Strategic Communications Action Plan
for
Budget Department
Ministry of Finance
Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

October 2010
### Acronyms and Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADB</td>
<td>Asian Development Bank</td>
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<tr>
<td>AMD</td>
<td>Aid Management Directorate</td>
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<tr>
<td>ANDS</td>
<td>Afghanistan National Development Strategy</td>
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<td>ASI</td>
<td>Adam Smith International</td>
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<tr>
<td>BD</td>
<td>Budget Department</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIRU</td>
<td>Budget Integration and Research Unit</td>
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<td>BPU</td>
<td>Budget Policy Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSC</td>
<td>Civil Service Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>DFID</td>
<td>Department for International Development, UK</td>
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<tr>
<td>FY</td>
<td>Financial/ Fiscal Year of Afghanistan</td>
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<td>GoA</td>
<td>Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan</td>
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<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
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<td>MoE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
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<td>MoEc</td>
<td>Ministry of Economy</td>
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<tr>
<td>MoF</td>
<td>Ministry of Finance</td>
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<tr>
<td>MTBF</td>
<td>Medium Term Budgetary Framework</td>
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<tr>
<td>OoA</td>
<td>Office of the Administrator</td>
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<td>PB</td>
<td>Programme Budgeting</td>
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<td>PBU</td>
<td>Provincial Budgeting Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>PFM</td>
<td>Public Finance Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAB</td>
<td>Strengthening Afghanistan Budgets</td>
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<td>SCAP</td>
<td>Strategic Communications Action Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<td>WB</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
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</table>
# Contents

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS .................................................................................. II
CONTENTS .................................................................................................................. 3

PART A – INTRODUCING EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS ........................................... 4
1 BRIEF BACKGROUND ................................................................................................ 4
2 OBJECTIVES ............................................................................................................. 5
3 SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGY ............................................................................. 5
4 A COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY .......................................................................... 6
5 PLAN PERIOD ............................................................................................................. 6

PART B – STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS ACTION PLAN ......................................... 8
6 STAKEHOLDERS OF THE BUDGET DEPARTMENT .............................................. 8
7 KEY MESSAGES ......................................................................................................... 9
  7.1 MESSAGES FOR GROUP 1: PFM REFORM ACTORS ........................................... 10
  7.2 MESSAGES FOR GROUP 2: BUDGETARY UNITS ............................................. 11
  7.3 MESSAGES FOR GROUP 2: DONORS .............................................................. 12
  7.4 MESSAGES FOR GROUP 4: AFGHAN PUBLIC ................................................. 13
8 OUTPUTS ................................................................................................................... 14
  8.1 A MENU OF OUTPUT OPTIONS ........................................................................... 14
  8.2 COMMUNICATIONS OUTPUTS ........................................................................... 15
    8.2.1 High Level Statement on PB .......................................................................... 15
    8.2.2 Brochure and FAQs on Programme Budgeting ............................................. 15
    8.2.3 Program budgeting slogan ............................................................................ 16
    8.2.4 Programme budgeting information kit for MPs ............................................. 17
    8.2.5 Symposia, Workshops and Talks ................................................................. 18
    8.2.6 Direct Mailers on program budgeting ........................................................... 19
    8.2.7 Reviewing the Donor Financial Review ....................................................... 19
    8.2.8 Newsletter and Bulletins ............................................................................... 19
    8.2.9 Utility Items .................................................................................................. 20
    8.2.10 Mobile Phone Text Messages ..................................................................... 21
    8.2.11 Online Budget Calendar ............................................................................. 22
    8.2.12 Software Ticker for Budget Calendar .......................................................... 22
    8.2.13 Media (Press) Release and Briefings ......................................................... 23
    8.2.14 Hard copies of Documents & Reports ....................................................... 23
    8.2.15 Televised Budget Debates and Discussions ............................................... 24
    8.2.16 Pre-budget Analyses ................................................................................... 24
8 LINKING OUTPUTS TO THE BUDGET PROCESS .................................................. 25
9 SUCCESSFUL DELIVERY OF THE SCAP ............................................................... 26
  10.1 STYLISTIC TOOLS ........................................................................................... 26
  10.2 PRODUCTION RESOURCES .......................................................................... 26
  10.3 DATABASE FOR DISSEMINATION ................................................................. 27
  10.4 IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING ................................................... 27
  10.5 INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING .......................................................... 27
11 SELECT OUTPUTS WITH INDICATIVE PRODUCTION COSTS ................................ 28
PART C – ANNEXURE ................................................................................................. 29
12 COMMUNICATIONS CONCEPT NOTE FOR DFR ................................................. 29
Part A– Introducing Effective Communications

**Why Strategic Communications?**

Strategic Communication is communication designed, developed and deployed to support a broader goal (or a process) and is aligned to enhance the strategic positioning of a process or project. It can mean either communicating a concept, process, or data that satisfies a long term strategic goal by allowing facilitation of advanced planning. It can also mean the related function within an organization, which handles internal and external communication processes.

Successful and open communications are critical to the effective implementation of reforms. They form a body of support working as a catalyst for undertaking desired reforms and do not replace good systems and effective processes. The absence of effective communications impedes the efficacy of reforms programmes.

Government to people communications are based, and run, on different principles from advertising for products. The budget for product advertising is many times larger in comparison to that of government campaigns, while the concerns and issues that stakeholders face in government campaigns are much more serious than buying a new brand of shampoo or consuming a fizzy drink that promises to make people more attractive to the opposite sex.

1 Brief background

This Strategic Communications Action Plan (SCAP) has been prepared for the Budget Department of the Ministry of Finance, Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GoA). The SCAP has been produced as a part of the DFID supported Strengthening Afghanistan Budget (SAB) under technical assistance from Adam Smith International (ASI). It builds on the stakeholder analyses and concept notes produced by the media team of MoF and SAB. It identifies existing communication activities and suggests improvements to them wherever required. New communication initiatives for internal and external stakeholders of the Budget Department (BD) are also proposed.

The SCAP has been developed in direct response to outputs listed in the current logical framework for SAB agreed between DFID and GoA:

— Output 5: MoF increases access of all stakeholders to budget-related information

— Output 6: MoF is better able to engage with donors on budgetary issues and spending priorities

Further, there are several references to the role that better communications can play in the process of budget formulation in reports and documents that have been perused for preparation of this document.

For example, the IMF Budget Integration and Program Budgeting Mission report of April 2010 notes:

> To date the emphasis has appropriately been on establishing the “technical foundations” .......However, unless the information is understood and actually used to make better decisions, the potential benefits of the reform process will not be
realised.....The next stage of implementation represents a major milestone and will be critical to the ultimate success of the reform. The challenge is to actively engage decision makers to utilise program and output based information through the budget process and in budget implementation.

