



Islamic Republic of Afghanistan



**STRATEGIC INTENT 1389 - 1393
(2010 - 2014)**

Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development

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List of acronyms

AIRD	Afghanistan Institute for Rural Development
ANDMA	Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority
ANDS	Afghanistan National Development Strategy
ARDSS	Agriculture and Rural Development Sector Strategy
AREDP	Afghanistan Rural Enterprise Development Programme
BDS	Business Development Services
CARD-F	Comprehensive Agriculture and Rural Development Facility
CDC	Community Development Council
DC	District Council
DDA	District Development Assembly
ERDA	Energy for Rural Development in Afghanistan Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission
IARCSC	
IDLG	Independent Directorate for Local Governance
IDPs	Internally Displaced People
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
MCN	Ministry of Counter-Narcotics
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MFI	Microfinance Institution
MISFA	Microfinance Investment and Support Facility for Afghanistan
MoEW	Ministry of Energy and Water
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
NABDP	National Area Based Development Programme
NEPA	National Environment Protection Agency
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NRAP	National Rural Access Programme
NRVA	National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment
NSP	National Solidarity Program
PDC	Provincial Development Committee
PRTs	Provincial Reconstruction Teams
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
UN	United Nations
VAU	Vulnerability Analysis Unit
VC	Village Council
VSLA	Village Saving and Loan Association
WatSIP	Water Supply and Irrigation Programme

Minister's Foreword

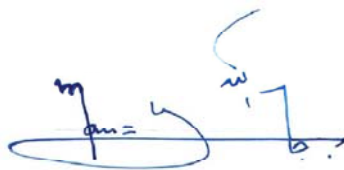
Rural poverty, local governance and unemployment are three of the most critical issues currently facing Afghanistan and will remain significant challenges for some years to come. These issues are addressed in the MRRD Strategic Intent (1389-1393), which has been developed to contribute towards poverty alleviation by giving rural communities a comprehensive package of development services, and an enabling rural environment to achieve sustainable rural development. MRRD aims to facilitate rural communities across Afghanistan to become empowered and prosperous by shifting our strategic focus to rural infrastructure and economic development, local governance, institutional strengthening, and human capital development.

MRRD is the first public institution to introduce a cohesive culture of rural development by putting people at the centre of its vision. Importantly, we at MRRD have also decided to focus all our efforts to attain the vision based on core values of integrated rural development. In addition, His Excellency President Hamid Karzai further emphasized a focus on revitalizing rural social and physical infrastructure as one of the key tools to reduce poverty. I also believe that only the strength of spirit and core values will lead us to successfully achieve the objectives set in this Strategic Intent. I am confident to say that MRRD is now greater than the sum of its programmes. We have a presence throughout the country at community level, which gives us a comparative advantage for not only implementing MRRD's programmes, but also can proudly, partner with governmental and non-governmental institutions to facilitate appropriate rural development interventions.

To meet the objectives of alleviating poverty and enabling rural communities achieve sustainable development, I am pleased to present MRRD Strategic Intent 1389-1393, which is produced after months of hard work and extensive consultations. I would like to also thank the MRRD team and the international community for supporting the production of the Strategic Intent of the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development for (1389-1393).

Jarullah Mansoori

Minister



Preamble

With this new five-year Strategic Intent, MRRD reaffirms its determination to respond to long-term poverty challenges in rural areas. It remains committed to improve the quality of its services while establishing itself as a leader in policy-making for the rural development sector, using its extended presence in the field and its deep understanding of communities for designing evidence-based policies.

MRRD's ultimate goal is to reduce poverty in rural areas and to pave the way for other actors to complement its endeavours. For MRRD, poverty alleviation can only be pursued by tackling all complex causes of poverty, in a holistic manner. The essence of rural development thus lies in partnerships, which will continue to be nurtured, cultivating a virtuous circle of development. In the complex landscape of rural Afghanistan, MRRD builds on its comparative advantage to address some of the causes of poverty as demonstrated in chart 1.

Over the years, MRRD has demonstrated its capacity to directly address many of the rural communities' needs through its national programmes, namely the Afghanistan Rural Enterprise Development Programme (AREDP), the National Area Based Development Programme (NABDP), the National Rural Access Programme (NRAP), the National Solidarity Program (NSP) and the Water, Sanitation and Irrigation Programme (WatSIP). MRRD has displayed fairness by granting equitable development to all; through the organization of local level elections, it has provided Afghans with an opportunity to decide for their future; through training, it has built enormous social capital, transforming men and women in thousands of villages, into responsible actors for their own development. Rural people, who constitute the heart of MRRD's mission, have gained better access to markets and jobs, to education and health facilities and to energy. But above all, MRRD has instilled hope within communities, a feeling that makes rural Afghans believe that everything is possible and that they can change the course of their life.

