



UNEP Afghanistan
Launch Report on Natural Resources Management and
Peacebuilding in Afghanistan (DRAFT)
UNAMA-ALPHA Compound, Kabul, Afghanistan
Date: June 24, 2013

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**Agenda for
the launch of Natural Resources Management and Peacebuilding Report
June 24, 2013
11:00- 12:15pm**

Time	Activity	Description	Responsible
11:00 –11:10		Arrival and Registration	Yasir Atayee
11:10 - 11:15am	Opening and Welcome	Inaugural Remarks - Chairperson	UNAMA, ,Mr. Nicholas Haysom Resident Coordinator/Deputy Representative Of Secretary- General (DSRSG)
11:15 –11:45am	Presentation on Natural Resource Management and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan	Main Findings (UNEP)	Mr. Andrew Scanlon
11:45- 12:45pm	Discussion on Next Steps		CCA/ UNDAF
12:15pm	Meeting adjourned		Chairperson
Refreshments	Tea/ Coffee		

Background: A technical report and guidance chart of the "*Natural Resources Management and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan*" was officially launched by the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Afghanistan on 24 June, 2013 at the United Nations Assistance Mission for Afghanistan (UNAMA) office, Kabul.

The United Nations Environment Programme Programme Manager, Mr. Andrew Scanlon, welcomed all the participants. He added that the report consists of specific recommendations for the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes in Afghanistan. He said it will prove interesting for the government of Afghanistan and international partners, particularly for conflict sensitive issues related to natural resources. Mr. Scanlon described the main parts of the report as; land, water, forest, drugs, extractives and recommendations. In each part of the report, both challenges and opportunities are mentioned for maximizing peace-building efforts in Afghanistan. He added that primary purpose of this report is to understand links between natural resources such as water, forest, land, drugs, extractives and peacebuilding in a better way.

It was supposed that the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator and a Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General with the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), Mark Bowden, host the launch. However, on behalf of Mr. Bowden the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) deputy country director, Mr. Reuno, inaugurated the event. In his augural remarks, he welcomed all the participants and added:

“The United Nations works in partnership with the Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to bring peace and stability to this nation. We believe the sustainable management and use of Afghanistan’s mineral, land, water and forest resources is an important part of this challenge. Decades of conflict, on-going political instability, poverty, drought and the unsustainable use of natural resources, have had devastating impact on Afghanistan’s people, economy and the environment. Hence, effective management of natural resources will help build peace in Afghanistan, development work and investment in all natural resource sectors”.

Participants from both government and international partners actively participated at the event. **See Annex 1 for participants.**

Physical copies of the report were disseminated to all member and country representatives of the UN agencies, the political mission, government and international partners, and the development banks. The report is available online. In addition, UNEP is working on the development of project proposal for each thematic area.

Before the launch of the UNCT report, UNEP presented the Natural Resources Management and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan report and guidance chart to the United Nations Country Team at UNAMA, Kabul. Andrew Scanlon, UNEP Programme Manager, briefly sketched out the process leading to the report, engagement with key UN and non-UN actors, the breadth of the scope and its coverage. Equally importantly, Mr. Scanlon, briefed 28 agencies, funds and programmes of the UN of the limits of this report, and the need for follow on action. Follow on action should take place both internally, within the UN System, but also externally with donors, and working together in guidance to and support of the government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

Presentation on Natural Resource Management and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan:

The main reason for the launch was to share the initial findings of the report with key partners in Afghanistan. The UNEP program Manager, Andrew Scanlon and Erin Blakenship, co-author of the report, presented a short presentation on NRM and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan. The report was accompanied with a guidance chart, which represents graphic representation of the NRM issues in Afghanistan. It is mentioned that this report has been produced at a request from the UN Country Team to the EU-UN Global Partnership on Land, Natural Resource and Conflict. Similarly, this report has been produced for the internal of the UN, which is not at the position for external review. He added that the report is part of the global series of the United Nations, produced under the global initiative of NRM and Peacebuilding.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) led this process with the advice and support of other agencies, funds and programmes operating in Afghanistan. The presenters describe how the United Nations, government of Afghanistan and the wider international community can ensure the management of natural resources in a way that contributes to peace and development. Mr. Andrew said that natural resources such as land, water, forests and minerals trigger and fuel conflict in Afghanistan, but sustainable and equitable management of these natural resources can contribute to peacebuilding.