2 Objectives

The objective with which this document has been prepared is to assist the Budget Department achieve:

A. More effective implementation of PFM Reforms in Afghanistan, particularly on the process of Programme Budget Implementation;
B. Increased awareness of stakeholders on budget related information, policies and processes;
C. Better engagement with donors and other key actors on budgetary issues and spending priorities

These are a set of multi-dimensional and overarching objectives touching upon a vast cross section of the Afghan populace. To achieve the aforesaid objectives, requires a vast range of approaches, messages and outputs closely linked to efficient dissemination channels backed by effective monitoring.

3 Summary of methodology

This paper has been prepared based on research interviews with a range of stakeholders of the Budget Department. They include, but are not limited to:

— officials of Budget Department and Ministry of Finance
— officials of other Ministries and Agencies of GoA
— national and international consultants working on PFM
— media Department of MoF
— select audiences representing media, donors and civil society

Various documents on MoF (and broader GoA) communications and on the budget preparation process have been closely perused. ASI’s ongoing support to GoA and in particular to MoF, has led to a vast repertoire of experience which forms the backbone of this SCAP.

Since a baseline survey has not preceded this SCAP, absence of scientific data and information on knowledge aptitude and practice of various stakeholders is overcome by triangulation of opinion of different stakeholders interviewed.

The SCAP is centred around the Media Department of the MoF has a team of professionals around whom This paper, thus also puts forth setting up of an institutional mechanism in the Budget Department for strengthening the communications function.
4 A Communications Strategy

In this section, we very briefly describe the general principles of strategic communications and outline the philosophy that guides this document. The strategy addresses structural issues, but primarily focuses on providing a ‘menu of outputs’ for various communication functions of BD.

The importance of arriving at appropriate outputs for effective communications is based on a strategy which is shown in the following graphic:

Whether aiding the implementation process of Programme Budgeting or promoting any other agenda of GoA, change involves getting stakeholder groups to think differently than before, to act differently, and often to work in concert with other stakeholder groups. MoF and Budget Department does not have a single, monolithic audience; instead it has many audiences each consuming different media, each perceiving different benefits or risks from changing behaviour.

Successful communications, then, requires communicating and motivating different stakeholders with different messages through different medium – in short ‘different strokes for different folks’.

5 Plan Period

The SCAP is not confined to the duration of TA support from ASI or limited to the resources available from SAB. Starting from December 2010, the communication initiatives have been proposed in two phases and a longer term third phase that the BD may consider.

The SCAP proposes outputs that BD can roll out as ‘quick wins’ by January 2011 (Phase I), followed by a medium term plan (Phase II) covering Programme Budget Implementation for 1390 and Budget Preparation for 1391, covering a complete budgetary cycle.

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1 The outputs proposed in this document are illustrative only and will need to be developed once BD has stated its preference for pursuing them.
The above two phases, lead to a longer term Communications Plan for the BD. During the period February – April 2011, efforts for preparation of a longer term communication action plan for three or five years needs to commence for which an impact assessment of phase I and II of SCAP should be undertaken by BD.

Timelines and budgets, wherever possible, have been indicated for the suggested outputs.

It is recommended that the BD along with budget implementation pays special attention to longer term communication objectives of Budget Department building sustainable communication capacity as the Afghan economy grows over time and the need and demand for strategic communications builds.
Part B – Strategic Communications Action Plan

6 Stakeholders of the Budget Department

Here we list, based on broad categories, key stakeholders\(^2\) for the BD to meet the objectives set out for this plan. Considering the diverse nature of the interests and impact of the National Budget on a cross section of the Afghan populace, we have categorised the various stakeholders into three, separate but not necessarily exclusive groups.

**Group 1: PFM reform actors**

i. Ministry of Finance people:
   a. MoF leaders as ‘champions of change’.
   b. Staff and officials of BD and MoF
   c. Mustafiat staff

ii. The Budget Committee\(^3\) and the Steering Committee on PB Implementation\(^4\)

iii. Staff, officials and leaders of partner agencies Ministry of Economy (MoEc), Civil Service Commission (CSC) and Office of Administrator (OoA)

iv. Donors:
   a. In their role of pushing for PFM reform
   b. In their role of provision of technical assistance to budget units

v. Members of the Afghan Parliament

**Group 2: Key ‘customers’: Budget units**

vi. Government of Afghanistan:
   a. Staff of 51 Budgetary Units\(^5\) of GoA
   b. Members of the Afghan Cabinet

**Group 3: Key ‘customers’: Donors**

i. Donors, in their role as funders of development programs (on- and off-budget)

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\(^2\) These stakeholders may be further divided based on gender, age, vocation, location, literacy levels etc. or from a point of hierarchy and experience. However for the purpose of the plan, this is considered adequate.

\(^3\) Chaired by Minister Finance with Chairman CSC and Ministers of MoFA and MoEc as members, this committee clears all documents on the Budget before they are presented to the Cabinet

\(^4\) Chaired by the DM, Finance with other DMs of ministries that have rolled out Programme Budgeting
**Group 4: Afghan Public**

i. Journalists/ Media: print, broadcast, national and international

ii. International agencies NGOs and development organisations

iv. Trade Associations in Afghanistan

v. Opinion formers such as religious leaders, academics and researchers

vi. Businessmen, industrialists, traders, professionals, agriculturists directly impacted by budgetary decisions

vii. General Afghan public

Each stakeholder (group) will view the budget from a different perspective and will be best informed through different media, hence different stakeholders always demand different communications approaches.

### Key Messages

Some types of message delivered by the Budget Department should be common to all stakeholders, while some types of message should be tailored to stakeholder groups or even individual stakeholders.

Message types that should be common include an explanation of the definition of program budgeting and confirmation of Government commitment to the budget approach. The basic understanding of the definition of program budgeting must be uniform across all stakeholders, so that a common understanding of the facts exists. Of course, at a technical level some stakeholders will need to understand it in more detail than others. The exception to this is the Afghan public stakeholder group, which does not require even a high level understanding of the technical process of program budgeting. The Government’s commitment to program budgeting should also be understood by all stakeholders in the same way, to make sure that all stakeholders know that the Government is 100% committed to the budget approach.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PFM Reform Actors</th>
<th>Definition of budget approach</th>
<th>Commitment to budget approach</th>
<th>Purpose of budget approach</th>
<th>Actions required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Customer: budget units</td>
<td>Common messages</td>
<td>Common messages</td>
<td>Unique messages</td>
<td>Unique messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer: donors</td>
<td>Unique messages</td>
<td>Unique messages</td>
<td>Unique messages</td>
<td>Unique messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghan public</td>
<td>Unique messages</td>
<td>Unique messages</td>
<td>Unique messages</td>
<td>Unique messages</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Message types that should be different across different stakeholders are those relating to the **purpose** of program budgeting and those relating to **actions required** by stakeholders. Messages relating to the purpose of program budgeting must highlight for each
stakeholder what is ‘in it for them’, and these benefits will differ. Similarly, the actions required by each stakeholder will be different, as each plays a different role in the budget process.

