field monitoring program which is active in all fourteen regional offices. This program focuses on surveying children within both the rural and urban areas of Afghanistan, monitoring their basic human rights which includes their access to health care, food, education and justice and freedom from harassment. The AIHRC child field monitoring program is the only program of its kind within Afghanistan providing primary qualitative and quantitative data which is important in monitoring the development progress within the country. Around 2500 children are interviewed by the AIHRC annually, as a part of this field monitoring program, representing a data set from 29 of Afghanistan's provinces.

The commission's border monitoring program is also a significant initiative set out by the AIHRC which monitors children who are trafficked, smuggled or

deported. The two-main entry and exit points the commission focusses on is the Afghan border with Pakistan and Iran. Annually, the AIHRC surveys 300 children in border areas. Our data has provided key insights into the struggles and violations of human rights children in these circumstances face. This has allowed the AIHRC to craft conscious and applicable policy recommendations to government and civil society organizations.

Promoting children's rights and in particular their freedom from punishment is a key focus of the AIHRC. Our Juvenile Justice Program has been successful in ensuring that children's rights are observed and protected in all 34 provinces by means of our 14 regional offices monitoring, protecting and promoting the welfare and human rights of Afghan children. The AIHRC deploys around 250 monitoring missions per year to monitor the condition of children in correctional centers. The commission takes surveys from the child prisoners, monitors their treatment and published our findings which is shared widely with relevant stakeholders.

The AIHRC continues to advocate against violence against children and forms of child abuse which include child labor and the recruitment of child soldiers. The commission monitors and reports on instances of child abuse throughout the country and is sure to report such cases to the appropriate judicial bodies to ensure Afghan children are given fair and equal access to justice. The AIHRC continues its child rights education program whereby staffers educate the public, CSOs and government bodies about the rights of children.

Key Principles:

The AIHRC has embedded the following key principles with relation to the commission's child policy:

1. Treating all Children with Respect and Dignity:

The AIHRC trains all staff to be vigilant and mindful of children's rights when conducting their work and within their personal affairs. This means respecting

their rights to freedom of speech, freedom of expression and their right to access to justice. Furthermore, in the process of interviewing children AIHRC staffers must be sure an adult guardian is present, ensuring the safety and rights of children are protected.

2. Zero Tolerance for Inappropriate Use of Language and Behavior:

The AIHRC regards any use of inappropriate language or behavior, including sexually suggestive language and actions, towards children and those with disabilities as inappropriate, harassment and abusive. The commission has a zero-tolerance attitude towards any abuses of this nature and will take the necessary steps towards achieving justice for children.

3. Preventing Risks of Danger or Injury for Children:

The AIHRC will ensure that no children will be harmed or put in potential danger within the scope of our work and mandate. Ensuring their safety and their ability to exercise their human rights is of the utmost importance for the AIHRC.

4. Strict Policy on the Interaction with Children and Use of Technology:

The commission prohibits any staffers from using any forms of technology to harass, exploit and/or inappropriately engage with children. The AIHRC has a zero-tolerance and firm stance against the use, dissemination and engagement with child pornography or suggestive explicit material. This also includes the use of children's photos without the consent of their legal guardian or being in the possession of, or distributing suggestive images, videos or depictions of children in any form.

5. Zero-Tolerance Towards Child Labor:

The commission has a zero-tolerance attitude towards the illicit use of children for any means of labor as outlined by Afghan national law. The commission remains committed to monitoring instances of child labor and preventing the culture of using children for free, cheap and/or exhaustive labor.

6. Advocating Against the Physical Abuse of Children:

The AIHRC promotes a zero-tolerance stance towards the physical abuse of children within their homes and at school. Afghanistan has unfortunately fostered an environment where it is accepted for teachers and parents to physically reprimand their children and students. This type of physical abuse leads to detrimental effects for young Afghans and perpetuates a cycle of abuse. The commission will continue to administer education programs for Afghan primary and secondary teachers, educating them about the harmful effects of their actions and explaining national law that prohibits such behavior.

Key Child Rights Issues:

At the national level the AIHRC is committed to advocating and promoting the following child rights based policies:

Bacha Baazi:

The AIHRC was the first institution to publish a report on *Bachaa Baazi* which has been internationally circulated and cited. Notably, the work of the AIHRC led to the criminalization of *Bachaa Bazi* in Afghanistan. The commission remains firm on advocating against this phenomena of using underage Afghan boys for sexual exploitation. The rights of children must be respected and any forms of child abuse, physical, emotional and sexual, must be persecuted by the Afghan judiciary. In continuing to monitor and advocate against *Bacha Baazi* the AIHRC will partner with relevant CSO and International Partners to prevent the continuation of this practice. The commission will continue to provide information and knowledge to relevant stakeholders and educate the public on why *Bacha Baazi* is not an accepted practice and reinforce the rights of children.

Child Rights Education:

The AIHRC actively monitors the rights of children and their access to education. According to official statistics three million Afghan children are deprived of education. Eight million Afghan children that attend primary and secondary schools face un-surmounted structural challenges impeding upon their success in school. This includes, a high-statistic of dropouts, absenteeism, lack of textbooks and teachers, poor

and inadequate educational materials and proper and accessible school facilities. The AIHRC through field monitoring will conduct annually surveys of children's access to education nationwide. These findings will be made public and shared widely with the relevant stakeholders which includes the Ministry of Education, the government and parliament.

The Recruitment and Use of Child Soldiers:

Afghan children have been amongst the most exploited demographic within the successive years of war in Afghanistan. They have not only had to bear the burden of growing up in uncertainty and volatility, but often many have forcibly been made into active participants of war, engaging in combat as child soldiers. The commission has been a staunch advocate against the use and recruitment of children as soldiers and promotes the strict prohibition of children engaging and participating in combat with government and non-government actors.

The AIHRC will continue to monitor the role of Afghan children in conflict and will be sure to report such cases to the relevant government agencies to prevent the occurrences of child participation in combat. Furthermore, the commission, through its MoU with the Afghan National Security and Defense Forces, will train state officials on the rights of children and the prevention of their recruitment for combat. The commission will share data and information to relevant stakeholders about the situation of Afghan child soldiers. Furthermore, the AIHRC will make all reports relating to child soldiers' public through our online open data system.

Child Labor:

The AIHRC has a zero-tolerance policy towards child labor and has made sure that no business is exchanged with enterprises that use and/or profit from the use of child labor. By means of the commission's actions, the AIHRC will advocate for all public and private entities in Afghanistan to respect Afghan law and not promote, profit or use child labor.

The commission will partner with CSOs who focus on the monitoring, promotion and prevention of child labor by providing knowledge and reports that the

commission has published. Furthermore, the AIHRC will ensure that all cases of child labor that have been reported and registered are forwarded to the proper legal bodies. This can ensure enterprises are aware of the human rights of children and the prohibition of the use of child labor as outlined by Afghan law.

Child Trafficking

The commission will continue to implement its border monitoring program which monitors children who are trafficked, smuggled or deported at the Pakistani and Iranian borders and in between provincial borders within Afghanistan. The AIHRC will produce an annual report on the findings which will offer key insights into the struggles and violations of human rights that children within these circumstances are subjected to. The AIHRC will craft conscious and applicable policy recommendations to government and civil society organizations that are based on respecting, promoting and protecting the human rights of Afghan children.

In moving a step forward, the AIHRC will expand its monitoring to surveying children who have been trafficked to see what challenges and dangers they faced along the way and understanding how they were initially trafficked. This is a key step the commission is taking to see how we can prevent instances of child trafficking and pinpoint where the vulnerabilities are for Afghan children. Furthermore, the AIHRC will look to partnering with CSO organizations to create a program which can rehabilitate children who have been trafficked, ensuring they receive the proper medical and psychological support needed to succeed in reintegrating into Afghan society. This includes ensuring they are relocated with their families or entered into facilities which are responsible for their wellbeing.

AIHRC Person(s) with Disabilities (PwD) Policy

Introduction:

2.7 per cent of Afghanistan's population is made up of people with disabilities. Though unfortunately this figure is on the rise due to continued conflict, the AIHRC remains a strong advocate for the human rights of Afghan Person(s) with Disabilities (PwD). The commission through monitoring, and research has been publishing reports on the human rights situation of PwDs, which covers data and information from 27 provinces of the country. Our trusted methods and strong regional and provincial representation has allowed the commission to provide a varied and accurate account about the barriers in place to PwDs observing and exercising their human rights. The AIHRC will continue to monitor, promote and protect the human rights of PwDs.

Background:

The constitution of Afghanistan, in Article 53, has defined the state's obligation toward PwDs. It stipulates, "The state shall adopt necessary measures to regulate medical services as well as financial aid to survivors of martyrs and missing persons, and for reintegration of the disabled and their active participation in society, in accordance with provisions of the law."¹ This constitutional provision also stipulates that, "the state shall guarantee the rights of retirees, and shall render necessary aid to the elderly, women without a caretaker, disabled, as well as poor orphans, in accordance with provisions with the law."² The AIHRC since its inception has taken serious and sincere steps in monitoring, promoting and reporting on the human rights situation of PwDs.

The AIHRC, by establishing this specific department, has taken a leading role in advocating for the rights of PwDs by monitoring and reporting on the situation of their human rights. The commission produces an annual report whereby our provincial offices carry out surveys that are disseminated throughout all of the provinces. In gathering a holistic understanding of the situation of PwDs the AIHRC is able to facilitate knowledge and

information sharing with CSOs and government bodies and offer key policy recommendations to the relevant government bodies. Our regional and provincial offices are also trained to take into consideration cross-cutting elements within these reports which include gender, age and level of education which is key in providing varied and representation data sets. Furthermore, the AIHRC has gone a step further and has categorized PwDs surveyed by the type of disability they have which allows for a deeper and wider understanding into the PwD demographic within Afghanistan.

With the advocacy of the AIHRC, Afghanistan ratified UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) on 18 September 2012. The AIHRC was the leading institution which translated the convention into four regional languages (Uzbeki, Pashai, Nuristani and Balochi), brail, Dari and Pashto. In 2010 the AIHRC prepared an action plan for the ratification of the CRPD which was based off of our extensive monitoring and evaluation of PwDs. The Afghan government relies on the AIHRC as an advisory and technical body in shaping the country's disability policies whereby the commission is sought to set the standards, guidelines and policies for Afghanistan alongside a committee of NGOs.

Alongside our in-depth monitoring and reporting of PwDs the AIHRC conducts knowledge sharing seminars, capacity building workshops and strong promotion and empowerment programs focussing on ensuring that the human rights of PwDs are protected and preserved. The commission has a strong partnership with regional CSOs to conduct joint educational programming on disability awareness. The AIHRC also advocates at the national level for the government and its relevant organs to pursue respecting and integrating PwDs into the Afghan social, political and economic life of the country.

Key Principles

The AIHRC has embedded the following key principles with relation to People(s) with Disabilities Policy:

1. The Constitution of Afghanistan

2. Ibid

Affirmative Action

PwDs should be treated with respect. The AIHRC will continue to promote, protect and monitor the situation of PwDs to ensure they are provided with the needed attention, adequate resources and affordable choices to independently live a dignified life.

No discrimination:

The AIHRC will monitor and investigate any situation leading to discrimination or wilful barriers made to deprive or discriminate against PwDs in the work place, provision of state services and/or in the public space.

Equal Access

The AIHRC will monitor and promote PwDs rights to equal access to public services, distribution of economic opportunities, land and all means provided by the Government. The AIHRC will also continue to monitor the physical access of PwDs to public spaces and their access to transportation.

Access to Justice, Information and Protection:

PwDs rights to justice, information and protection should be provided by the Government. The AIHRC will monitor the rights of PwDs and their access to justice, information and protection.

Active Social and Political Participation

Afghan PwDs are often excluded from the public sector within Afghanistan due to the taboo mentality of mental and physical disabilities still widely prevalent within Afghan society. As Afghanistan has gone through successive years of war, which has produced a high number of PwDs, The AIHRC believes that the Afghan government, state institutions and private enterprises must commit to meaningfully including PwDs in the public space and for them to be afforded the same access to political participation as all Afghan citizens.

Inclusive Development:

The AIHRC believes that PwDs must be given equal access and opportunity to both contribute and be active participants of the Afghan economy. Inclusive economic growth is at the core of a successful Afghan state development process. This includes the participation and inclusion of PwDs. The AIHRC advocates for public-private-partnerships that can facilitate the

inclusion of PwDs in the economy. Furthermore, the commission believes that enterprises should adopt quotas and targets for the number of PwDs that should be hired within an enterprise, as per Afghan law which stipulates 3% of staff population must be PwDs.