MRRD's development models are well established and the successful formula is being replicated elsewhere in Afghanistan and is now being adapted to more challenging and insecure environments. The resultant expansion and increased institutional momentum of MRRD's five national programmes are now in a position to contribute even more towards the ANDS and the Agriculture and Rural Development Sector Strategy's objectives and to advance the Millennium Development Goals agenda. MRRD's comprehensive rural development approach will also contribute to shaping Afghanistan as a capable regional level partner.

MRRD is more than the combination of its programmes and as a result, MRRD has a cohesive institutional culture putting people at the centre of its vision; its relatively light structure which brings together civil servants and programme staff makes it a dynamic and flexible organization; its presence throughout the country, at the village level, puts it in the best position to observe and analyse economic and social trends and the rural population's needs. MRRD intends to build on such comparative advantages to create an enabling environment for partners by putting its knowledge and the structures it created to the service of other ministries and development actors. To do so, MRRD will undergo a reform process

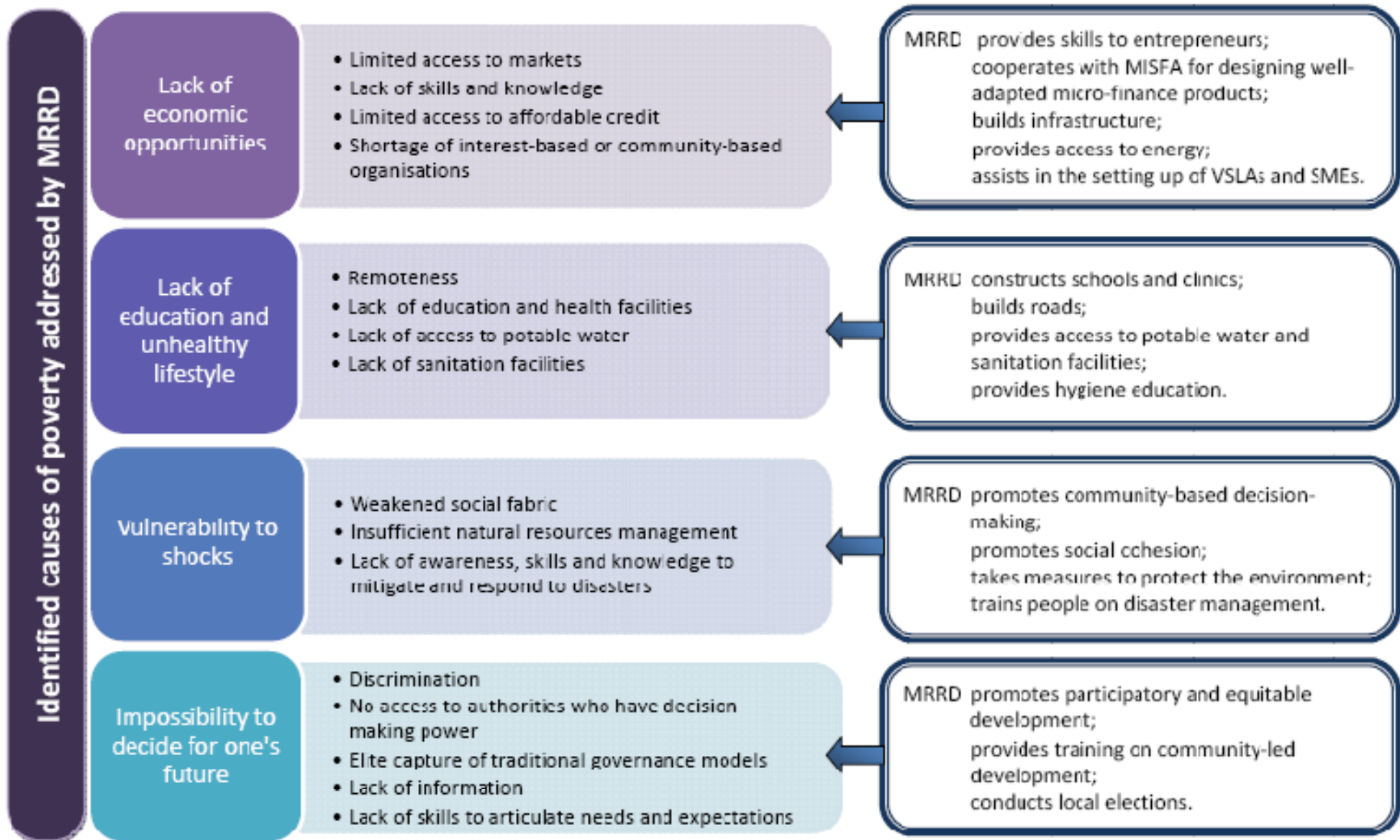


Chart 1: Identified causes of poverty addressed by MRRD

which will allow it to better position itself as a policy-making actor and as a facilitator for rural development.

Under this Strategic Intent, MRRD will thus focus its efforts around the two following outcomes:

1. To contribute to poverty alleviation through the delivery of a comprehensive package of services
2. To create an enabling environment for sustainable rural development

These outcomes support MRRD conceptual framework (as presented in box 1) and will be realised through five strategic focus areas which are interlinked and which build on each other (see chart 2). Cross-cutting issues are mainstreamed in each priority areas and are further expanded upon in a separate section.