At this point of time, the messages remain broad based and rather refer to a group of messages i.e headlines, rather than being specific in nature. The exact messages will need to be developed in close consultation with BD and taking into account the technical details of budget formulation and implementation processes.

Accordingly we list the key messages for each of the stakeholders groups:

### 7.1 Messages for Group 1: PFM Reform Actors

i. **Definition of program budgeting:**
   a. Budget structures and the amounts allocated should be clearly linked to strategy and policy.
   b. Budget submissions are results-based, which means that there must be a clear description of what outputs and outcomes will be achieved for all costs calculated.
   c. Budgets should calculate total costs for results and programs, which means that each program cost estimate should include both development and operating costs.

ii. **Commitment to program budgeting:**
   a. The decision to move to program budgeting for all budget units has been made and is irrevocable. This commitment has been demonstrated by the extension of roll-out from pilot ministries and agencies to all budget units in the Government.
   b. The Government is committed to all donor financing being channelled through the same process as existing on-budget funds.

iii. **Purpose / Benefits of program budgeting:**
   a. Push budget units to achieve better results
   b. Ensure budget unit plans are in line with central Government policy and strategy, and this improve coordination
   c. Delegate responsibility and accountability to budget units
   d. Reduce wastage, inefficiency and corruption

iv. **Actions required:**
   a. Understand what program budgeting is and your specific role in the process
   b. Work with all other PFM reform actors to help ensure it is implemented properly
   c. Hold budget units accountable for their results, rather than dictate how they should achieve them
7.2 Messages for Group 2: Budgetary Units

i. Definition of program budgeting:
   a. Budget structures and the amounts allocated should be clearly linked to strategy and policy.
   b. Budget submissions are results-based, which means that there must be a clear description of what outputs and outcomes will be achieved for all costs calculated.
   c. Budgets should calculate total costs for results and programs, which means that each program cost estimate should include both development and operating costs.

ii. Commitment to program budgeting:
   a. The decision to move to program budgeting has been made and is irrevocable. This commitment has been demonstrated by the extension of roll-out from pilot ministries and agencies to all budget units in the Government.
   b. The Government is committed to all donor financing being channelled through the same process as existing on-budget funds.

iii. Purpose / Benefits of program budgeting:
   a. Help you with your annual and medium-term planning, ensuring that it is in line with national priorities and reducing gaps and overlaps with other ministries and agencies.
   b. Help you track and manage implementation by those who work in your ministry / directorate / team.
   c. Help make sure your ministry or agency gains funding when it achieves results, so that it can achieve even more in the future.
   d. Successful implementation of program budgeting will lead to a better reputation for your organisation, with central Government and donors.

iv. Actions required:
   a. Read and understand all communications relating to the budget. Attend all training sessions.
   b. Ensure that the definition, purpose and importance of program budgeting is understood by all directors and managers working in your budget unit, including those in provincial departments.
   c. Ensure that you follow the timing of the Budget Calendar.
   d. Work closely with all those responsible for implementing the budget process, including the Budget Department. Ask questions of your Sector Manager when you do not understand.
7.3 Messages for Group 2: Donors

i. Definition of program budgeting:
   a. Budget structures and the amounts allocated should be clearly linked to strategy and policy.
   b. Budget submissions are results-based, which means that there must be a clear description of what outputs and outcomes will be achieved for all costs calculated.
   c. Budgets should calculate total costs for results and programs, which means that each program cost estimate should include both development and operating costs.

ii. Commitment to program budgeting:
   d. The decision to move to program budgeting for all budget units has been made and is irrevocable. This commitment has been demonstrated by the extension of roll-out from pilot ministries and agencies to all budget units in the Government.
   e. The Government is committed to all donor financing being channelled through the same process as existing on-budget funds.

iii. Purpose / Benefits of program budgeting:
   f. The focus on results helps to ensure productive use of development financing.
   g. Reporting ensures transparency of expenditure and results achieved, which will help reduce wastage and corruption.
   h. Donors can have confidence that their funds will be properly used for the benefit of the Afghan people.

iv. Actions required:
   i. Take time to understand how your on- and off-budget financing should fit with the budget approach.
   j. Understand how the timing of your planning should fit with the budget calendar.
   k. Make sure your funding aims to meet the program budgeting definition, so that we are all aiming for best practice.
   l. When you work with line ministries, make sure you do so within the context of the budget process.
   m. Plan to increase alignment of off-budget financing with line ministry budget structures, and to increasingly channel funds through the budget process.
   n. Contact the Budget Department with any questions of concerns.
7.4 Messages for Group 4: Afghan Public

i. Definition of program budgeting:
   a. All Government ministries will clearly show how much money they plan to spend and what they plan to achieve with it.
   b. All Government ministries will clearly show how much money they have spent and what they achieved with it.

ii. Commitment to program budgeting:
   c. The decision to move to program budgeting for all budget units has been made and is irrevocable. This commitment has been demonstrated by the extension of roll-out from pilot ministries and agencies to all budget units in the Government.
   d. The Government is committed to all donor financing being channelled through the same process as existing on-budget funds.

iii. Purpose / Benefits of program budgeting:
   e. You have a clear view of spending and achievement of your Government.
   f. You can use your vote to elect the people who you think will achieve most.

iv. Actions required:
   g. Ask for information from your Government so that you understand what money they have and what results they will achieve with it.
   h. Use local civil society organisations to approach Government ministries and agencies and tell them when you are satisfied or dissatisfied.
   i. Vote for those who you think will achieve most for you and your community.

The messages listed in the above three sections are only illustrative in nature and will need further detailing in consultation with BD, prior actual production of outputs and dissemination.
8  Outputs

8.1  A menu of output options

This section has been developed to provide a ‘menu’ of communication outputs for decision makers in the Budgetary Department to choose from. The outputs suggested are drawn from likely media consumption patterns of various stakeholders (and groups) identified in section 6 of this SCAP.