Access to Education:

The AIHRC believes that like all Afghan citizens, PwDs must be given equal access to education. Due to the shame associated with having a mental or physical disability, some PwDs do not attend school, being denied their right by family and/or extended family wanting to conceal the individual, societal discrimination and prevailing stereotypes. The commission will continue to monitor and report on the access to education of PwDs, safeguarding their human rights and in particular their access to education.

Currently, Afghanistan only has three operating primary educational facilities for PwDs that are visually impaired. However, these institutions are constantly full to capacity and report being unable to meet the needs of students due to underfunding, staff capacity and growing security restrictions. Ensuring that PwDs are able to receive an education, guarantees that they acquire the needed skills to pursue vocational endeavors and be productive and proactive members of society, which inevitably combats poverty, stereotypes associated with disabilities.

Equal Access to Health Care and Social Services:

The AIHRC believes that a specific social security system must be put in place that can facilitate the rehabilitation and reintegration of PwDs. Unfortunately, Afghanistan still suffers from cases of polio and due to the successive years of civil conflict, many Afghan children continue to be born with birth defects. Furthermore, there is no infrastructure in place to support Afghans suffering from mental disabilities and/or illness. The commission believes there must be an active effort made to ensure PwDs, particularly women, are able to seek adequate health care and have access to health professionals that can diagnose their needs accurately and in a timely manner.

The AIHRC Environmental Policy

Introduction

The Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) is committed to promoting and observing Afghanistan's environmental law, alongside utilizing international human rights instruments which includes the declaration on the protection of the environment and in line with UN SDG 13: Climate Action. This policy position has also taken into account the Paris Agreements which sets out the global agenda in preventing further danger to our planet by means of climate change.

Background

Protecting the environment is vital in realizing universal human rights. As stipulated in the Stockholm and Rio Declarations on environment and development, and also other UN treaties, the three principles in protecting and preserving our planet are the right to participation, right to information and right to redress. The AIHRC has been committed to both promoting and observing these principles. Afghanistan has also taken steps towards environmental protection with its law on environment and waste management which was ratified in 2007 and its imposed regulation on the decrease and prevention of air pollution in 2009.

The AIHRC is proud to highlight that Afghanistan ratified the Paris Agreements on 15 February 2017 and formally enforced the treaty on 17 March 2017. Afghanistan's percentage of greenhouse gasses for ratification is 0.05 percent. In line with the Paris Agreement and Afghanistan's commitment to this international treaty, the AIHRC continues to be an ally in environmental protection, aiming to keep global warming below 2°C, and supports the recommendations put forth by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The AIHRC encourages the Afghan government to take into consideration the three guiding principles of the agreement and reach a national environmental mandate that is: universal and legally binding, fair and differentiated, sustainable and dynamic.

The AIHRC has regularly attended, as a principle member, high level meetings at the Afghan High Commission on Prevention of Environmental Pollution (AHCPEP) in regard to environmental protection and preservation. These high-level meetings produce the valuable legal framework through which environmental protection will be carried out within Afghanistan. Notably, the AIHRC trained the staffers of the AHCPEP on human rights and environment. The commission remains committed in being an active participant in the environmental dialogue and policy making of Afghanistan, to ensure that future generations have a viable and sustainable environment to live in.

Principles:

The AIHRC advocates for the following principles

1. The AIHRC is committed to knowledge and information sharing with all relevant stakeholders, with particular attention to environmental initiatives. The commission is always keen on building partnerships that would be of positive benefit to the Afghan people. This includes, but is not limited to, offering knowledge on best practices for the construction of offices. The AIHRC's headquarters is a model for sustainable building construction and operation.
2. The AIHRC, prior to initiating a construction project, will conduct a local stakeholder meeting and provide a stakeholder mapping which will take into account the environmental impact. The commission is committed to projects that initiate little to no negative environmental externalities. To reinforce our legitimacy with the Afghan people, all documents will be made available to the public and a response mechanism will be put into place that can appropriately and in a timely manner respond to all stakeholder demands.
3. In remaining conscious of the environment we operate in, the AIHRC will register petitions from local stakeholders and will take earnest approaches in investigating environmental damage being inflicted by third parties. This includes working

closely with local and international environmental CSOs, empowering their mission and assisting their work through knowledge sharing.

Key Environmental Issues

Loss of Biodiversity and Long-Term Damage to Ecosystems

The AIHRC will always, prior to start of any construction project or when monitoring human rights within Afghanistan, will be conscious of our eco-footprint, ensuring we follow international protocol set out by the IPCC. The commission will remain committed to preserving the biodiversity of Afghanistan and opting for sustainable approaches to human rights advocacy and development.

Air Pollution

The AIHRC, in line with the Paris Agreement's core mandate of ensuring global warming remains below 2°C and Afghanistan's goal of ratifying 0.05% of global greenhouse gas emissions, will ensure that all projects carried out by the commission do not negatively impact the air quality of the regions in which we operate in. The commission is committed to moving towards not using generators for electricity purposes. Furthermore, the commission will allocate a specific budget for cleaning and reforestation initiatives.

Damage to Aquatic Ecosystems

The Afghan people and the AIHRC understand the importance of water as both a resource and commodity. The commission will not initiate nor endorse any project(s) that are known to potentially harm the aquatic ecosystem or hinder citizens access to potable drinking water. The AIHRC is against fracking, the construction of illegal wells and projects that knowingly put the environment at risk. Access to safe drinking water for citizens and water sanitation programs will remain key objectives for the AIHRC, with local approaches remaining at the heart of our strategy and mission.

Land Degradation

Ensuring a sustainable use of land and resources is a key focus for the AIHRC's activities. The commission is against the initiation of any project that would inflict irreversible land degradation. In committing to this the AIHRC has not, and will not, build any offices on land

allocated for agriculture, forests, or land needed to protect and promote the rich biodiversity of Afghanistan. In further emphasizing our commitment, the commission will pursue eco-friendly and sustainable construction models for future development sights and will advocate for all government and non-government bodies to take a similar stance.

Waste Production

In promoting a clean and sustainable environment, the AIHRC has implemented a strict and responsible waste management policy at our headquarters, our regional offices, and within our employee code of conduct. All offices and staffers are prohibited from littering and must respect the environment within which they operate in. Furthermore, staffers are to be environmental ambassadors advocating within their local communities proper and responsible waste disposal methods.

Baselines, Targets & Strategic Interventions

Strategic Objective One: Leadership

The AIHRC as an independent and influential institution in the areas of monitoring, protection and promotion of human rights is respected and holds a leadership role at the national and international level.

Box 12: Objectives 1.1 and Indicators

Objective 1.1: Human rights discourse in Afghanistan through active engagement, commitment and participation of stakeholders at the local, national and international level and utilization of the opportunities, mechanisms, procedures and mass media is strengthened and safeguarded.

Indicator 1.1.1: Degree to which human rights are observed throughout the peace process, which includes the presence of women and victims of human rights violations.

Baselines:

- No human rights clause were included in the peace agreement between the GoIRA and Hizb Islami peace accord
- No accountability mechanism is defined for the accountability of war crimes and human rights violations during war between parties to the current conflict
- The action plan of 1325 is approved
- There 10 women including the deputy of high peace council serving the peace,
- 4 women serves as minister and over 12 as deputy ministers. Numerous women served as the ambassadors to different countries
- Only one national inquiries were conducted on victims of terrorism and 21 of august was put in calendar to celebrate the victims of terrorism day

Targets:

- The future accords will have a human rights, women rights and accountability clause
- The action plan of 1325 is implemented and a report is released
- At least prominent women in each province are consulted about peace process
- Women positions at the top will be improved and 30 percent of civil servants will be composed of women
- Women continue to represent Afghanistan abroad
- Victims are compensated by the GoIRA and by the parties to the conflict through the approval of the law of compensations

Strategic Interventions:

1. Launching two national programs on peace, women and human rights in coalition with civil society organizations, academic institutions, national and international organizations
2. Conduct a survey measuring women's participation in local decision-making processes including development projects, budget preparation and provision of public services

Implementer:

The chairperson, Commissioners, Executive Director, Coordinators and head of regional and provincial offices.

Indicator 1.1.2: Degree to which the AIHRC's presence and reflection of its views appears in the national and international press.

Baselines:

- Annually 5 conferences have been held in the past 5 years
- The AIHRC released 483 press releases and statements were released by the AIHRC
- The AIHRC appeared and gave 86393 minutes of media interviews and comments

Targets:

- By 2023, the AIHRC maintain press conferences to annually 5 press conferences
- The AIHRC will react and promptly make its position known on any major human rights issues by issuing press releases
- The AIHRC will increase its presence on media and reach out to people through this means

Strategic Interventions:

1. Reflect and publish statements, announcements, reports and positions of the AIHRC through regular use of press conferences, media interviews, and publishing articles at the national and international levels
2. Active participation, presentation of commission viewpoints and positions at international meetings, conferences and dialogues

Implementer:

Chairperson and the AIHRC representative.

Indicator 1.1.3: Degree of progress of Afghanistan's engagement and interaction with the International Criminal Court (ICC) and other prominent human rights and treaty bodies within the United Nations system.

Baselines:

- The AIHRC is a prominent and a leading authority on human rights appearing frequently in local media
- The AIHRC attends and contributes to all important and leading human rights forum nationally, and at the global level
- The AIHRC is an A status NHRI and member of APF and GANHRI
- An International conference was held on accountability, justice and human rights
- A draft law on cooperation of the GoIRA and ICC is drafted by the AIHRC
- Afghanistan has submitted its UPR in the past
- Afghanistan submitted reports to the Committee against torture, CRC committee, CEDAW committee and ESCRs committee

Targets:

- The AIHRC will remain a prominent and leading authority on human rights in Afghanistan
- The AIHRC continue to attend all GANHRI, APF and UN meetings
- The AIHRC will retain it's A status
- Islamic Conference and UN will remain engaged on the Civilian Casualties
- The Law on cooperation of the GoIRA and ICC is approved
- Afghanistan submit its UPR to the HRC
- Afghanistan Submits its reports to the committee of convention against racial discrimination, and committee of conventions on rights of people with disabilities
- Afghanistan submits its report to committee of CEDAW
- AIHRC submits public submissions and shadow reports to the UN treaty bodies and Human Rights Council

Strategic Interventions:

1. Conduct national and international conferences covering pertinent human rights issues in cooperation with international institutions including the United Nations, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and other regional and international institutions
2. Provision of practical and enforceable recommendations to the Government of Afghanistan, the ICC and other human rights mechanisms on women, victims of human rights and the prosecution of human rights violators

Implementer:

The AIHRC chair, Commissioners and Executive Director.

Box 13: Objective 1.2 and Indicators

Objective 1.2: The Afghanistan human rights agenda is set by the AIHRC and widely reflected at the international level;

Indicator 1.2.1: Degree of change in relation to the occurrence of violence against Afghan women, in comparison to the situation of women in neighboring countries.

Baselines:

- There is annually 5000 cases of violence against women registered
- 4 women ministers and 12 deputy ministers, 2 mayors and 2 district governors are appointed. 456 women run for parliamentary elections out of 2522 candidates
- Afghanistan has 5 women ambassadors and several general councilors
- The EVAW law is kept as a special law
- A new position at the level of deputy attorney general is established
- A new EVAW tribunal is established by Supreme court

Targets:

- There will be a comparison studies in situation of women in the region, projecting and measuring Afghan women progress on elimination of violence against women and a report will be published annually
- The level of violence against women would not increase, from 5000 cases, but there are more frequent and free reports of violence against women
- The 20 days campaign against violence against women will cause an effective public attention on violence against women,
- The EVAW law will be implemented and reported
- The prosecutors are trained on EVAW law and CEDAW
- The Court function in 15 provinces

Strategic Interventions:

1. A national campaign raising public awareness on the elimination of violence against women
2. Conducting national inquiries on violence against women
3. Collecting data on the implementation of SDGs by the Afghan government especially on goal number five: gender equality and goal number sixteen: peace, justice and strong institutions
4. Present findings on major human rights issues at national and international conferences

Implementer:

Women Rights Coordinator, and Women's Rights Unit.

Indicator 1.2.2: Mechanisms established by the Afghan government for the protection of victims of human rights violations.