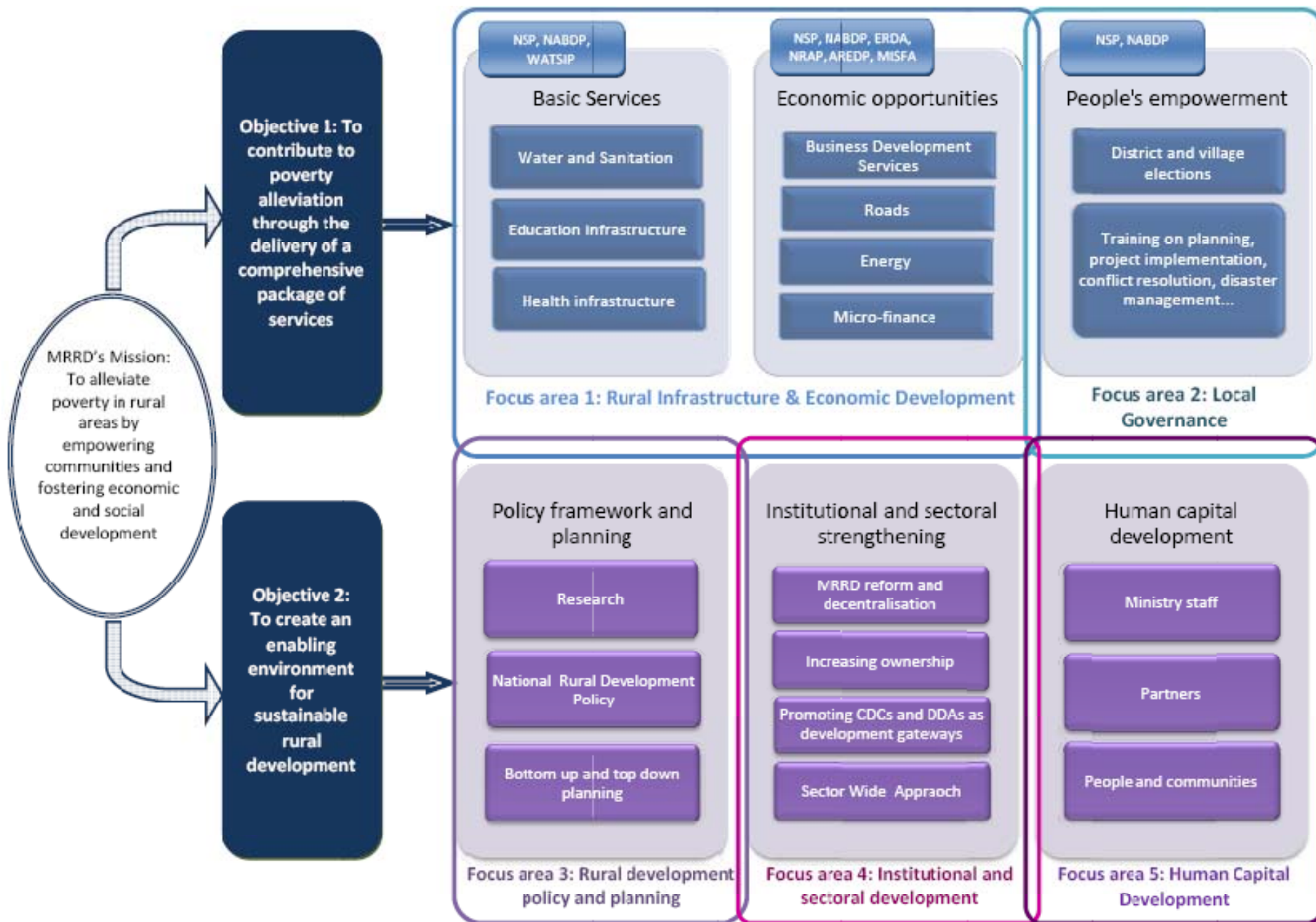


Chart 2: MRRD's outcomes and Strategic Focus Areas

Box 1: Conceptual Framework

MRRD's Vision for Rural Development

Empowered and prosperous rural communities

MRRD's Mission

To alleviate poverty in rural areas by empowering communities and fostering economic and social opportunities

Core Values

- The rural community is the centre of MRRD's development focus. The strongest voice in driving the development agenda is the voice of the rural population.
- MRRD is committed to equitable, sustainable and participatory development.
- MRRD regards market-led economic development as a key driving force to sustainably reduce poverty.
- MRRD conducts all activities with honesty, integrity, transparency and accountability, in accordance with cultural norms and values.
- MRRD believes in the maintenance of past and future investments to promote sustainable development and foster ownership.
- MRRD believes in cooperation, coordination and collaborative partnerships.
- MRRD regards the conservation of environment and the effective use of natural resources as vital values.
- MRRD values the role and active participation of women in rural development

Strategic Focus Areas

Rural Infrastructure and Economic Development
Local Governance
Rural Development Policy and Planning
Institutional and Sectoral Development
Human Capital Development

Cross-cutting issues

Women's empowerment
Environmental protection
Disaster management
Stabilisation and conflict mitigation

Strategic Focus Area 1: Rural Infrastructure and Economic Development

1. RATIONALE

For MRRD, the provision of rural infrastructure and economic development services for men and women ***aims at reducing poverty through creating an enabling environment for sustainable development, improving livelihoods, and creating jobs and income generating opportunities.***

Based on communities' priority plans, MRRD has built numerous infrastructure that have enhanced both social and economic development in rural areas. Yet, the need for this vital infrastructure across rural Afghanistan remains great. Rural areas still suffer from lack of connectivity and limited access to vital services and markets. Shortage of sufficient and suitable irrigation infrastructure is affecting the productivity of the limited arable lands that exist. Natural disasters wreak havoc on the farmlands, irrigation canals and other essential survival and livelihood assets. Availability and access to potable drinking water remains limited in much of the country, because of degraded watersheds.