The primary consideration in recommending outputs and media vehicles is cost-effective reach. For example, direct mailers are a good medium for reaching a small number of government officials whereas newspaper advertisements would be an expensive way to reach the same audience. In recommending the outputs, production facilities in Kabul have been taken into account, although it is important to note that effectiveness of outputs is largely influenced by its look, feel and packaging.

The matrix below shows which outputs are considered appropriate for different stakeholder groups. However, the precise outputs used in each communication will first need to be decided by Directors and the Director General.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PFM Reform Actors</th>
<th>Budget Units</th>
<th>Donors</th>
<th>Afghan Public</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High level statement on program budgeting</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brochure and FAQs on program budgeting</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program budgeting slogan</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program budgeting information kit for MPs</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symposia, workshops and talks</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct mailers on program budgeting</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donor financial review</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newsletters and bulletins</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utility items (e.g. calendars, mugs)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile phone text messages</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Online budget calendar</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Software ticker for desktop</td>
<td></td>
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<td>✓</td>
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</table>
Media releases and briefings

Hard copies of documents and reports

Televised budget debates and discussions

Pre-budget analysis

| | |
|---|---|---|
| ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

Some of the proposed outputs are targeted to a range of the stakeholders, (or at the least to more than one of the aforesaid groups), which we list in this section. These outputs are generic in nature and will differ in messages for different stakeholders. The particular message in each of the outputs in this category is influenced by the time at which they are proposed to be deployed. Such outputs include:

**8.2 Communications outputs**

**8.2.1 High Level Statement on PB**

A statement of high level commitment to Programme Budgeting issued from GoA – either at the level of President Karzai or Minister Zakhilwal. This could be an extract from a speech delivered or an interview and does not necessarily mean getting a sign off specifically for the purpose. An opportunity could be created for such a statement by simply organising a workshop or any other occasion.

Once such a statement is made, BD could publicise that in various forms for its officials. This statement can be made into posters, stickers or table top items to be displayed in MoF offices and tables. It could be small gifts for visitors to senior officials and ministers and DMs.

This could be prepared in Dari, Pashto and English languages for higher reach and retention amongst its viewers.

A sample for illustrative purposes is shown above.

**8.2.2 Brochure and FAQs on Programme Budgeting**

A simple booklet with content developed as Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on Programme Budgeting will serve to further the twin objectives of:

- raising awareness about PB and
- supporting effective implementation of PB by various GoA agencies
The booklet will be oriented towards explaining basic ideas and issues on PB incorporating types and levels of information needed into forms and simple language for a wide range of stakeholders.

The booklet will have multiple objectives including:

i. Increase visibility of PB across ministries and regions

ii. Underpin commitment of GoA and Afghan policy to PB for international agencies

iii. Raise awareness amongst key PB stakeholders

iv. Work as a resource for officials in various budgetary units

This booklet will however not provide technical information on PB preparation or implementation issues or seek to be a job aid for officials working in the MoF or in various budgetary units.

The planned booklet is intended to explain and communicate wider benefits of PB and convey GoA’s commitment to PB (and its inevitability) in a direct form based on facts rather than express viewpoints or opinions.

The booklet can be pre-faced by an important and recognised Afghan such as an economist, finance minister, or development specialist. It can also be prepared in Dari and Pashto in a simple narrative format. They can be disseminated through multiple channels, based on a dissemination plan to reach the end user in a cost effective manner.

An electronic version of the booklet can be hosted on the MoF website and publicised on through wider dissemination by emails. A soft copy in a CD can also be distributed as a part of this output or independently.

Two versions of this booklet, a hard cover bound and rich looking version for high level circulation amongst officials, ministers and politicians and donors and another for mass circulation may be considered. The more expensive version can be developed in a coffee-table style which to be gifted to visiting dignitaries and other important personalities.

This output should be produced at the earliest, and will form the basis of several other outputs that are discussed subsequently.

8.2.3 Program budgeting slogan

A slogan on PB can be coined, adopted and publicised by BD through various means for different stakeholders, but primarily targeting its internal staff and GoA officials. Some sample slogans that illustrate the proposed output are:

— Programme Budgeting Ensures a Prosperous Afghanistan

— Programme Budgeting benefits Afghans

— Programme Budgeting is a National Priority

— Programme Budgeting Ensures a Prosperous Afghanistan
Path to Progress: Programme Budgeting

The slogan could be displayed on all co-lateral stationery of the Budget Department such as business cards, letter heads, bulletins like the previous output also made into posters and stickers for display.

Illustrative sample of a Budget Department business card alongside:

Similarly an illustrative design or sample of poster or sticker is as below:

8.2.4 Programme budgeting information kit for MPs

Considering the influence and importance of Members of Parliament on the Budget and its formulation process, we recommend a specific output for them.

Easy to understand literature, with focus on how Programme Budgeting can benefit their constituents can be prepared for Afghan MPs. The key message around which this output will be wrapped is that PB can lead to greater popularity. This is achieved through timely completion of development projects in the parliamentary district they represent and through greater transparency and accountability.

The proposed kit can be a collection of few documents, including well represented facts and figures and important issues about their constituency to give a personal
touch to the kit, significantly improving its impact. The name and production of the kit should be appealing to the MPs with the content being relevant.

The composition of the kit could be some or all of the following:

- **Letter from Minister**
  - one page
  - Welcome Note
  - Introducing Programme Budgeting
  - State National Commitment and Priorities

- **Programme Budget**
  - two page folder
  - The importance of the Budget
  - Programme Budgeting versus Line Item Budgeting
  - Successes Around the World
  - Glossary of terms

- **PB in Afghanistan**
  - eight page dossier
  - Role of MPs and how they can benefit
  - Implementation Process
  - Successes so far in Afghanistan
  - Specific issues and information on constituency

- **PB Tracker**
  - small booklet
  - Effective monitoring of projects and programmes
  - List of ongoing projects in constituency
  - Grievances and problem resolution

The PB Diary suggested as an output earlier could be also included as a part of the kit.

It is important to bear in mind that the production of this output is extremely important – it needs to be attractive yet not expensive.

### 8.2.5 Symposia, Workshops and Talks

Communications works at its best when it is people to people i.e inter-personal. MoF and BD are already organising a series of symposia, workshops, meetings and training programmes. It is recommended that such interaction opportunities are:

a. Made more frequent

b. Designed to provide an opportunity to listen to participants

c. Escalated to higher levels through the presence of Minister and/ or DMs to provide motivation and express high level commitment

These ‘events’ could either be created or held as regular events cast into the budget calendar. A critical success factor for such events is setting a short and clear agenda and careful selection of participants. The benefits from such events may not be immediate, yet is immense.