Baselines:

- The Anti-torture commission is established and functioning,
- Several national inquiries have been conducted,

Targets:

- By 2023, The Anti-torture commission will be recognized as a preventive national mechanism against torture,
- Two more national inquiries will be conducted,
- The justice mechanism will include victims in the proceedings against perpetrators,
- Compensation mechanisms are established based on the law of compensation
- By 2023, the new phase of transitional justice will be implemented and a report will be out

Strategic Interventions:

1. Collecting data on the implementation of SDGs by the Afghan government especially on goal number sixteen: peace, justice and strong institutions
2. Present findings on major human rights issues at national and international conferences

Implementer:

The AIHRC Coordinators and Program Units.

Indicator 1.2.3: Degree to which the government has paid attention to the improvements of the human rights situation of children, persons with disabilities and IDPs,

Baselines:

- The law and policies of protection of children is drafted,
- The law of People rights with disability is approved and is enforceable
- The policy of IDPs is in place

Targets:

- The law on protection of children is approved,
- The comprehensive code of children is approved
- The support program for assisting children, people with disabilities and IDPs are in place
- The law of people with disability is amended
- The policy of IDP is implemented

Strategic Intervention:

Conducting national inquiries on children, persons with disabilities and IDPs

Implementer:

Coordinators and Program Units of Child Rights, Persons with Disabilities Rights, and Monitoring and Investigation.

Indicator 1.2.4: Degree to which the right to the healthy living environment is observed and protected by the government. Additionally, sustainable mechanisms are created to prevent excessive use of water.

Baselines:

- The law of environment is approved
- The high commission on environment is established
- The action plan on implementation of SDGs is approved

Targets:

- The law of the environment and the law of waste management is implemented
- The High Commission on environment protection is more active
- The action plan on SDGs is implemented

Strategic Interventions:

1. Conducting monitoring and survey to measure protection of the environment and access to potable drinking water
2. Training to the members of high commission on protection of environment is conducted

Implementer:

The research and monitoring and investigation Unit, Legal advisor and the Regional Managers.

Box 14: Objective 1.3 and Indicators

Objective 1.3: The effective and meaningful presence of the AIHRC at the national and international levels is continued and maintained.

Indicator 1.3.1: The degree to which the Afghan government commits to implementing the commission's recommendations.

Baselines:

- The government of Afghanistan implements 32% of the AIHRC recommendations. The AIHRC placed 1441 recommendations to be implemented to by the government and only 472 recommendations have been implemented

Targets:

- The AIHRC will continue to follow up and advocate on implementation of the AIHRC recommendations. The AIHRC by end of 2023 expects to place over 2000 recommendations and 60% of them will be implemented

Strategic Interventions:

1. Active leadership and participation within advocacy and coordination networks at local, national and international levels

Implementer:

The AIHRC Chair and Commissioners and regional Managers.

Indicator 1.3.2: Degree of amendments made and the prevention of the enforcement of laws, policies and other legal documents that violate human rights.

Baselines:

- The AIHRC reviewed and took part on over 200 laws and regulations
- The AIHRC is a principle member of the legislative committee

Targets:

- All laws and regulations and policies that are drafted would be reviewed by the AIHRC
- The AIHRC continues to attend legislative committee

Strategic Interventions:

- By 2023, the AIHRC will have 5 laws to be drafted, amended or changed

Implementer:

The Commissioners and the legal advisor, Program Coordinators.

Indicator 1.3.3: Degree and the manner of participation, leadership and national and international joint efforts.

Baselines:

- Advocacy meetings: the AIHRC has attended and initiated over 2259 advocacy meetings at the provincial and national level
- The International Meetings: The AIHRC is regularly attending the GANHRI, UNHRC, APF and other international meetings

Targets:

- The AIHRC will make more advocacy meetings and by 2023, the meetings will rise up to 3000
- The AIHRC will attend all UNHRC related to Afghanistan
- All treaty bodies meeting related to Afghanistan
- All GANHRI and APF meetings
- All OHCHR meetings
- The AIHRC will submit shadow reports to treaty bodies periodically and attend the events related to Afghanistan

Strategic Interventions:

1. Active leadership and participation within advocacy and coordination networks at local, national and international levels
2. Taking a leading role in managing the Commission for the Prohibition of Torture
3. Active participation of the AIHRC in the meetings of GANHRI, APF and other prominent regional and international organizations

Implementer:

The Chairperson, Commissioners, Coordinators and regional program managers, and program Units.

Indicator 1.3.4: The prevention of human rights violators from being appointed into top government positions.

Baselines:

- An advisory body to the president on the senior appointment was led by the AIHRC

Targets:

- The advisory board will be reactivated and all senior appointments will be reviewed and vetted
- The AIHRC will produce annual reports on the performance of the government on the recruitment of government officials based on merit and human rights reputations

Strategic Interventions:

1. An attempt to establish a high-level presidential advisory board which will identify and prevent the appointment of a government official, at any level, guilty of human rights violations

Implementer:

The Chairperson and Commissioners

Baselines, Targets & Strategic Interventions

Strategic Objective Two: Promotion and Empowerment

Human rights have been promoted at the level of individuals, communities, institutions and national plans. Individuals are able to exercise their human rights and institutions are able to fulfill their obligations to observe, protect and promote human rights.

Box 15: Objectives 2.1 and Indicators

Objective 2.1: The knowledge, skills, understanding and capacity of individuals and institutions in observing, respecting and improving the situation of human rights in Afghanistan is enhanced by the AIHRC's education and promotion initiatives.

Indicator 2.1.1: Increased demand by both government and non-governmental institutions for the AIHRC to conduct human rights training programs.

Baselines:

- The AIHRC has been asked and training the MoI, MoD, NDS and MoE, MoHE, MoRRD, Parliament and IDLG
- In 1396 or annually:
- 3590 cadres and cadets of the national defense and security forces were trained
- 7 MoUs have been signed with different government institution
- 724 judges and prosecutors were trained
- 624 Human Rights defenders were trained
- 400 journalists were trained
- 4000 people were trained from different walk of life
- 4200 university students were trained
- 21440 people's covered by direct half day awareness raising programs

Targets:

- The AIHRC continue training the MoD, ANA, MoI, ANP, NDS and Government employees at all level
- By the end of 2023, number of ANA, ANP and NDS trained will increase to 12000
- 2000 Judges and prosecutors were trained
- 1200 human rights defenders would be trained
- 800 journalists trained
- 8400 university students trained
- 22000 people will be covered by direct awareness program of the AIHRC

Strategic Interventions:

1. Conducting human rights education for health care providers and educators
2. Raising awareness and engaging with women, youth and local inhabitants on cultural heritage and its preservation
3. Creating tailored human rights education for women, youth and children
4. Organizing one-day conferences to commemorate national and international human rights events
5. Producing and broadcasting radio and television programs focusing on disseminating the core ideals of universal human rights
6. Producing and widely distributing monthly human rights publications, videos and actively utilizing social media channels

Implementer:

The IHL training departments, Human Rights Education Unit and Regional Offices.

Indicator 2.1.2: The increase or decrease in the number of complaints against judicial organs and defense and security forces.

Baselines:

- The AIHRC receive round 7200 complains annually

Targets:

- The AIHRC will record a decreased or increased number of complains
- By 2023, the AIHRC will investigate, follow up and close all cases referred to the AIHRC
- It is expected to receive 7000 complains annually

Strategic Interventions:

1. Conducting human rights education for defense and security institutions
2. Conducting human rights education for judges and prosecutors

Implementer:

Coordinators and Regional Offices.

Indicator 2.1.3: An increase in the number of human rights ambassadors and defenders within the provincial districts.

Baselines:

- Currently the AIHRC has registered 580 human rights defenders at the national, provincial and district level
- Targets:
- The AIHRC expects the number of HR defenders to be doubled during the period
- We aim to have 1200 human rights defenders at the national level
-

Strategic Interventions:

1. Raising awareness and engaging with women, youth and local inhabitants on cultural heritage and its preservation
2. Creating tailored human rights education for women, youth and children
3. The establishment of volunteer human rights councils at the district level in both rural and urban areas within Afghanistan

Implementer:

Coordinators and Regional Offices.

Box 16: Objectives 2.2 and Indicators

Objective 2.2: Human rights concepts and values are included in national policies and programs and within the curriculum of education and training centers throughout the country.

Indicator 2.2.1: The degree and scope of inclusion of human rights, women's rights, peace and justice within the educational curriculum at the primary, secondary and higher education levels.

Baselines:

- Currently school text books are reviewed and human rights are part of the school text books

Targets:

- The school text books will be further reviewed and women rights, peace, justice and respect for human rights, and rights of people with disability will be further included in the text books
- The curriculum will reflect human rights, women rights, peace and justice and rights of people with disabilities

Strategic Interventions:

1. Signing a memorandum of agreement with the Ministry of Higher Education, national and private universities and institutions of higher education

Implementer:

Commissioners and Coordinator of Human Rights Education.

Indicator 2.2.2: The degree to which human rights centered subjects are taught at national and private higher educational institutions.

Baselines:

- Currently human rights subject is being taught at 51 higher education institutes and universities
- Annually 51 MoUs are signed with Higher Education Institutes and universities

Targets:

- Human Rights will be taught at all higher education institutes and universities
- 57 universities and higher education institutes will teach human rights
- Human rights will be mainstreamed through all academic work and literatures

Strategic Interventions:

1. Creating and teaching human rights-based courses in national and private universities
2. Strengthening the current MoU with the Ministry of Education to include human rights, women's rights and child rights within the educational curriculum and ensuring the current educational curriculum is in line with the principles of universal human rights
3. Prepare and develop a human rights and international humanitarian curriculum for security and defense institutions

Implementer

Commissioners and Coordinator of Human Rights Education.

Box 17: Objectives 2.3 and Indicators

Objective 2.3: The capacity of individuals, government agencies, civil society organizations, media outlets is enhanced and becomes a catalyst for change and the enjoyment of human rights by Afghan citizens;

Indicator 2.3.1: Degree of participation and implementation of human rights activities by the AIHRC's civil society partner institutions.

Baselines:

- The AIHRC has MoUs with over 31 CSOs active on the area of human rights
- Limited Number of CSOs has the capacity to partner on human rights education with the AIHRC

Targets:

- The number of projects implemented by the CSOs will increase by 10% annually
- The AIHRC will build the capacity and hand over projects to annually 2 CSOs
- 360 human rights councils at the district levels of 34 provinces will be established and trained

Strategic Interventions:

1. Holding human rights education for civil society organizations, journalists and clergy members
2. Provide three-month capacity-building trainings, research and internship opportunities for civil society activists, media and graduates of universities

Implementer:

Commissioners and Regional Offices.

Indicator 2.3.2: Degree to which referrals are made, complaints are reported and cooperation is sought by the government and non-governmental organizations.

Baselines:

- In 1396, the AIHRC received:
- A, 1816 letters, recommendations and referrals and follow up made to the commission
- 2, 785 letters and correspondents of cooperation requests and invitation to assist were received

Targets:

- By 2023, the AIHRC will expect
- To keep the level of cooperation at the current 1396 level annually
- Increase by 10% of its correspondents and degree of cooperation

Strategic Interventions:

- Advocacy meetings, Publishing reports, and recommendations,
- Standard and quality services
- More meetings and talk with Government agencies with clear aim to enhance their responsibilities

Implementer:

Commissioners, coordinators and regional managers.

Indicator 2.3.3: Degree to which human rights issues are observed or reflected in the media.

Baselines:

- Currently human rights is reflected on all major media on a weekly bases
- In 1396, 61 times the AIHRC was named, cited and referenced to by media
- 182 times the AIHRC
- Activities were reflected or broad cast by media
- 554 articles were published or focused on human rights on print and internet based media
- The AIHRC conducted 814 media interviews
- Over 8000 minutes of radio and TV program allocated to human rights annually

Targets:

- Number of articles or reports on Media will increase by 10%
- The AIHRC will be frequent and prominent face of human rights face on media
- The AIHRC will reach out to Afghanistan citizen by using media

Strategic Interventions:

1. Cooperation and partnership with media outlets, ensuring they are given accurate and substantive information about the human rights situation within Afghanistan bringing together both media and democracy
2. Producing and broadcasting radio and television programs focusing on disseminating the core ideals of universal human rights

Implementer:

Commissioners, coordinators and regional managers.