The two important aims of the report were mentioned:

First, to ensure that the UN and its international partners design conflict-sensitive projects and programmes. Second, to encourage environmental or natural resources management projects that harness the power of nature to both sustain livelihoods in the country and maximize opportunities for peacebuilding. Presenters declared that this is a policy paper, which guides us to revise our work or plan our activities in a more harmonized manner for achieving goals of "decade of development for Afghanistan".

Likewise, in the UNCT meeting, a number of questions were raised by the Resident Coordinator, Mark Bowden, regarding how to link this policy piece to the Common Country Assessment processes, and the work of donors in the country. Mr Bowden asked how to get training on NRM and peacebuilding into the CCA process. He noted that Paul Lundberg, the CCA advisor would be working on just this approach. UNODC mentioned the direct and immediate need to include this work with UNODC, Interpol, and UN processes on crime. UNAMA Human Rights Head of Office, Georgette Gagnon, signaled immediate need to work with the Policy Paper team on linking human rights approaches, in particular around Extractives, and offered to facilitate and support more work on expanding this section immediately. The UNEP PM then finished his presentation, recommended the training in third week August, from 18th to 21st August. and invited all colleagues to attend the official launch at 1100 at the UNAMA meeting.

Discussion: After end of the presentation, participants were given the opportunity of asking questions and providing their productive inputs and feedbacks on the report.

Afghanistan Analysts Network:

1. How UNEP could make sure that these materials you mentioned are relevant to different process and was not that process very late for producing the report?
2. How this report deals with the political elements related to transboundary and ethnic issues, for instances, word "peace" has different connotations.

UNEP:

1. The report should have been produced earlier. However, NRM issues are generally very long-term issues, such as extractives, which need long term planning. For instance, the development of legislations

in Afghanistan is still under discussion in the parliament. This report highlights how fast to put that process into actions. Hence, best international practices can be used for positive outcome, particularly in the development decade of Afghanistan.

2. The report consists of recommendations for transboundary issues. For instance, to identify what are the key components driving conflicts or how best to use natural resources for maximizing peacebuilding efforts. In many situations, the development of infrastructure or extractions of resources caused ethnic conflicts over the use of land or water. This report may helps to resolve natural resources related conflicts, particularly through mainstreaming of environmental assessment in projects and programmes and enhancing capacity of relevant ministries and partners.

AfghanAid:

1. Why not links between disaster management and NRM is mentioned in the report?

2. In Afghanistan, functional group related to disaster and environmental issues, such as climate change and floods is not existed.

UNEP: It is a policy paper, which does not mean to mention all the environmental issues.

UNDP: Best approach for addressing such issues are the local people because UNDP has been applying this approach very successfully from the last few years. Local people can provide local solutions of their problems.

UNEP: The Environment and natural resources is a flexible word, which can be used in different context. However, if UNEP or any international agency talks about peace with local people, the results can be manipulated. There are potential opportunities at provincial level for better understanding the role of the environment in peace, such as building strong connections between provincial governors and provincial councils and raising awareness at local level.

MRRD: Government should be involved for much more success and looking forward for funding. At local level, MRRD has produced a policy paper for engagement with local people, which is submitted to the cabinet of ministers for their approval.

UNEP: It was an internal review. Next step will be the external review, in which UNEP will invite relevant government partners.

UNAMA: For security reasons, UNAMA has excluded such important issues from its work. However, in the coming decade of development for Afghanistan, UN could draw funds for such issues to support the government of Afghanistan in its potential objectives.

UNEP: Point noted.

EU: Does this report identify which component of the NRs triggering violent conflicts among communities?

UNEP: Recommendations part of the report has described this issues. However, it does need a great deal of research.

At the end of the event, PM thanked all the participants for their active participation and fruitful comments and suggestions.

Results:

- 1- Development of project proposals for each thematic area
- 2- Dissemination of the UNCT report
- 3- Implementation of capacity development programme, such as trainings both internally and externally. UNEP should work to guide and support the government of Afghanistan. Mr Paul Lundberg, the CCA advisor, will be working on this approach
- 4- UNAMA Human Rights Head of Office, Georgette Gagnon, will work with the Policy Paper team to link human rights approaches with it.
- 5- Linking results of the UNCT report with the Common Country Assessment process.
- 6- Linking results of this work with UNODC, Interpol, and UN processes on crime.

Annex 1: List of participants

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Photos:

1 Programme Manager of UNEP, Mr. Scanlon, presenting results of the UNCT report



2 Comments from one of the participants



3 Deputy Country Director of UNDP, Mr. Reuno, welcome speech



NRM and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan: Contacts detail

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