The BD is planning a Budget Symposium which would impress upon participants the progress made and benefits from the Programme Budgeting initiative of GoA. The proposed Symposium can be the first of a series rather than a one off event.

Such events can also be planned specifically for small and homogeneous groups by arranging an acceptable speaker for the audience. Before dinner speeches hosted by senior functionaries (Minister, DM or DG) of MoF may send out short invitations to select individuals for these events. The topic for such talks does not need to be, and should not be directly linked to
These events have the potential for generation of collateral publicity through media coverage, and are hence cross-cutting for different target groups.

8.2.6 Direct Mailers on program budgeting

Direct mailers to staff in provincial locations from higher officials will be an effective means of spreading the message. Such mailers could be generated fairly cheaply and need to be ‘special’ in nature. The objective of these mailers should be to make PB more acceptable and clear impediments that the target audience may be facing. It is worthy to have a personalised touch to these mailers and stylistically they should be written in the first person tone.

The recommendation for such mailers should not be confused with business correspondence and circulars. As stated above they are ‘special’ the content of which could be:

As a team member who is responsible for implementation of Programme Budget for the Government of Afghanistan, I thought of sharing some recent successes we have achieved together. ..... In the days to come, the Budget Department will be focussing on certain aspects for which your cooperation is essential..... I appreciate that since this is a newly rolled out initiative, you may be having questions to ask on some aspects of implementation of the new guidelines. I and my team members here encourage you to get in touch with the Provincial Budgetary Unit more frequently, and if required with me directly......

Such letters should be sent out in Dari and Pashto, in addition to English (for donors) to achieve greater resonance with its target audience.

8.2.7 Reviewing the Donor Financial Review

International donors are an important player in the PFM reforms in Afghanistan. The biannual Donor Financial Review (DFR) provides an opportunity for GoA to showcase its progress on various fronts and also strengthen the partnership with Donors.

In the immediate past, BD has intimated to donors its intention to change the process of the DFR. The proposed changes can include a strategic effort for pro-active communications with donors. AMD’s three major objectives in bringing around changes to the DFR are:

i. interesting for donors

ii. favourable to creating a constructive dialogue between donors and GoA

iii. focused on outcomes (rather than volumes of money)

A detailed communications concept note has been prepared and submitted to the Aid Management Directorate (AMD) of the Budget Department which is annexed in Part C of this paper.

8.2.8 Newsletter and Bulletins

The Fiscal Policy Unit (FPU) currently produces a quarterly newsletter targeting various stakeholders of the MoF. This provides a platform for BD to effectively reach out with its messages to the Budgetary Units as well as to other stakeholders of Group 1.
Strategic Communications Action Plan for Budget Department

An outline approach to effectively using the FPU Bulletin is shown below:

Based on preliminary enquiry, the FPU bulletin currently faces some limitations. With a print run in the range of 500 to 600, the bulletin is presently produced in English language only. Content is developed ‘in-house’ and distribution is not backed by a strong database.

BD could consider one or a combination of the following to start effective utilisation of the Fiscal Bulletin:

i. Take a lead role in production and distribution of the bulletin renaming it as:

   Fiscal & Programme Budget Bulletin
   Ministry of Finance
   Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

   | Highlights in this Issue:                  |
   | Guest Column                              |
   | Does Programme Budgeting benefit Afghanistan? | Page 1 |
   | Profiting from Livestock                   | Page 2 |
   | Overcoming the Fiscal Trough               | Page 3 |
   | Does Programme Budgeting benefit Afghanistan? | Page 4 |

ii. Work for dedication of a specific section of the bulletin to PB and develop its own content for the dedicated section. This will require BD to order and pay for extra copies which it needs to distribute on its own.

At this point of time, we would not recommend a separate bulletin for the BD since this option is likely to be administratively difficult and may lead to duplicity of efforts within the MoF. It is also in the interest of BD to take up a wider platform in the MoF rather than dilution of existing communication initiatives within MoF.

8.2.9 Utility Items

Messaging through a utility item of daily use such as a wall clock, tea coasters photo frame or annual calendar which officials and staff will use in their homes can be highly effective. It brings a sense of pride for the individual in their family and provides as reason to understand and comprehend the message better. This works across sections and societal classes. Children and other members of family are likely to ask questions such as ‘what is programme budgeting?’ or ‘do you like PB?’ or ‘how is PB different?’ when they see it on the wall of their living or bed room. Rarely will a head of a family respond to such questions, and particularly in the cultural context of Afghanistan by saying ‘I don’t know’.

These outputs have a fair degree of permanence in their presence and messaging, and hence need to be fairly broad based rather than being very specific such as a deadline for Budget Circulars.
Calendars with PB Messages
The BD has already successfully produced and disseminated a Ramadaan Calendar in 2010 setting a precedent in successful messaging for awareness creation. This output addresses the first step of awareness creation about PB and involves printing of short messages on calendars – either annual or for specific occasions such as Ramadaan. The messages in these outputs has to be small and precise, and targeted for a wider audience than the Budgetary Units itself. These calendars are expected to be use or displayed in the offices and by staff and officials of the Budgetary Units. They can be produced in either tabletop, wall hung, pocket size formats or as stickers.

Diaries, Notebooks and Writing Pads
Several times in a year MoF and BD organise a range of meetings, from simple review meets to training programmes, workshops, budget hearings etc. BD could produce writing pads with messages on Programme Budgeting for use in these meetings.

Diaries with PB messages – which could be a few pages in the beginning and/or on each page can be produced.

The Diaries will need to be effectively distributed to key individuals in this Group of Stakeholders. Members of Parliament, people in key positions of Budgetary Units and others can be targeted through this output.

The quality of production of the diaries, notebooks or writing pads is a critical factor for them to be used by the people for whom they are meant.

There a range of outputs that can be designed, developed and deployed to achieve this communication goal. It involves mostly direct and interpersonal communications as the group is small and needs different messages.

As per the Statistical Yearbook of GoA published by Central Statistical Organisation for 2008-09, the total number of employees of MoF is 4,806 of which 3,623 are educated to the level of high school and above i.e are literate. The number of employees with a graduation or higher qualification is however much smaller at 594. Considering officials at the level of Rank 5 and above our target is 2,276 officials of which 177 are in Rank 7 & 8.