Box 18: Objectives 2.4 and Indicators

Objective 2.4: Innovative and quality human rights services are provided by the AIHRC with both national and international standards being considered.

Indicator 2.4.1: Increased number of AIHRC's visitors, clients and stakeholders.

Baselines:

- In 1395, 1396, The AIHRC received: 25628 complainants, victims and their companies to its offices
- 13003 visitors
- 10036 people visited the AIHRC to study and conduct research using the AIHRC resource centers

Targets:

- The number of the AIHRC visitors will increase by 10 %
- By 2023, the AIHRC will receive annually over 12000 people to bring complains
- 15000 to visit and 15000 to use the AIHRC resource centers

Strategic Interventions:

1. Strengthen and continue to actively use the AIHRC webpage and social media outlets
2. Ensure all offices are equipped with the necessary technology needed to conduct activities

Implementer:

Commissioners and Coordinators.

Indicator 2.4.2: Both the external and internal evaluation results of the implementation of the AIHRC's Strategic Plan.

Baselines:

- The AIHRC has been audited and evaluated by the external evaluators and auditors, and the results were satisfactory, to excellent

Targets:

- The AIHRC will conduct and keep the evaluation
- The AIHRC will conduct
- 5 financial audits
- 2 evaluations
- and 5 internal evaluation and internal financial audits

Strategic Interventions:

1. Monitor and evaluate the programs and administrative activities of the commission
2. Conduct both an internal and external audit program
3. Monitor and evaluate the programs and administrative activities of the commission
4. Conduct both an internal and external audit program
5. Conduct annual AIHRC staff reviews and ensure an accurate internal assessment is performed
6. Implement a physical inventory plan for AIHRC's goods and assets in regional and provincial offices
7. Assess the degree to which the strategic plan is implemented (to be carried out by an external evaluator)
8. Survey and evaluate the context for establishing a National Human Rights Institute (the first of its kind in Afghanistan) and a national human rights television program

Implementer:

Executive Director, MERU and Coordinators.

Indicator 2.4.3: Degree to which the AIHRC's print and internet publications are utilized.

Baselines:

- In 1396, the AIHRC published 240000 volumes of magazines, and distributed
- webpage is reviewed by 200000 people annually,
- The AIHRC Facebook has 60000 likes,

Targets:

- By 2023, the AIHRC will publish: 1000000 volumes of magazine
- The AIHRC webpage and downloads will increase by 10%
- The AIHRC Facebook likes increased to 100000

Strategic Interventions:

1. Prepare and publish the AIHRC's six-month and annual reports
2. Survey and evaluate the context for establishing a National Human Rights Institute (the first of its kind in Afghanistan) and a national human rights television program
3. Producing and widely distributing monthly human rights publications, videos and actively utilizing social media channels

Implementer:

Commissioners and Coordinators.

Indicator 2.4.4: Stakeholder degree of satisfaction with AIHRC programming and performance.

Baselines:

1. In 1396, the number of participants to the AIHRC programs and referral to the AIHRC and number of complainant bringing complains and petitions have increased by 32 percent compared to the 1393

Targets:

1. The number of people referring to the AIHRC, bringing cases and attending our meetings and programs will raise by 10%,
2. The number of people filled the AIHRC evaluation and result sheet surveys will increase by 10%

Strategic Interventions:

1. Strengthen and continue to actively use the AIHRC webpage and social media outlets
2. Ensure all offices are equipped with the necessary technology needed to conduct activities
3. Review the AIHRC's organizational structure in accordance with the new strategic plan; incorporating change management techniques to ensure maximum efficacy and output is delivered
4. Review the current data collection systems of the AIHRC and develop new systems where needed, ensuring the commission is utilizing advance data collection and analysis mechanisms
5. Conduct an annual conference to review and approve the Annual Action Plan
6. Monitor and evaluate the programs and administrative activities of the commission
7. Conduct both an internal and external audit program
8. Conduct annual AIHRC staff reviews and ensure an accurate internal assessment is performed
9. Implement staff capacity building programs which will be made available to all AIHRC offices
10. Design, compile and review regulations, guidelines and other administrative documents
11. Prepare and publish the AIHRC's six-month and annual reports
21. Implement a physical inventory plan for AIHRC's goods and assets in regional and provincial offices
31. Assess the degree to which the strategic plan is implemented (to be carried out by an external evaluator)
41. Develop a strategic plan for the next five-year planning period
15. Survey and evaluate the context for establishing a National Human Rights Institute (the first of its kind in Afghanistan) and a national human rights television program

Implementer:

Commissioners and Coordinators.

Baselines, Targets & Strategic Interventions

Strategic Objective Three: Monitoring and Protection

Human rights and freedoms of Afghan citizens are protected and respected in the laws, policies and practices of the responsible institutions as a result of the effective and continuous monitoring of the AIHRC.

Box 19: Objectives 3.1 and Indicators

Objective 3.1: The AIHRC's continuous, targeted and effective monitoring, using new technologies and methods, protects human rights and prevents human rights abuses;
Indicator 3.1.1: Prisoners who are illegally detained and identified by the AIHRC are released.
Baselines: - In 1396, the AIHRC identified and released 300 illegally detained people Targets: - The AIHRC will work with the police and prosecutors that no citizens are detained without charges - The number will decline from the 300 to 150 annually - The capacity and prosecutor general office Strategic Interventions: - Create an online monitoring system which is capable of receiving complaints and ensuring up to date databases are maintained - Continuous and targeted monitoring of Afghan detention centers, women prisons and juvenile centers, shelters, hospitals, and orphanages - Monitor the implementation of the presidential decree on the pardon and commutation of sentences. Prepare a list of women prisoners who are charged of immoral crimes to be pardoned and or their prison time be changed to a prison substitute Implementer: Commissioners and Coordinators of the Monitoring and Investigation and Ombudsman Office, and Regional Offices.
Indicator 3.1.2: Witnessing a reduction in the number of cases of torture and abuse of prisoners.
Baselines: - The last AIHRC record shows 79 cases of torture in 2017 - No perpetrators committed crimes of torture are tried and sentenced Targets: - This number will decrease to below 40 or any increase in the number will be verified and reported - Every perpetrator of crime of torture are brought to justice Strategic Interventions: - Continuous and targeted monitoring of Afghan detention centers, women prisons and juvenile centers, shelters, hospitals, and orphanages - Monitoring the practices of defense and security institutions - Taking a leading role in managing the Commission for the Prohibition of Torture Implementer: Chairperson, Commissioners, Executive Director and all offices.

Indicator 3.1.3: Women and girls have equal, adequate, and affordable access to education and health services.

Baselines:

- Currently there are 9 million children are in school. 35 % of them are girls
- 3 million children are out of school which
- 60% of women don't have access to health care

Targets:

- The age and grades of girls that attend school are increased
- Provision of healthcare to women are adequate, accessible and affordable
- The percentage of women have access to health care is 65%

Strategic Interventions:

Strengthening the women rights monitoring and protection program by expanding its task to monitor and survey women and girls access to health and education

Monitor and ensure that the national budget is both balanced and equally distributed. The budget would be reviewed on the bases gender and the needs of children

Implementer:

Chairperson, Commissioners and Child Rights Unit.

Indicator 3.1.4: Reduction of violence against women and children.**Baselines:**

- Annually around 5000 kind of violence against women are registered
- Around 1200 cases of violence against women are prosecuted and followed up under the ERAW law
- The number of violence against children are unknown and a fraction of it around 700 cases are registered
- The AIHRC conducts monitoring to hospitals, shelters, and women detention centers and annually conducts over 800 monitoring missions

Targets:

- By 2023, the AIHRC will expand its reach and capacity to register and follow up all cases of violence against women
- The AIHRC will monitor the implementation of the ERAW law in 22 provinces by prosecutors and ERAW tribunal,
- All cases that are processed by the ERAW tribunal will be reported
- AIHRC will monitor the performance of the ERAW tribunals in all provinces and its expansions from 14 provinces to 22 provinces
- The AIHRC will conduct monitoring missions to hospitals, shelters and women detention centers
- The AIHRC publish two annual reports on situation of violence against women and situation of women
- The AIHRC will monitor the situation of children in conflict with law in correction centers and implement 400 field monitoring missions annually
- The AIHRC will continue its border monitoring and field monitoring missions

Strategic Interventions:

1. Continuous and targeted monitoring of Afghan detention centers, women prisons and juvenile centers, shelters, hospitals, and orphanages
2. Monitoring the situation of women serving in police, ANA, and the NDS and investigate their complaints and petitions against their institutions
3. Strengthening the women rights monitoring and protection program by expanding its task to monitor and survey women and girls access to health and education
4. Monitor the implementation of the presidential decree on the pardon and commutation of sentences. Prepare a list of women prisoners who are charged of immoral crimes to be pardoned and or their prison time be changed to a prison substitute
5. Monitor and ensure that the national budget is both balanced and equally distributed. The budget would be reviewed on the bases gender and the needs of children
6. Publishing thematic, research and monitoring reports on thematic human rights issues, women, girls and children
7. Provide shadow reports to United Nations Human Rights mechanisms and treaty bodies, including CEDAW and CRC

Implementer:

Commissioners and Coordinators, Regional and Provincial offices.

Indicator 3.1.5: Improved access to opportunities, services and care for peoples with disabilities, the elderly and IDPs.

Baselines:

- The Convention of rights of the people with disabilities are approved
- The law of people with disability is approved
- People with disabilities are provided with land slot and apartments
- A survey of situation of elderly was conducted in 2012
- In 1395 and 1396, the AIHRC place over 252 recommendations to government on rights of people with disabilities

Targets:

- The convention of people rights with disability is monitored in all 29 provinces
- The law of people with disability will be amended
- Data about the People with disabilities will be updated and disseminated
- The law on protection of elderly people are drafted
- The AIHRC will follow with government to recommend all AIHRC recommendations on the rights of people with disabilities
- Annually there will be a report on situation of people rights with disabilities produced and published

Strategic Interventions:

1. Monitoring rights to freedom of assembly, access to public services and the situation of elderly citizens and IDPs
2. The AIHRC will conduct a survey and partner with CSOs on article 19, 21 and 27 of CPRDs
3. Monitor how the Afghan government implements the recommendations of UN human rights mechanisms

Implementer:

Commissioner and Coordinator of the PWD.

Box 20: Objectives 3.2 and Indicators

Objective 3.2: The impacts of human rights violations of individuals and vulnerable groups, including women, children, and disabled people, are identified and addressed by the commission's investigation and verification system.

Indicator 3.2.1: Reduced / Increased number of visitors and complaints received by the AIHRC.

Baselines:

- In 1395 and 1396, 25832 and 22853 people visited the AIHRC respectively and 25628 of them were victims or complainants
- In 1395 and 1396, The AIHRC received over 15298 complains and petitions

Targets:

- The AIHRC aim to increase the number of visitors to its offices, programs, and website by 20%
- By 2023, all complaints will be registered, processed and closed within a reasonable timeframe

Strategic Interventions:

1. Registering, processing, documentation and the follow up of complaints of violations of human rights and violence against women, children and other vulnerable groups

Implementer:

Commissioners and Regional and Provincial Offices.

Indicator 3.2.2: The degree to which AIHRC recommendations and referred cases are addressed by the relevant legal authorities.

Baselines:

- In 1396, the AIHRC has placed and issued 1441 recommendations
- 472, recommendations are implemented
- of the 5600 cases of human rights violations that were referred to the justice mechanisms in 1395 and 1396, 1590 cases were resolved

Targets:

- The AIHRC will keep the number of recommendations to be implemented over 50%
- By 2023, all complaints referred to justice mechanism will be solved

Strategic Interventions:

1. Supporting and advocating for the victims of human rights abuses, violence against women and children and other vulnerable groups. Furthermore, introducing them to supporting institutions

Implementer:

Commissioners, and Coordinators, and Regional and Provincial Office Managers.

Indicator 3.2.3: Degree to which the cases of violence against women, children, journalists and human rights defenders are followed up by law enforcement agencies.

Baselines:

- 3488 cases of violence against women are prosecuted by the justice mechanism,
- Number of cases of violence against journalists that were prosecuted are very few than 5 cases
- And there is no data on how many cases of violence against children are followed up. Only one officer was dismissed of the case of Bacha bazi

Targets:

- The number of cases of violence against women would be 70% of cases referred to the justice and legal entities
- All allegations against violators of human rights of Journalists and the child rights abusers will be prosecuted

Strategic Interventions:

1. Registration, investigation and the follow up of human rights defenders', women rights activists and CSOs complaints and ensuring their protection

Implementer:

Commissioner and Coordinator of Women Rights Unit and Regional and Provincial Program Managers.