Most of the infrastructure implemented through MRRD programmes is of a small-scale nature and has usually had an impact at village level. This choice has been favoured partly because government procurement rules are more appropriate to construction of micro-infrastructure and partly in response to village level prioritization which reflects current poverty and vulnerability levels. While the provision of such infrastructure continues to be necessary, it is insufficient for boosting economic development and increasing rural access to social services. To develop this critical mass of infrastructure projects to stimulate economic development, thus MRRD programmes need to invest in the construction of larger infrastructure at the inter-village, sub-valley and district levels.

Under Articles 10 and 13 of the 1382 Afghan Constitution, and further objectives laid out in the ANDS state, the government should facilitate the emergence of a strong private sector and support enterprises and industry across the country including the rural areas. MRRD, as the government's lead institution responsible for rural development, has the central role of improving rural livelihoods, creating sustainable rural jobs and sources of income, thereby reducing poverty.

Whilst agriculture and livestock represents the dominant economic sector of rural employment¹, they do not presently secure stable and sufficient incomes to address people's needs. In addition, Afghanistan has experienced little growth in enterprise-related activities in rural areas. The country continues to import vast quantities of easily-manufactured daily use items, while the exports sector remains small and undiversified. Comprehensive SME surveys find that the two major obstacles to private sector enterprise growth in rural areas are shortage of business development services and access to credit. MRRD has thus provided services that facilitate new entrepreneurial initiatives in rural areas which increase

¹ NRVA 2007, p. xix

economic opportunities (by linking villages to markets for instance). Such services need to be scaled up and better integrated with other rural development and agriculture programmes so as to maximize impact. For example, MRRD implements economic development off-farm activities extending beyond the farm-gate. The range of activities will allow targeting landless people. This perfectly complements the efforts made by the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livelihood (MAIL), which focus on improving on-farm crop and livestock production and productivity.