The following set of outputs may be considered for production and deployment of outputs under this sub-strategy:

8.2.10 Mobile Phone Text Messages
As time is the essence of the PB preparation process – reminders on the deadline are useful. In addition to the software based desktop reminder, Short Messaging Service (SMS) or text messages delivered on the mobile phones used by Budgetary Unit officials will be a cheap and effective means of reaching out.
An example of an SMS messages is as shown alongside:

8.2.11 Online Budget Calendar

Once the Budget Calendar is approved by the Budget Committee, this should be published online and publicised to this category of stakeholders though direct mailers, SMS messages emails and other forms of inter-personal messaging.

A sample calendar (with unverified text) from the internet is shown for illustration purpose.

The online calendar should be attractive such that users can print them out or save it for reference. Changes and revisions in the budget calendar i.e deadlines for submissions or budget hearings should be effected immediately and the change publicised.

8.2.12 Software Ticker for Budget Calendar

Since this is highly proficient in the use of computers, emails and the internet accessing them can be very cost effective through the use of information technology. A software ticker for the desktop screens of staff and officials of Budgetary Units could be developed by the Budget Department.

However, this output has some limitations such as:

- needs to be updated from time to time, particularly when deadlines are shifted
- may have limited acceptability in terms of people willing to run the software in personal computers
- in the case of shared computers in offices, the reach of this output may reduce considerably.

An illustrative sample and design of this output is shown above.
8.2.13 Media (Press) Release and Briefings

Mass media is the most potent of all the media vehicles to reach general Afghan Public. Coverage in the form of news is cost effective and carries conviction with audiences. This is however, contrasted with *advertisements or sponsored features* (paid editorial content) which may not be effective to achieve the communication goals of BD.

There are a several established tools and techniques for interacting with the media. The relationship between media officer and journalists is one of trust and mutual benefit. This needs to be nurtured over a period of time. A group of handpicked journalists should be trained to promote informed reporting on budget related issues.

An essential step to this end is monitoring the coverage on budget and related issues. Media Department of MoF is currently monitoring such coverage. The process of monitoring coverage can be strengthened through the use of an IT based system, which can be a simple MS Access or even MS Excel based programme.

Timing and content of press releases is critical to good coverage being ensured. The timing of the press releases needs to be closely linked to the budget calendar and can be taken up in coordination with Government Media and Communications Centre (GMIC).

A suggested calendar for media (press) release is as below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Budget Event</th>
<th>Press Release Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 March</td>
<td>End of previous F Y</td>
<td>Expenditure, performance and growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 March</td>
<td>End of previous F Y</td>
<td>Expenditure, performance and growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 March</td>
<td>Beginning of current F Y</td>
<td>Targets and priorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 April</td>
<td>Budget Calendar &amp; BC1</td>
<td>Highlights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 June</td>
<td>MTFF</td>
<td>Highlights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 June</td>
<td>DFR 1</td>
<td>Highlights and donor performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 August</td>
<td>MTBF</td>
<td>Highlights and sectoral priorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 August</td>
<td>BC2</td>
<td>Highlights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>MoEc finalises plans</td>
<td>Highlights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 October</td>
<td>BC2 Response</td>
<td>Highlights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Nov</td>
<td>DFR 2</td>
<td>Donor commitments and priorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov</td>
<td>Budget Hearings</td>
<td>Daily Highlights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec</td>
<td>Accepted BC2</td>
<td>Highlights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-20 Dec</td>
<td>Finalise Budget Statement</td>
<td>Highlights</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.2.14 Hard copies of Documents & Reports

There is a strong case for publishing various reports and notifications in well designed book format. The BD is already publishing the DFR in such a style and fashion. Documents and reports such as the Budget Statement and the MTBF can be published in shorter versions such as ‘Afghanistan Budget at a Glance’ for wider dissemination.
Readership and awareness is likely to be much more when printed copies can be accessed – particularly amongst high level leadership and senior officials and busy professionals.

8.2.15 Televised Budget Debates and Discussions

As a form of editorial coverage, televised debates and discussions on various aspects of the Budget can attract good viewership. These programmes will need to set up in close coordination with TV networks, and be structured to cater to interests of common people. They can be advertised prior to telecast through the television or through newspapers to ensure cross media reach.

A serialised television programme on Budget where MoF/BD leadership answers questions from general people from across the country will potentially attract a lot of viewership. The questions could either be asked in person or through a ‘phone in’ programme with a ‘best question’ prize each week.

The positioning of the proposed programmes and credibility and popularity of the person who answers the questions are just as important. The BD can directly associate with such programmes including providing sponsorships.

Such debates and discussions could also be taken up in partnership with Trade Associations, Academic and Research Institutes and Independent Agencies on TV and through ‘off-air’ public discussions.

International media interest could be solicited for such programmes and discussions on Afghanistan’s budget and economy can be included as a part of the BBC’s Doha Debates as a starting point.

8.2.16 Pre-budget Analyses

The BD could engage with a range of stakeholders from the Afghan Public on expectations from the Budget. This strategy will result in effective and successful dialogue as it is human nature to be more interested in the future than in the present or events that have occurred.

Trade associations, academia and other interest groups can be reached out through this approach. Events such as debates for school children or amongst students in the Kabul University can be planned and delivered attracting substantial public attention.

In conclusion of the list of outputs, we reiterate that the aforesaid outputs are an initial proposition meant to offer BD with a ‘menu’ to choose from. This is not to suggest at the least that outputs for meeting communication goals of BD are limited to those stated above.
## Linking Outputs to the Budget Process

In this section, we list key budget events and establish a link to the outputs proposed in the earlier section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outputs for all Groups</th>
<th>MTBF</th>
<th>Budget Circular 2</th>
<th>Budget Circular 1</th>
<th>Budget Calendar</th>
<th>No specific timing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FAQS on Programme Budgeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>High Level Statement on PB</td>
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<td>PB Slogan</td>
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<td>Direct Mailers on PB</td>
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<td>Messaging through Utility Items</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outputs for Group 1: PFM Reform Actors</td>
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<td>Reviewing the Donor Financial Review</td>
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<td>BD and MOF Symposium, Workshops and Talks</td>
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<td>Outputs for Group 2: Budgetary Units</td>
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<td>Newsletter and Bulletins</td>
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<td>Mobile Phone Text Messages</td>
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<td>Online Budget Calendar</td>
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<td>Calendars with PB Messages</td>
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<td>Diaries, Notebooks and Writing Pads</td>
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<tr>
<td>Software Ticker for Budget Calendar</td>
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<td>Programme Budgeting Information Kit for MPs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outputs for Afghan Public</td>
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<tr>
<td>Media (Press) Release and Briefings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hard copies of Documents &amp; Reports</td>
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<tr>
<td>Television budget discussions and discussions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pre-Budget Analysis</td>
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</table>
10 Successful Delivery of the SCAP

In this section, we list some key factors that influence the successful delivery of the plan. In clichéd terms, they are Critical Success Factors for the SCAP and include the following:

10.1 Stylistic Tools

**Managing expectations:** It is important to be honest in all communications and particularly for this sub-strategy. It is not appropriate to raise expectations of these stakeholders to unrealistic levels or to levels which cannot be honoured by the MoF or BD at a later day. This will destroy the fabric of credibility which is a cornerstone of effective strategic communications.