Box 21: Objectives 3.3 and Indicators

Objective 3.3: Human rights are protected by enacting, amending, and modifying the laws, regulations and legal instruments through legal guarantees, conducting investigations and presenting recommendations to the appropriate national and international actors.

Indicator 3.3.1: Number of laws and legal resources reviewed and approved in accordance with human rights standards.

Baseline:

- The AIHRC reviewed over 200 laws and placed recommendations on 12 laws

Targets:

- The AIHRC will review and work with the legislative committee that all laws and regulations will have compliance with the international human rights norms

Strategic Interventions:

1. Active participation in drafting committees to amend laws, regulations, bills, policies, and national programs. Furthermore, submitting proposals for the inclusion of human rights standards within the content of these documents
2. Conduct coordination meetings with legislative bodies

Implementer:

Commissioners and Coordinators and Legal advisor.

Indicator 3.3.2: Number of AIHRC recommendations accepted for the amendments of Afghan laws and policies.

Baselines:

- In 270 laws and regulations that are reviewed, almost all of them are complying or have been improved in compliance with the international human rights laws
- MoDs, NSC, and Mol has policies that integrate human rights

Targets:

- By 2023, all laws and regulations and policies are reviewed by the AIHRC and the AIHRC recommendations are taken into consideration by the legislative committee and parliament

Strategic Interventions:

1. Conduct coordination meetings with legislative bodies
2. Identify and adopt measures to prevent the implementation of laws, policies, and other measures that are not in line with the human rights obligations of the Afghan Government

Implementer:

Executive Director and Legal Advisor

Box 22: Objectives 3.4 and Indicators

Objective 3.4: Protection and monitoring programs resulting in the observance of international humanitarian law and human rights law by defense and security forces during armed conflicts;

Indicator 3.4.1: Reduced civilian casualties perpetrated by security and defense forces.

Baseline:

- In 1396, the number of civilian casualties recorded by the AIHRC rose to 9413, of which 9% are perpetrated by the Government forces,

Target:

- The role of government in perpetrating violence against civilians and causing civilian casualties will reduce below 5%

Strategic Interventions:

1. Monitoring the observance of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) by armed conflict groups in Afghanistan
2. Monitoring, collecting information and reporting violations committed by non-state armed groups; holding them accountable, ensuring International Humanitarian Law (IHL) is observed
3. Supporting and advocating for the victims of armed conflict, ensuring their human rights are met
4. Prepare and publish an annual report on violations of humanitarian law within the Afghan context
5. Conducting and coordinating meetings with defense and security institutions, the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross and other civil society organizations
6. Working with victims of war, with a focus on women and children, advocating for their rights
7. Embark on a new phase of Transitional Justice in Afghanistan
8. Registration, documenting and referral of international crime cases (war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide) to justice and judicial institutions

Implementer:

Commissioners and SIT and Ombudsman Units, Regional and Provincial Managers,

Indicator 3.4.2: Reduction in the number of child soldiers being recruited by armed conflict groups.

Baseline:

- Currently there are only 29 cases of child soldiers reported to the AIHRC

Target:

- The AIHRC will further monitor the situation and report any increase and decreases to the number of child soldiers verified

Strategic Interventions:

1. Supporting and advocating for the victims of armed conflict, ensuring their human rights are met
1. Monitoring ANA and ANP bases for recruiting child soldiers

Implementer:

Commissioner and Coordinator of Child Rights, Regional and Provincial Managers

Indicator 3.4.3: The number of cases of international crimes addressed by the Afghan judicial authorities.

Baseline:

- The Judiciary has yet to convene and try any one on the charges of crimes defined under the international criminal court

Targets:

- The new office of prosecutor general will prosecute all cases of international crimes nature
- The AIHRC will run the new phase of transitional justice and documents cases of International crimes for criminal investigations

Strategic Interventions:

1. Prepare and publish an annual report on violations of humanitarian law within the Afghan context
Conducting and coordinating meetings with defense and security institutions, the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross and other civil society organizations
2. Embark on a new phase of Transitional Justice in Afghanistan
3. Registration, documenting and referral of international crime cases (war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide) to justice and judicial institutions

Implementer:

Commissioners and Coordinators, Regional and Provincial office managers

Indicator 3.4.4: Degree of attention paid to the protection of victims of terrorism, widows, women and girls, victims of sexual violence in conflict.

Baselines:

- The law on compensation to the victims of terrorism is drafted
- A national day for the victims of terrorism is set in the calendar

Targets:

- The law of compensation to the victims of terrorism is approved
- A policy of protecting women in conflict will be drafted and implemented

Strategic Interventions:

1. Active participation on the legislative committee
2. Draft a policy on protecting women in conflict and submit it to the government
3. Monitoring and advocating for the law and policy to be implemented

Implementer:

Commissioners and legal advisor

Methodology employed for the AIHRC 2019-2023 Strategic Planning Process

The new five-year Strategic Plan of the AIHRC, based on the consultation processes and recommendations of the evaluation of the previous Strategic Plan (SP), aims to enhance the AIHRC's lead role on human rights monitoring, protection and awareness, and the organizational and the managerial development of the AIHRC as an effective and influential human rights authority at the regional, national and international levels.

Methodology used for formulation of AIHRC's strategy for (2019-2023)

With the direct supervision of AIHRC Executive Director and the technical assistance of AIHRC Policy Advisor, the Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Unit (MERU) of the AIHRC led a consultative and participatory approach for the development of a new AIHRC Strategic Plan for the 2019-2023 period.

Table 2: The following steps and timeframe were considered for 2019-2023 strategic plan

No.	Description	Timeframe	Remarks
1	Consultation workshops and data collection process as follows: - One full day workshop with AIHRC staff members - One full day workshop with the AIHRC stakeholders	August 2018	Field visits to AIHRC regional offices in six zones for the consultation meetings as follows: - Kabul Regional Office Consultation Meeting: the representatives of (14) central, eastern and southern provinces were brought together at this meeting. - Kunduz Regional Office Consultation Meeting: the representatives of (4) north-eastern provinces were present at this meeting. - Bamyan Regional Office Consultation Meeting: the representatives of (5) central provinces attended this meeting. - Kandahar Regional Office Consultation Meeting: the representatives of (3) south-western provinces were present at this meeting. - Mazar-i-Sharif Regional Office Consultation Meeting: the representatives of (5) northern provinces attended this meeting. - Herat Regional Office Consultation Meeting: the representatives of (4) western provinces participated in this meeting.
2	Data compilation and process, information analysis, and desk review	September 2018	(72) group-based SWOT analysis took place during the consultation workshop process throughout the consultation workshops.
3	Draft Development (preliminary text, draft, and finalization)	October & November, 2018	The drafting process took into account the data collected and analyzed from the consultation workshop processes, and to reflect the recommendations and lessons learned from the evaluation of the previous AIHRC Strategic Plan.
4	Draft consultation and feedback by AIHRC Donors	25 th October, 2018	The 2019-2023 AIHRC Strategic Plan draft was shared with the donors and their feedback and suggestions were noted during a project committee meeting (PCM) and considered in the Strategic Plan.
5	Draft consultation and feedback by AIHRC staff and relevant stakeholders	December 2018	The Strategic Plan and Action Plan drafts were disseminated to AIHRC's staff (regional and provincial managers) and relevant stakeholders for their feedback and suggestions.
6	Approval of the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan by the AIHRC's Board of Commissioners as well as the approval of the new Strategic Plan and Action Plan in the AIHRC annual conference. This conference was held in Kabul at the end of December, 2018.	December, 2018	Before implementation, the Strategic Plan and Action Plan will require approval from the Board of commissioners of the AIHRC. There was a total number of 151 staff member participants (58 Female & 93 Male) who attended this two-day conference. Furthermore, Chairperson Dr. Samar, AIHRC Commissioners, AIHRC Executive Director and all members of the AIHRC top management were present in the process of the Strategic Plan approval.



■ **Image 1** Consultation Meeting in Balkh Province

In order to create a common ground for capturing expressed views of relevant stakeholders, various analytical tools, such as SWOT, STEP, PEST, and PESTLE were implemented within the process.¹ However, the impact of internal and external factors was mainly sourced through a SWOT analysis exercise which shed light on the AIHRC's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

The process in collecting the data needed for the 2019-2023 AIHRC Strategic Plan included:

Formation of a Strategic Plan Review Team: The AIHRC formed a core team dedicated to bringing together and leading the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan process. The departments included were: Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Unit (MERU), Program Unit Coordinators and the Database Unit. All worked in facilitating the consultative processes and workshops within the provinces, as well as data collection and analysis.

Desk review: All relevant documents, including the AIHRC thematic and annual reports, final report on the external impact evaluation of the AIHRC, the AIHRC 2014-2018 Strategic and Action Plans' evaluation reports and relevant reports on human rights from the United Nations and international agencies were thoroughly reviewed and consulted.

Consultation with AIHRC program and admin staff: A full-day workshop was convened with the AIHRC provincial and regional office staffers (including program and admin staff) to express their thoughts and recommen-

1. SWOT = Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Threat; STEP/PEST= Social, Technological, Economic, Political; PESTLE = Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal, Environmental. These tools are frequently used for situational analysis, however, the most common tool is SWOT that is most often used to highlight internal and external factors an organization would encounter with.



■ **Image 2** Consultation Meeting in Bamyan

dations to the team. The discussions were further shaped through plenary and group discussions, as well as individual feedback (in written form). To highlight the internal and external factors impacting routine activities of the AIHRC and identifying new capacities for human rights activities and future delegation and partnership, the SWOT analytical tool was used. Between August 2018 and December 2018, a total number of 1050 stakeholders were a part of the consultation process. The AIHRC team visited, in addition to Kabul province, five other provinces: Kunduz, Bamyan, Kandahar, Mazar-i-Sharif (Balkh) and Herat.²



■ **Image 3** Consultation Meeting in Herat

Consultation with relevant stakeholders: The stakeholders included university professors, NGO representatives, women's activist groups, media representatives, members of Ulema council, and members of local authorities (governor office, police, and judicial bodies), members of provincial councils, Members of Parliament, community elders and leaders, members of lawyer's associations, private sector and business community. The stakeholders shared their views during the SWOT analysis exercise and provided recommendations and viewpoints for the formulation of the Strategic Plan.

2. Please consult annex for full breakdown of SWOT analysis.

Exchange of correspondence with the AIHRC regional and provincial managers: The regional (satellite offices) and provincial managers were asked to provide their views on very specific human rights issues and priorities based on the peculiarities of their working areas, as well as providing feedback and suggestions on the needed changes they deem necessary within the structure and authorities of their offices.



■ **Image 4** Working Group during Kabul Consultation Meeting

Consultation on the preliminary draft with AIHRC staff, relevant stakeholders, and donors: The Strategic Plan draft has been shared with AIHRC regional and provincial staffers, managers, and with donors and relevant stakeholders. Upon completion of this phase of the process the finalized text was submitted to the AIHRC's board of commissioners for approval. Furthermore, a two-day conference was held in Kabul at the end of December 2018 where a total number of 151 regional and provincial staffers participated (58 Female & 93 Male).

The discussions of all meetings were recorded and publically disseminated and the AIHRC's gathered participant feedback from the conference and workshop process to evaluate the findings for creating a more effective future program. The entire methodology was based on the assessment of the AIHRC's working environment (new opportunities, challenges, new capacities) on a Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) through the broad participation and consultation with relevant stakeholders (government and non-government), and identification of a clear means for verification of expected outcomes throughout the 2019-2023 Strategic and Action Planning process.

The Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) is a dynamic and growing institution that enjoys a professional and effective leadership



■ **Image 5** Consultation Meeting in Kandahar

based on a forward-looking vision and credibility at the national and international level. It has carried out human rights monitoring, protection and promotion activities to achieve its goals enshrined in the Constitution and the Law on Structure, Duties and Mandates of the AIHRC and as highlighted in its comprehensive and responsive Strategic and Action Plan (2018-2023). It's strategic and action plans are considered key points of its strength.



