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## **A Message from Naheed Sarabi, Deputy Minister of Finance for Policy**

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

In early May, the Central Statistics Office released the latest [Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey](#), which showed an increase in poverty in the country since 2012. In April, the Afghan government declared a severe drought affecting two-thirds of the country.

With natural disaster and inequality still presenting challenges to economic growth and prosperity, we focused on the Afghan government's on-going poverty reduction efforts and social inclusion policies and programs in [this month's Reforms in Review article](#). Though growth will be gradual and unemployment will continue to be a long-term challenge, the National Unity Government is implementing policies and programs to address the roots of

poverty and steer the country toward greater prosperity in a sustainable manner.

We also welcomed [UNAMA's report](#) on the government's implementation progress of the national anti-corruption strategy, and the successful completion of the [IMF's third review](#) under the ECF arrangement.

Next month, we look forward to hosting the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board meeting in Kabul and seeing many of you there.

Sincerely,

Naheed Sarabi

Deputy Minister of Policy

Ministry of Finance, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan



Photo courtesy of Citizen's Charter

## Reforms in Review series

### Part 2: Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion

This month, we looked at the reasons behind the increase in poverty since 2012, and some of the key programs being implemented and policies put in place by the National Unity Government to address the roots of poverty. [Read the article here.](#)

[Read last month's Reforms in Review article on Justice Sector reform here.](#)

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### Government Responds to Widespread Drought

In mid-April 2018, the Afghan government declared the country was suffering from severe drought, dealing a major blow to the rural agrarian economy and animal husbandry.

On May 30, [President Ghani traveled to Balkh province](#) to assess the situation and speak to those affected.

Widespread and urgent livestock protection and grain needs are being addressed across the country in the short term. Immediate relief needs are underway, with plans being developed for medium-term recovery and long-term subsequent reconstruction phases.

The short term response has included animal feed distributions, based on the needs of different areas affected by the drought. A total of 5,240 metric tons have been allocated to Jawzjan, Faryab and Balkh, and 1,470 metric tons have been allocated to Herat, Ghor and Badghis provinces. Further allocations are on-going across all provinces. The government also allocated 78,000 metric tons of wheat to those affected by the drought from the national grain reserve.

The Ministry of Finance has re-allocated 822 million Afghanis (about 11.5 million USD) to purchase 19,950 metric tons of livestock feed and fodder. The government has requested additional support from the international community in addressing the crisis. Further funds will be re-allocated to relief, recovery and reconstruction phases during the Mid Year Budget review.

A technical committee has been set up and is meeting regularly to develop medium and long term detailed response plans, which will be discussed in detail as part of the upcoming JCMB and Geneva Ministerial conferences.

The committee includes the Ministry of Rural rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL), the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), Afghanistan Natural Disaster Management Authority, the Central Statistics Office, Independent Directorate for Local Governance, Afghan Red Crescent Society, [UNOCHA](#) and other UN bodies, and other organizations.

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Kabul Photo Biennale "Rebirth" | © Rahmat Alizadah

## Reports from our Partners

The Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit assessed EUPOL's work on police reform efforts, and UNAMA released a report highlighting substantial progress by the government in implementing its anti-corruption strategy. Read the reports below:

[Afghanistan's Fight Against Corruption: From Strategies to Implementation](#)

UNAMA, May 2018

[Assessing EUPOL Impact on Afghan Police Reform](#)

AREA, January 2018

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## In the News

[IMF Executive Board Completes Third Review Under the ECF](#)

[Arrangement for the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and Approves \\$6.4 Million Disbursement](#)

**IMF, May 25, 2018**

[Kabul Clinic Improves Health for Mothers, their Children and the Community](#)

**World Bank, May 30, 2018**

[The latest poverty numbers in Afghanistan: a call to action, not a reason for despair](#)

**Shubham Chaudhuri, World Bank, May 7, 2018**

[Request for continued donor support for the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund](#)

**Ministry of Finance, April 21, 2018**

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