**Value for money:** effective reach of the messages and outputs proposed is dependent to a large extent on the rarity value of the outputs. To cite an example if 100,000 posters are sent to Badakshan province, it is bound to end up in a campfire and will clearly send the wrong messages that GoA is wasting money. Similarly, if dinner meetings for ministers/DMs or donors are arranged at expensive venues the MoF will be seen as irresponsible and frivolous spender of scarce Afghan resources.

**Indirect promotion:** Rarely will people who do not have an official reason be attracted to anything to do with the Budget. It is definitely not a subject of mass interest and there will be only a meagre number of people who have a direct interest on the subject. It is therefore crucial that the message of promoting Programme Budgeting is packaged well. To cite an example, if discussions on Programme Budgeting are titled as Reducing Corruption in Afghanistan through Better Budget Process, they are more likely to attract audiences and participants.

10.2 Production Resources

Well delivered communication strategies and outputs are resource intensive. They require technical inputs and close oversight at the design and production stage. Quality of production plays a vital role in acceptance of the outputs, i.e no one picks up a booklet that is shabby looking. Lastly, dissemination has a cost too.

The BD should locate adequate resources for implementing this plan – or even for producing individual outputs. Many communication outputs fail because while the production takes place, adequate resources are not earmarked for dissemination. For example – if brochures are printed, courier costs for sending out the brochures need to be budgeted.
Some of the costs associated with implementation of the strategy are shown above.

10.3 Database for dissemination

This is critical to the success of any communications strategy or output. If an output is produced for Members of Parliament, then BD should have complete **addresses and names spelt without mistakes**. The example cited is relatively easier to access. In other cases such as journalists or heads of Budgetary Units, the database will require regular updating.

For each output, target stakeholders needs to be identified from the database of BD and a means of reaching them in the most efficient manner (from a cost and time perspective) should be worked out.

10.4 Impact assessment and monitoring

From a communications point of view admittedly the Budget Department has neither qualitative nor quantitative data on its stakeholders at this point of time. Relevant information for effective strategic communications could cover a range of data on human resources in the MoF & GoA, media consumption patterns, their attitudes towards the Budget, policy or procedure, or stakeholders attitudes towards MoF & GoA etc.

Monitoring of implementation of the strategy is essential for meaningful impact. This needs to cover dissemination and also impact measurement. At the end of the March 2012, based on an impact assessment survey, BD should effect changes and corrections to the present plan and draw a forward plan for three to five years.

To assess the impact, BD needs to commission a competent polling company to design a proper demographic model of FRC stakeholders. It will require 1500-2000 respondents selected to proportionally represent the whole of the stakeholders (i.e. men and women, age, region, etc). The poll should establish basic socioeconomic data, media consumption patterns, then familiarity with and attitudes to people, issues, procedures and levels of success. Remaining questions can be devoted to learning the depth of their environmental knowledge vis-à-vis Programme Budgeting.

10.5 Institutional Capacity Building

The role of various Directorates of the Budget Department, in contributing to the achievement of these objectives is very important. The three Directorates will need to be closely work and feed into the communications function for messages and achievements to be disseminated. At the same time a **culture of open and proactive communications has to be ushered through leadership, conviction and championing the cause.**

At a sufficiently high level a Champion of Communications within the BD shall need to steer the cultural change.

A proposal for strengthening the existing Media Department in MoF has already been prepared by the SAB team and is awaiting approval to locate donor funding.
11 Select Outputs with Indicative Production Costs

The following table provides a list of some of the recommended outputs in the SCAP along with preliminary cost estimates for production. The list does not include open-ended outputs such as High Level Statement on Programme Budgeting, Diaries or TV Debates.

The costs are estimates based on past experience and can vary to a large extent depending on the expectations of the Budget Department, production processes, quantity and scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Output</th>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>Initial Quantity</th>
<th>Indicative Costs in USD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. FAQs on Programme Budgeting – in Dari, Pashto &amp; English</td>
<td>All Groups</td>
<td>20,000 copies</td>
<td>35,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Symposia, Workshops and Talks</td>
<td>All Groups</td>
<td>Lump sum: Nov 2010–Feb 2011</td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Direct Mailers</td>
<td>Group 1 &amp; 2</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. SMS messages</td>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>50,000 up to March 2011</td>
<td>3,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Welcome Kit for MPs</td>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Calendars</td>
<td>Group 1 &amp; 2</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Donor Financial Review</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>Lump sum for Nov-Dec 2010</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Budget at a Glance</td>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td>2,000 for FY 1390 Budget Statement</td>
<td>7,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Newsletter</td>
<td>Group 1 &amp; 2</td>
<td>2,000 upto March 2011</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Communicating the Donor Financial Review- A Concept Note

The SAB Change Management Team has prepared this note on Donor Financial Review (DFR) for AMD Director Hamid Jalil and his team, following discussions held on the DFR on 27 Sept. It was agreed to provide a ‘menu’ of communications initiatives from which the AMD could choose. The following is based on research and discussions held in AMD on 28th September 2010.

The Brief

SAB has been asked to work towards making the DFR more:

1. interesting for donors
2. favourable to creating a constructive dialogue between donors and GIRoA
3. focused on outcomes (rather than volumes of money)

The options set out below are all designed to help move the DFR towards these objectives:

The Menu

1. Renaming Donor Financial Review – this has already been decided and informed to donors by AMD which is considering Donor Cooperation Review. Other options such as Development Financial ‘Dialogue’ or Donor Financial ‘Talks’ or ‘Consultations’ or even ‘Engagement’ may be considered – the word Review could carry a stigma. In a very strict sense of the term, it is not actually a ‘review’ as it also projects donor funding into the next financial year. This may however require a government order to replace ‘DFR’ in budget calendar and other enabling documents. It is important to retain the ‘financial’ word so that the exercise retains its basic purpose of feeding into the budget process.