■ **Image 6** Consultation Meeting in Kabul

The AIHRC's credibility at the national and international levels and its leadership and efforts in monitoring, protection and promotion of human rights emanates from its reputation as a reliable advocate of advocacy for upholding and defending human rights, protector for civil society and women's rights activists, and opponent of taboos and harmful social traditions under a severely insecure and volatile situation resulting from continued war and armed conflicts in the country. Its membership and active participation in international human rights assemblies, especially in the Asia Pacific Forum, and its holding of Status "A" from the Committee on accreditation of ICC are among the AIHRC's strong points.

Strategic Plan SWOT Analysis

In bringing together the 2019-2023 strategic plan, the AIHRC completed a rigorous set of stakeholder consultations. These consultations were held throughout six zones: Kabul, Kandahar, Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif, Bamyan and Kunduz. Within these six zones, all 34 provinces were represented with five to ten representatives from each province. This SWOT Analysis has been composed of the feedback given by over 1000 consultation participants. Consultation groups were made up of government officials, Ulema Councils, university professors, civil society leaders, local and national media representatives, youth groups, women's organizations and AIHRC staffers. The consultation method-

ology commenced with AIHRC presentations, briefings, and an explanation of the SWOT procedure to ensure audience comprehension. Then participants were randomly divided into working groups whereby they were instructed to complete a SWOT analysis. This was then followed by a group representative sharing the results of their discussions. This process was finalized with participants providing their individual feedback, reflections and suggestions on the process. The SWOT analysis below is a summarization of the qualitative, primary data collected throughout the consultation period within the six zones.

Box 23: Strengths

- Existence of transparency and accountability in the AIHRC.
- Success in maintaining the independence and neutrality of the AIHRC.
- Being a trusted institution amongst the Afghan people.
- Presence of sound leadership and accountable management.
- Establishing good relationships with public and private institutions.
- Professional and committed staff
- Responsible cooperation with stakeholders
- Carrying out scientific research and providing primary data on the human rights situation in Afghanistan
- Protection of vulnerable people, including women and children
- Serious and track able follow-up of cases of human rights violations
- The AIHRC's ability to advice and impact government policy and practice, ensuring human rights are incorporating within the national agenda.
- Conducting effective and relevant awareness raising initiatives
- Having representation throughout the Afghan provinces, with 14 regional offices
- Meticulously creating and proactively implementing a Strategic and Action Plan every five years
- Referring complaints to justice judicial organs, ensuring citizens have adequate access to justice
- Creating and emphasizing equal access to opportunities for women
- Strong government and international support and confidence for the AIHRC
- Having built strong relationships with relevant government agencies
- Effective and active presence in local, national and international media
- Producing an annual AIHRC performance report and presenting it to the relevant stakeholders
- The AIHRC continues to have an open door policy for citizens, allowing citizens to observe and exercise their human rights
- Working towards the inclusion of human rights topics within the national educational curriculum of Afghanistan
- Incorporation of human rights values into national laws and policies in an effort to institutionalize and systematize human rights in Afghanistan
- Implementation of human rights educational programs in rural areas.
- The use of digital and radio media platforms to disseminate human rights educational information and programs
- Availability of well-equipped libraries in the regional and provincial offices
- Strong partnerships with civil society organizations and local and national media outlets.
- Monitoring, reporting and following up on human rights violations in Afghanistan
- Adoption of a clear stance through press conferences and publication of press releases

- Advocacy to ensure a just peace
- Effective monitoring of the practices of justice and judicial organs to hold them accountable to their responsibility to the Afghan people
- Being the only institution in Afghanistan that has and continues to effectively monitor the condition of prisoners and detention centers throughout the country
- Effective monitoring of the implementation of pardons and the reduction of punishment orders
- Continuous monitoring and reporting of civilian casualties within armed conflict

Box 24: Weak Points

- Not having provincial offices in all thirty-four provinces of Afghanistan
- Shortage of AIHRC staffers who can conduct awareness raising initiatives, especially within the regional offices
- Lack of independently operating human rights media outlet.
- Not having access to investigate all prisons throughout all of the country's provinces
- Not having a department for the rights of People(s) with Disabilities office in all of our regional offices
- Needing more resources to advocate and promote the rights of children within Afghan families
- Not having a more advance means of collecting child labor data
- Not having a stronger mechanism to implement the prohibition of child abuse within primary and secondary schools
- A continued Afghan culture of impunity, whereby powerful individuals are not prosecuted by the judiciary
- Needing to renew the AIHRC's environmental policy to meet the future environmental challenges of Afghanistan and globally
- Struggle to implement and employ transitional justice within Afghanistan
- Not having enough local focal points within the districts to engage with all stakeholders
- The disproportionate development of human rights between the urban and rural areas of Afghanistan.
- A slow turnover in AIHRC hiring practices
- Not enough human rights training programs for the relevant stakeholders.
- Difficulty in implementing activities due to a shortage of staffers.
- Re-occurring participants at AIHRC programs, which hinders the dissemination of information to broad range of stakeholders.
- Concentration of AIHRC conferences within urban areas.
- Lack of content diversity within AIHRC monthly magazines, not taking into account those with only primary education.
- Shortage in AIHRC logistic and security staffers.
- The AIHRC's inability to activate the National Institute of Human Rights.
- Not being able to actively engage on the international level due to foreign travel restrictions
- Unstable job security for staffers due to funding and national security uncertainties.
- Lack of opportunity for staff capacity building in the areas of attaining higher education due to monetary restrictions.

Box 25: Opportunities

- Building upon our legal knowledge to remain in accordance with national and international laws
- Continuing to build strong international partnerships
- The strong citizen trust and cooperation with the AIHRC
- The strong legitimacy and integrity of the AIHRC amongst national and international institutions
- A growing understanding of the importance of human rights and increasing outrage towards human rights violations.
- The AIHRC's monitoring and investigation work, especially the work being done in detention centers.
- An increase in societal and governmental will in working with the AIHRC towards systematically and institutionally implementing human rights.
- Media cooperation and partnerships in dissemination the work and message of the AIHRC

- The increasing number of literate Afghans who are able to actively engage with the material produced by the AIHRC and our conferences
- The Afghan people's earnest desire to work towards securing a long-lasting and sustainable peace in Afghanistan
- A continued growing support from the people of Afghanistan for the AIHRC's mission, vision and mandate.
- The support and respect of government officials for the AIHRC
- Increasing inter-ethnic and inter-religious cooperation and coexistence
- Increasing capacity of the Afghan security forces
- Growing AIHRC support from the religious and conservative stakeholders within Afghanistan
- Strong CSO cooperation and partnership with the AIHRC
- The AIHRC'S budget which remains independent and is not mandated or interfered with by the government
- The Provincial Council's support for the AIHRC
- The support of the international community and that of civil society organizations for the AIHRC
- Strong national and international support of the AIHRC's women's rights monitoring, reporting, advocacy and empowerment initiatives
- The increased awareness of human rights which have led to a more self-aware Afghan population
- An increase in human rights civil society groups and institutions nationwide
- The ability of the AIHRC to refer victims and reported cases to the relevant institutions. Furthermore, the number of cases the AIHRC has resolved, which has garnered the trust of victims and citizens.
- A strong support from national and international human rights defenders who look to safeguarding the AIHRC
- An increasing interest in the areas of human rights and democracy at the academic level
- The amendment of national laws in accordance with human rights standards
- Afghanistan's membership in the International Criminal Court
- Afghanistan's membership in the United Nations Human Rights Council

Box 26: Threats

- Expansion of the theater of war into new territories which were once controlled by the government. This affects AIHRC's access to such districts and regions as well.
- The existence of contentious actors within governmental organizations.
- The lack of government accountability to the Afghan people
- The weak rule of law in Afghanistan
- A continuation in the belief and/or practice of harmful traditions which endangers human rights
- The existence of non-state actors which has created a mafia-like state whereby crimes such as human, narcotic and weaponry trafficking is occurring.
- The continuation and rule of a culture of impunity.
- The growing influence and role of non-state, extremist and ultra-conservative actors destabilizing Afghan society.
- The existence and role of armed militias, warlords and non-state actors.
- The practice and prevalence of informal justice, which is particularly harmful for Afghan women.
- Failure by state institutions to follow up on the reported violations against prisoners, and ensuring their human rights are respected.
- The prevalence and destabilizing role of corruption within all levels of Afghan society.
- The continuation of poverty.
- The increasing number of civilian casualties in combat, suicide bombing attacks and instances of hostage taking.
- The continuation of widespread acts of violence against women.
- Lack of national security mechanism to ensure infrastructure security along highways.
- The recruitment and operation of corrupt justice and judicial officials.
- The continuation of proxy warfare in Afghanistan.
- The misunderstanding of human rights within Afghan society, especially within the rural and more conservative regions.
- Illiteracy and cultural poverty.
- The continuation of forced marriage which is a direct threat to the human rights of Afghan women and girls.

- The routine occurrences of street harassment, violence and other forms of emotional and physical abuse towards Afghan women and girls.
- The increasing number of Afghans seeking refuge abroad or in the neighboring states, and the increasing number of internally displaced peoples due to violence, lack of economic opportunity, environmental degradation, rise of the presence and influence of non-state actors, lack of access to education etc.
- The lack of citizen awareness of the national laws and their personal rights and freedoms.
- Inability, and therefore state-failure, to support Afghan children with physical and mental disabilities.
- The culture bureaucracy within governmental institutions, which has fostered inefficacy.
- Systemic and institutionalized gender inequality amongst Afghan men and women which continues to be a problem socially, politically and economically.
- The growing number of kidnappings, assassinations and insecurity within Afghanistan.
- The prevalence and expansion of religious extremism being carried out through mosques and Madrasas. Often recruiting vulnerable and impoverished Afghan children.

Implementation Mechanism

The AIHRC 2019-2023 Strategic Plan will utilize two parallel but complementary implementation structures. The first is the AIHRC's internal capacity and resources and the secondly partnering with sustainable and viable CSOs, human rights defenders, GIRoA and international partners and actors operating within Afghanistan.

The commission has built and developed nationally leading program development and implementation mechanisms. In addition to this the AIHRC actively monitors and evaluates the implementation of all programs and activities. The AIHRC is also one of Afghanistan's leading institutions in human resource retention and capacity building of staffers.

The commission consists of seven program units:

1. Monitoring investigation
2. Special Investigation Team
3. Women Rights
4. Human Rights Education
5. Child Rights
6. Ombudsman
7. Publication and Print Unit and Translation.

The AIHRC has established 14 regional and provincial satellite offices that are fully equipped and managed by highly qualified staffers. The current staff of the AIHRC reaches beyond Four Hundred & Seventy staffers who are trained within their respective specialized units. The commission has made it a priority to employ standardized and current management model paradigms. In this regard, the commission has adapted Result Based Management (RBM) whilst conducting interventions for measuring the impact of the implementation of the strategic plan.

The AIHRC will implement the 2019-2023 strategic plan by developing a specialized and targeted annual action plan for each program unit and each of the regional and provincial office. This will also be accompanied by an annual national action plan, all of which will be completed under the guidance of and in compliance with the RBM model. The development of an action plan to achieve the Strategic Plan's objectives allows

the AIHRC to track progress and monitor the levels of efficacy on a monthly, quarterly and annual basis. This allows the commission to make the needed changes when programs and/or activities are not performing to measure. However, it also allows the AIHRC to track and measure the success levels of programs and activities that are making impactful and beneficial changes.

The AIHRC will also look into building sustainable and long-term partnerships with CSOs, the GIRoA and international partners and actors operating within Afghanistan. The commission is looking to build partnerships within both rural and urban Afghanistan to ensure optimal human rights awareness raising and open opportunities for joint shadow reports which can be submitted to Treaty Bodies and Human Rights Councils, and Shuras within 372 districts.

The decision-making process for the implementation of the 2019-2023 AIHRC Strategic Plan will be done in three tiers. The first tier is the AIHRC Commissioner to meet and discuss the Strategic Plan as a whole and approving the entirety of its messaging. The second tier is the AIHRC Secretariat and Executive Body, which includes head of units and coordinators, making decisions on their respective and collective projects, activities and programming. Finally, the third tier would be decisions that regional and provincial head of offices and staff will make in the implementation of their decentralized actions plans which have been crafted to meet the localized needs of their office and stakeholders.

AIHRC Potential Risk Assessment

Table 3: 2019-2023 Strategic Plan Risk Assessment

№	Areas	Possible risks	Probability	Risk Factor	Assessment of Probability	Impacts	Assessment of Impacts	Strategic interventions	Impact Assessment Periods
1	Politics	The change or amendment of the Afghan Constitution	High	External	Since 2014 and after the signing of the Unity Government political agreement, discussions over change and amendment of the constitution have entered to a new and serious state. Further, attempt towards initiating a peace process to end long-term conflict in Afghanistan has added to this conversation immensely.	Undermining Articles 58, 7 and Chapter 2 of the Constitution and other chapters	The changes or amendments to the constitution does not allow changes and amendments to the most part of Chapter Two, however the changes in other chapters including Article Seven and Article Fifty-Eight of the constitution will have implications on human rights	Advocacy with and education for the members of district and provincial councils, women's activist groups, civil society, the media and the international community.	Yearly
		The withdrawal of the international community from Afghanistan or the reduction of their support to the Afghan government	Medium	External	After 2014, the international community dramatically reduced their aid contribution and physical presence in Afghanistan. With this trend continuing, the decrease in international and donor assistance to Afghanistan can pose serious threats to sustainable development initiatives.	The Afghan government, national and state-building process including building a vibrant civil society, licit economy and national projects that lead to stability and progress, rely to a degree on international support. Any changes to that support, destabilizes the country and the status quo thus negatively affecting the progress on human rights, women rights, child rights and the work of the AIHRC.	The Afghan government, non-governmental organizations and major national projects need continued assistance and effective participation by the international community. The decrease in support and withdrawal of international actors would lead to an onset of weakened political stability, democratic values, and a collapse of public services which will exacerbate the situation of human rights in Afghanistan.	Coordination and advocacy for the continued support of the international for Afghanistan	Yearly
		Reduced government commitment to the protection and promotion of human rights.	Medium	External	The Afghan government's peace process negotiation with the Taliban remains a very opaque process, whereby human rights standards have not been incorporated.	Undermining the Constitution, the rule of law, undermining women's rights and ignoring the rights of victims of war and limiting the work of the AIHRC.	Peace is a pre-requisite to the protection and promotion of human rights however, respect, promotion and protection of human rights make peace possible and sustainable. Any attempt to undermine or to understate the importance of human rights and democratic norms would make peace fragile and only a temporary political achievement.	Advocacy to protect human rights values and monitoring the performance of the government to enforce laws by relying on national laws and international mechanisms.	Yearly

№	Areas	Possible risks	Probability	Risk Factor	Assessment of Probability	Impacts	Assessment of Impacts	Strategic interventions	Impact Assessment Periods
2	Security	Insecurity spreads across the country and the working space shrinks for the AIHRC to implement its programs and projects.	High	External	After the collapse of Kunduz, the theater of war has been shifting from rural to urban areas and cutting off AIHRC access to areas that were once secure and workable. This inevitably causes displacement, civilian casualties, affects women and children, and also restricts the operations of the AIHRC.	Limitation of AIHRC's access and reach into some regions and districts, increased civilian casualties, violations of humanitarian and human rights law in the country, violations of the right to liberty and human security. Furthermore, human rights violation cases could not be verified, investigated and followed up on.	The AIHRC's access to areas under its program coverage has decreased from 70 percent to 56% percent whilst civilian casualties have steadily increased. For example, in the first six months of 2018, civilian casualties increased by 30% compared to the same period last year. Citizen's access to the right to freedom and security has become more limited compared with previous years.	Advocacy and pressure on the security and defense organs to ensure citizen security. Advocacy at the global level to attract international support and attention to Afghanistan. Continuous monitoring of compliance with humanitarian law during armed conflict, and advocacy in order to make parties in conflict comply with IHL. Action through human rights defenders, civil society organizations, media outlets and through local human rights councils created by the AIHRC.	Yearly
		Increased security threats for AIHRC staff.	Medium	Internal	AIHRC staffers perform high-risk activities in the domain of human rights monitoring, protection and promotion. They live and work within the very areas that are insecure. Over the past years, in particular in October 2015, two employees of the AIHRC were martyred in Jalalabad, Afghanistan and six others were wounded. These threats are posed on daily basis by individuals, anti-government forces, the Taliban and rogue elements within the government.	Reduced level of activities, losing qualified and competent employees. This also leads to higher implementation costs for activities in unsafe conditions and/or environments.	In previous years, the AIHRC monitoring teams had physical access into over 80% of the country, and now they only have access to 48% of the once covered areas. This can reduce the level of access, activity, and effectiveness of the AIHRC's work. Replacement and staff leaves with pay require higher costs.	Implementing the action plan for protecting human rights defenders, strengthening support guidelines, and coordination with partner institutions to support AIHRC staff.	

3	The AIHRC's budget	Reduction of donor's financial support to the AIHRC, which affects the commission's work and efficiency.	Medium	External	Donor funding level to the AIHRC has been declining over years. Although the commission's donors have firmly continued their financial and political support to the AIHRC, it is likely that some donors decrease or pullout financial support to the AIHRC.	Reduction of budgets will curtail monitoring, educational, promotional and protective activities. It also causes reduction in the organizational structure of the AIHRC, reduction of capacity building programs, losing staff due to low pay and closure of offices.	Despite the progress made in obtaining funding from the national budget of Afghanistan, and inclusion of the AIHRC as a budgetary unit, the AIHRC will require continued donor funding. Any budget cuts will lead to the reduction of AIHRC's program activities including monitoring, commission presence in the provinces, closure of offices and the loss of professional human resources.	Encouraging the international community to continue funding the AIHRC, diversifying our donors and sources of funding and raising the Afghan government's share into the AIHRC's annual budget to more than 30%	
5	The weakness of the rule of law and the promotion of informal justice	The possible increase in cases of human rights and humanitarian law violations.	High	External	The continuation of war, attacks on civilians, continuation of the culture of impunity, weak rule of law, expansion of influence and control of the Taliban, and irresponsible militias threats to the human rights and freedoms of Afghans.	Violations of human rights, violations of women's rights, violations of children's rights, increasing civilian casualties, targeting religious and minority communities.	Increased human rights violations require more costs and resources and more monitoring programs and education and capacity building programs.	Serious monitoring and follow up on the violations of human rights in the judicial and defense organs. Advocacy to approve the compensation law. Capacity building for the staff of justice and judicial organs and security and defense institutions in the area of human rights and humanitarian law.	
		Informal Justice.	High	External	With the increasing presence of the Taliban, the government continues to lose control over big swaths of the territory. Judiciary and law enforcement services decline. This will cause the spread of informal justice, extra judicial killings of women, and Taliban issued forms of justice.	The increasing presence and use of informal justice has resulted in a weakened formal justice and in the efficiency of the judiciary organs. This will cause women's and children's rights violations, restrictions of freedom of expression, freedom of opinion and fair trials.	Increased informal justice has caused the violation of human rights, especially women's rights, and it has created challenges to the promotion, monitoring and protection of human rights.	Strengthening and protecting the justice and judiciary institutions under the current MoU signed with the judiciary. Continuous monitoring of the performance of justice and judicial institutions and encouraging citizens to turn to formal judicial authorities. Launch an awareness-raising campaign on human rights and the rule of law in all parts of the country – rural and urban areas.	Yearly
6	Lack of qualified staff	Losing qualified staff and expert employees.	High	Internal	Insecurity, reduced financial support and funding to the AIHRC, available job opportunities in other government and non-governmental sectors, and threats will likely result to lose staff.	The loss of skilled and qualified personnel, and the decline in the quality of human rights services.	Reduced working motivation decreases the effectiveness of the AIHRC's activities in the area of protection, monitoring and promotion of human rights.	Adoption of security measures to protect employees. Investing in the upgrading of staff capacity, renewal and implementation of rules and regulations of the AIHRC.	

№	Areas	Possible risks	Probability	Risk Factor	Assessment of Probability	Impacts	Assessment of Impacts	Strategic interventions	Impact Assessment Periods
7	Corruption	Corruption will negatively affect the performance of judiciary and other justice systems.	High	External	With the continuation of war and insecurity and the weakness of the rule of law, there is a possibility that justice system cannot overcome the plague of corruption affecting the justice mechanisms.	The AIHRC's recommendations and the cases referred to the relevant institutions are not being followed up on and the grounds for the violations of human rights are provided.	Corruption has delayed the performance of the judiciary and other government agencies, has increased human rights violation, reduced citizen's access to justice and, ultimately, has led to the weakness of the rule of law and unfair distribution of public services.	Implementation of awareness-raising programs on the harmful consequences of corruption and its negative impact on the human rights situation, monitoring the performance of the judiciary and other government bodies in relation to human rights. Registration, investigation and the referral of cases of human rights violations caused by corruption to the relevant justice and judicial organs and its follow-up.	Yearly
		Corruption impacts on the credibility, performance and integrity of the AIHRC.	Low	Internal	Government intervention in the appointment of commissioners, the change of Commission's systems, weakened internal monitoring and audit, change in leadership and management, is likely to expose the AIHRC to corruption.	Reduction of the quality of performance, loss of credibility and waste of resources.	The AIHRC will lose credibility and lose the trust of stakeholders. The commission's independence is thus affected and could lead to a weakened institution.	Effective and continuous monitoring, evaluation and auditing, recruiting competent and committed staff, strengthening internal rules and procedures, and ensuring transparency in financial and administrative implementation.	
7	Extremism	Negative propaganda against human rights values, promoting the culture of Takfir (declaring someone an infidel), hatred and intolerance.	Medium	External	Afghanistan continues to witness a growing number and influence of Takfiri groups, the Taliban, ISIS and other extremist, non-state actors. They are actively engaging in violence and transmitting propaganda against human rights values. This promotes a culture of extremism and hatred, which propagates war and promotes violence using social networks, and the media.	Increased violent behavior, violation of the right to freedom of expression, freedom of opinion, freedom of the individual and other fundamental human rights.	Extremism has been a primary exacerbating force in human rights violations. This inevitably limits the AIHRC activities.	Increased training programs, public awareness sessions, and ongoing monitoring.	

Monitoring and Evaluation of the Strategic plan

For an effective and result based implementation of the AIHRC's five-year strategic plan, the commission benefits from a well-established Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Unit (MERU). The AIHRC'S MERU currently consist of one coordinator, and three members. The commission continuously seeks to train staff on the most current methodologies for data collection, analysis and dissemination, and to apply these techniques within our monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanisms. MERU regularly monitors and evaluates the progress of the AIHRC's strategic and action plan implementation on a monthly, quarterly and annually basis utilizing the AIHRC's unique online Program Management System (APMS).

In mitigating risks the AIHRC has committed to information sharing and undergoing independent external evaluations to ensure transparency and accountability. There are two rounds of independent external evaluations which are scheduled as follows:

1. Mid-term evaluation by third quarter of 2022;
2. Impact evaluation when the strategic plan comes to its end towards the end of 2023.

The external evaluation is always conducted by international experts, with prior donor consultation, and the findings are shared amongst relevant stakeholders. In addition to this the AIHRC will hire, in consultation with project committee members, an audit firm to review AIHRC accounts for the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan to ensure international standards and best practices are upheld, and financial commitments are upheld and honored. Furthermore, the commission ensures that our Internal Evaluation of Program(s) Unit and Auditing of Financial Documents are made available to donors to facilitate transparent information sharing.

The Internal Evaluation of Program(s) Unit will also audit the AIHRC's expenditures and account records of each regional and provincial office. They will review the related documents in accordance to the commis-

sion's financial policies (zero tolerance on financial irregularities) and organizational rules and regulations. This evaluation and audit will help plan and calculate the exact and necessary financial resources for AIHRC programming and for regional and provincial offices based on their specified needs. This process is an additional procedure put in place of regulating budget expenditures and maximizing the commission's finances whilst the AIHRC's National Finance Unit manages financial vouches on a month-to-month basis.

The AIHRC's MERU will monitor the progress of the annual action plan and the strategic plan on a monthly, quarterly and yearly measuring scheme. The unit has devised a specific set of checklists that measure the progress of activities at the national and provincial levels to mitigate risks, ensure peak efficacy and allow for program and activity adjustments where needed. In addition to this the commission will conduct an internal assessment report every six months assessing all AIHRC regional and provincial offices.