2. Post-Kabul Conference Exercise – A unique opportunity now exists to shift gears of the DFR using Kabul Conference as a springboard, and the ongoing review of Aid Policy - the DFR could be positioned as an exercise – post Kabul Conference and also build in Donor Consultations on the new Aid Policy. However, AMD and MoF’s busy calendar for November, it needs to commit dedicated resources if DFR were to be scaled up, and also the new Aid Policy announced.
3. **An identity/ logo for DFR 2010** – this could be used in all the letters, invites, meeting venue props such as banners and backdrops, stationery and on MoF websites etc. Preliminary concepts and first cut designs below:

4. **Presenting process to the HLCAE** – The sixth High Level Committee on Aid Effectiveness of all Donors is scheduled for 3 October 2010 (Sunday). This could set the ball rolling for the DFR process. A PowerPoint presentation on the proposed DFR – the changes envisaged and how it will mean better donor-recipient relationships can be prepared and presented. The challenge, however, is to get internal (MoF) approvals and agreements in the short time available and international travel schedule of DM.

5. **Donor ranking** – The 2009 November DFR has categorised donors based on the response to request for information from AMD. This has reportedly worked well and encouraged donors to come to AMD and submit comprehensive information. This could be taken forward through a ‘donor ranking/ grading’ in terms of aid effectiveness and overall performance. This could be nuanced – based on a proper methodology – to encourage donors while not discouraging any donors.

The decision whether to rank donors or award grades has to taken not just by AMD but by the Minister of Finance, since the Minister will be the first point of contact for feedback on the ranking. Each has its own advantages and the flip side. Absolute ranking is a zero sum game, so when one donor moves up another comes down. Thus it encourages competition and can attract criticism and challenge. Grading (such as A, B and C) based on scoring encourages bottom rung donors to move up, but lacks incentive for high ranking donors.

An alternative would be to rank the top donors only, thereby encouraging selective competition at the top only, such as the top 10 donors or top 20.

Some of the parameters (preliminary thoughts only, to be detailed by AMD advisers) for consideration are over the page:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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**Table:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
1. **Country Assistance Plan published – five year plan gets full marks**  
   2. **Aid Evaluation Study done – done twice in last 5 years**  
   3. **Amount of money disbursed – on percentile basis**  
   4. **Ratio of money pledged to disbursement – on percentile basis**  
   5. **Submission of information for DFR**  
   6. **Updation of DAD – six times a year gets full mark**  
   7. **Number of HLCAE meetings attended – five gets full marks**  
   8. **Involvement in provinces – more than 7 provinces gets full marks**  
   9. **Ratio of ‘outside budget’ to aid through budget**  
  10. **MoF & AMD perception**  
  **Total**

Notably, subjective criteria such as alignment to GoA policies may not be appropriate and may be considered as a part of the technical design. On the other hand, AMD may consider several other parameters such as sectoral allocation, military assistance etc.

AMD/ MoF may also consider collateral publicity associated with this such as press conference or awards presentation ceremony. This can provide a high level engagement opportunity and also explain to the general public what good aid means.

6. **Donor consultation** – It may be useful to meet a few donors to understand their expectations as a part of re-design and communications for DFR. Efforts in understanding donor’s point of view and/or their problems can never be too much from a communications point of view. This effort, to be essentially taken up jointly by ASI and AMD would build seriousness for the DFR. Besides, people will participate in a process to which they think they have contributed.

7. **Improving the look and feel of the DFR report** – The DFR review publication has consistently grown since 2006. The three available reports have consistently improved. The report for 1389 needs to be better in terms of production and content. Innovations such as devoting one page statistical snapshot and one page highlights with qualitative content to each major donor (with a clearly pre-announced cut off criterion). This will encourage donors to be a part of the DFR report and lead to greater involvement. Further, it will also bring in aspects of quality of aid into a sector that is largely driven by numbers.

8. **Case Studies** – GoA may consider to prepare case studies of successes in projects financed through the core budget. This could be either published as boxes in the DFR report or as audio-visuals of three to five minutes for inclusion in power point presentations. Such case studies run the risk of being too creative without adequate facts and numbers to back the success.

9. **Improving the DAD** – Donor Assistance Database – prepared by UNDP is useful well intentioned. However it is not optimally used by donors. There is a strong case to look into why it is so, by engaging with donors at various levels.

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6 The word ‘communications’ is from the Latin word ‘share’ and good communications is essentially two way.
This could be taken up by AMD Advisers, and efforts made for redesign. Achieving this objective before the November 2010 DFR is clearly a tall order.

10. **Workshop on the DAD** – Once the DAD is redesigned, based on user feedback, a workshop for donor agency administrator level staff may be organised for DAD7. Continuing this effort will build donor interest and also provide an opportunity for AMD to understand problems with DAD and required changes. This is a longer term output and may be targeted for the DFR 2011.

11. **Online networking** – AMD may consider to start an internet based blog or discussion forum on aid effectiveness and link to GoA websites as well as donor websites. This will create an open and two-way communication process and build transparency.

12. **The international AE community** – The AMD should also proactively engage with various international forums working on Aid Effectiveness so as to remain up to date in latest tools and techniques. It is important that AMD’s engagement is visible. This will create greater awareness amongst donors about the seriousness of AMD. There may be ease for forging a tie-up of some form with one such forum or independent body for DFR 2010.

**Next Steps:**

- AMD to provide initial assessment of which outputs to explore further
- Evaluate resource allocation against the potential return – in tangible terms and as goodwill and better relationship (this is a cost benefit analysis)
- Allocate resources – manpower and financial, for implementing the aforesaid ideas needs to be clearly earmarked as a priority investment
- Prepare timelines and budgets; production plan
- Internal approvals by AMD/ MoF
- Roll out

The table in the following page present a framework for potential benefits and indicates the general risks for each of the items on the ‘menu’.

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7 Trainings have been held in the past but poorly attended by donor agencies citing shortage of staff and therefore inability to nominate a focal point.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Impact on interest of donors</th>
<th>Lead to constructive dialogue</th>
<th>Lead to outcome oriented process</th>
<th>Strengthen budget process</th>
<th>Demand on resources</th>
<th>Strategic value</th>
<th>General awareness raising potential</th>
<th>Risk perception for MoF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Renaming Donor Financial Review</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Marginal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Kabul Conference Exercise</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<tr>
<td>An identity/ logo for DFR 2010</td>
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<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presenting process to the HLCAE</td>
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<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donors ranking(^8)</td>
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<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<tr>
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<td>High</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<td>Marginal</td>
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<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Marginal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^8\)The impact of this will largely depend on the selection of parameters and the degree of transparency in the process followed