Annex 1: AIHRC 2014-2018 Strategic Plan External Evaluation by Mr. Richard Bennet and Ms. Marianne Olesen & Suggestions for the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan

A Mid-Term Evaluation Report was conducted in July 2018 by Mr. Richard Bennet, human rights, peace and security consultant and newly appointed Chief of UNAMA's Human Rights Unit, and Ms. Marianne Olesen consultant with a focus on gender equality and women's rights. Their report was mandated to "provide an independent assessment of the AIHRC's Strategic Plan and Action Plan and is timed so that evaluation findings, lessons learned, and recommendations inform the forthcoming process to plan and formulate the next Strategic Plan 2019 – 2023."¹ The report was commissioned to fulfill three specific objectives: (1) assessing the effectiveness, relevance and sustainability of results to date (2) assessing the efficacy of multi-donor support and providing findings, conclusions (3) recommendations as well as lessons learned to inform on-going implementation and the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan.²

In reviewing the previous strategic plan of 2014-2018 the evaluation offered key findings for each proposed strategic objective: leadership, promotion of human rights and empowerment. The evaluation highlighted that the AIHRC is "seen as a trustworthy institution, free from corruption and with a committed staff (and) in this regard, it is a model for other Afghan institutions."³ In addition to this the evaluation highlighted that the AIHRC is a "leading advocate for women's rights and (...) AIHRC's Gender Policy is an important step towards strengthening (the commission) as a role model among Afghan workplaces."⁴ Furthermore, the AIHRC's participation in the Asia Pacific Forum and other notable regional and institutional human rights networks has created a protection against domestic pressure by means of the international support and esteem and garnered by

the commission.

The external evaluation highlighted key observations such as the AIHRC's Special Investigation Team being under resourced during a time when the country is experiencing high levels of International Humanitarian Law violations. In addition to this, the report suggested that the AIHRC's financial stability could "benefit from strategic discussions and agreement on contributions by the Afghan Government and the International donors to cover the entire 2019-2023 Strategic Plan period."⁵ One of the key statements made in the evaluation was that the JPA "should explicitly acknowledge the independent status of the AIHRC and the functions of a national human rights institution."⁶

In looking to the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan, the evaluation has put forth some key recommendations such as:

- The AIHRC should continue to use its leadership to mainstream human rights and empower others;
- Continuing efforts with all three branches of the government to ensure respect for human rights and compliance with the Commission's recommendations;
- The Commission should continue to vanguard the transitional justice agenda
- AIHRC should continue its strong leadership on protection of and advocacy for women's rights
- The AIHRC should hold discussions with international donors and the Government regarding the AIHRC's long term financing with a view to ensuring the sustainability and independence

1. AIHRC Mid-Term Evaluation Report by Mr. Richard Bennet and Ms. Marianne Olesen, July 2018.

2. Ibid., July 2018.

3. Ibid., July 2018.

4. Ibid., July 2018.

5. 2019-2023 Strategic Plan period

6. Ibid., July 2018.

of the institution, while delivering its mandate. Donors should continue to provide substantial funding to the AIHRC through its next Strategic Plan. The Evaluation Team recommends a modest increase in the AIHRC's budget.⁷

The report reflected that the commission should continue its current trajectory of programming and activities with no indication of stopping any current practices indefinitely. This being said, the report put an emphasis on the commission to increase efforts on thematic areas pertaining to justice, decentralization of administrative work and decision planning, diversification of partnerships for joint campaign and activities in support of women's empowerment and gender equality. It was echoed throughout the report that the AIHRC operates at a high level of competence and is committed to be a catalyst for change within Afghan society, understanding that human rights are a "generational project."

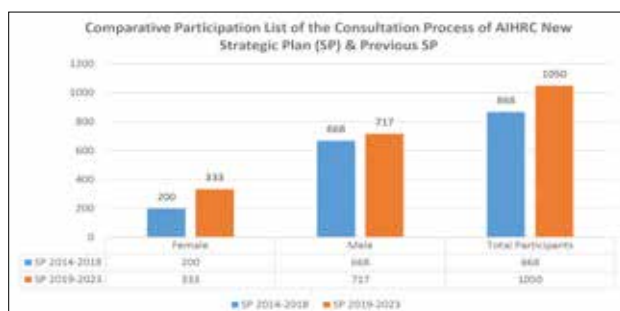
7. a modest increase in the AIHRC's budget

Annex 2: List of Participants of the consultation process

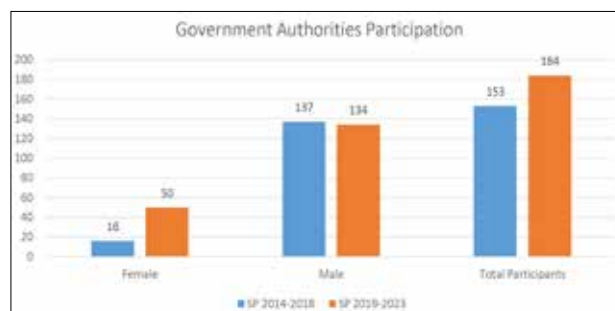
Participants List

[illegible]

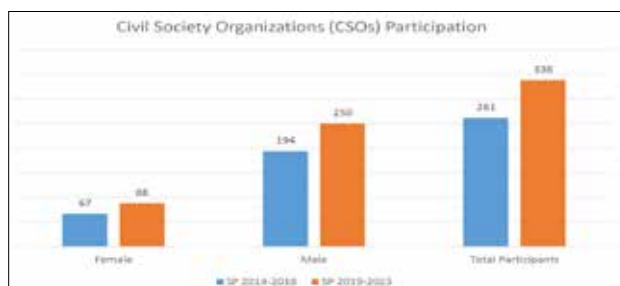
Annex 3: AIHRC Comparative Analysis Graphs



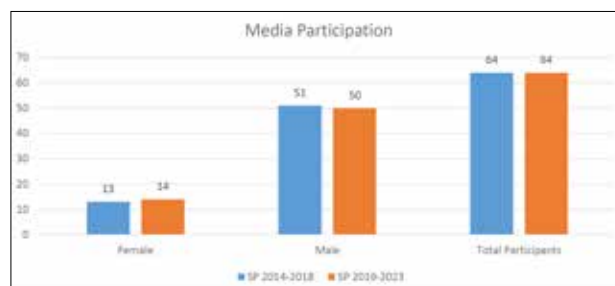
The above graph shows an increase of (21%) of participation during the consultation process of new Strategic Plan (SP) (2019-2023) compared to that of participants in the previous AIHRC SP (2014-2018)



During the consultation process of the 2019-2023 AIHRC Strategic Plan (SP), the total number of 184 high and mid-level authorities were participated; sharing their ideas and recommendations regarding the AIHRC SP. The figures from this year show an increase of (20%) participation of government officials compared to previous AIHRC SP.



A total number of 338 (88 female and 250 male) representatives from CSOs participated in the consultation process of the 2019-2023 AIHRC SP. This figure shows an increase of (29.50%) participation levels, in comparison to the previous AIHRC SP.



Representatives of media were another part of the consultation process of the AIHRC new Strategic Plan. The above graph shows the participation of 64 person (14 female & 50 male) which has no difference to the consultation process of previous Strategic Plan.



During the consultation process of the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan, almost every staff member of the AIHRC regional and provincial offices were involved. The findings above highlights that 464 staff members (181 female & 283 male) participated in the consultation meetings and AIHRC staff consultations. The graph shows an increase of (19%) participation

during the process in comparison to that of the last SP cycle. It also indicates an increase of (74%) female staff participation in comparison to that of the last SP process.

The increase in female staff participation can be explained due to the AIHRC increase of female staff hires throughout our regional and provincial offices. The commission has particularly focused on the hiring of more females within upper management positions to ensure a gender balance within decision making processes. Furthermore, higher levels of female participation is reflective of the higher numbers of women entering the workforce and formal sectors of the economy.

Annex 4: Women's participation in the AIHRC 2019-2023 Strategic Plan Consultations

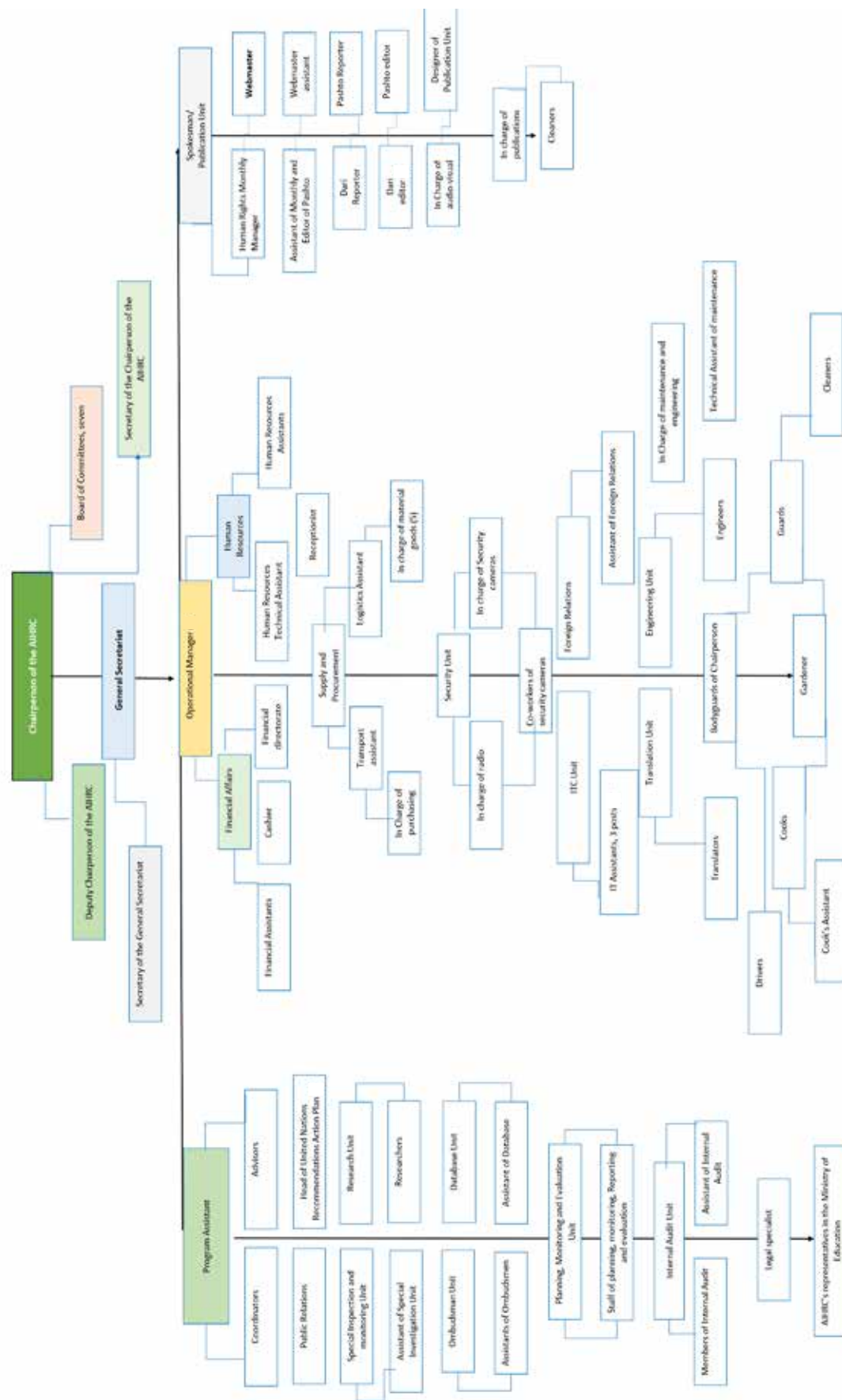


The above graphs above highlight female participation in the consultation process of the 2019-2023 AIHRC Strategic Planning process within six consultation zones. Representatives from government organizations, civil society organizations, women's groups, Ulema councils, university professors, community leaders and media from throughout the country were brought together within this process.

The findings indicate 32% female participation throughout the seven stakeholder consultations, which is a 9% increase from the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan consultation process. This is an positive indicator of the AIHRC's efforts in including women within the consultation and decision making processes.

Annex 5: The AIHRC Organizational Chart

Organizational structure of the AIHRC -HQ



Annex 6: The AIHRC 2019-2023 Strategic Plan Consultation Process Pictures

Strategic Plan Consultation Meeting-Kabul. 1-4



Strategic Plan Consultation Meeting- Kandahar . 5-8



Strategic Plan Consultation Meeting-Herat. 9-12



9

Strategic Plan Consultation Meeting-Mazar. 13-16



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Strategic Plan Consultation Meeting-Bamyan.17-20



Strategic Plan Consultation Meeting-Kunduz. 21-24