2. Rural infrastructure and economic development objectives and priorities

The objectives of MRRD are (i) to increase access to basic services and economic opportunities through the provision of sustainable infrastructure and (ii) to increase sustainable job creation and long-term livelihood opportunities through the provision of services which help rural people make the most of the economic potential in their areas.

- ***Objective 1: To increase access to basic services and economic opportunities through the provision of sustainable infrastructure***

Balancing the provision of micro and medium-sized infrastructure

MRRD will continue to build rural roads, bridges, culverts, irrigation canals, retention walls, water points and hygienic facilities, and similar basic infrastructure. This will increasingly include medium-sized bridges and irrigation structures as well as larger potable water supply systems. MRRD will seek to reach a balance between the provision of medium size infrastructures at the sub-district or district level (that respond to the needs of a greater number of people and improve the connection of villages to district centres and neighbouring villages), with the provision of small scale infrastructures that particularly target the poorest and most vulnerable members of rural communities. All infrastructure projects for potable water supply and sanitation will include training on hygiene and sustainable environmental management.

Rural energy and electrification investment

The provision of rural energy and electrification is essential for economic development. The lack of access to affordable energy sources often constitutes an obstacle to industrial growth either because the price of electricity is so high that the industry would not be competitive or because electricity is simply not available. MRRD will concentrate its efforts on rural energy as a specific focus of investment and programming and will promote the use of renewable energies, in partnership with the private sector. MRRD will also more closely engage with the Ministry of Energy and Water (MoEW) for jointly identifying rural electrification priorities and coordinating approaches to compensate for locations where the national grid may not reach.

Harmonisation of norms and standards

The diversity of the programmes which implement infrastructure projects has sometimes translated into a multiplicity of norms. MRRD intends to unify and harmonize norms and standards for all infrastructure projects of a certain kind (i.e. roads, culverts, dams, etc.) regardless under which programme they are being implemented. MRRD will include disaster-resistance and environmental compliance standards for all infrastructures, as appropriate.

Enhancing quality control of infrastructure projects

Greater focus will be dedicated to quality control of infrastructure projects. Quality Control will continue to be mainstreamed at all stages of projects design and implementation. An important measure will consist of closely monitoring the work done by the private sector under public-private partnership arrangements. In addition MRRD will establish a laboratory for testing the quality and grade of construction materials used in infrastructure projects commissioned by MRRD programmes.

Promoting community involvement in infrastructure maintenance

MRRD will follow a two-pronged approach for enhancing communities' ownership over infrastructure assets. Firstly, it will increase its investment in building communities' capacity to maintain assets, especially those which require specific technical knowledge (micro-hydro power, water piping systems, etc.); and secondly, it will promote traditional community-based maintenance systems for infrastructures that require labour intensive work, by mobilising communities through revival of the "ashar" system.

- ***Objective 2: To increase sustainable job creation and long-term livelihood opportunities through the provision of services which help rural people make the most of the economic potentials in their areas***

Facilitating the formation of productive community institutions

As with the successful experience of CDCs, which, formed around a public goods agenda, proved critical in planning and delivering infrastructure projects, there is a need to establish community-based institutions around private goods and to gradually scale them up. These institutions aim to identify business opportunities, providing a platform for training and support services, pooling assets and liabilities, aggregating savings, overcoming information shortfalls and utilising strong bonds of community solidarity to facilitate access to finance. Savings Groups, Enterprise Groups, Village Saving and Loan Associations (VSLAs) and Producer Associations will be some of the productive groups which will be facilitated by MRRD.

Building linkages to affordable rural credit including Islamic finance

MRRD will continue to provide strategic guidance and support to MISFA, by actively participating on the MISFA Board. MRRD will work with MISFA to raise awareness of MRRD staff and partners about micro-finance. In this way, MISFA and MFIs can build on MRRD's presence in and knowledge of rural areas and can increase their community outreach and develop products which are better adapted to rural needs. To complement MISFA's efforts to increase rural credit supply, MRRD will work on the demand side. This will be effected through facilitating the formation and strengthening of community institutions, providing financial literacy and numeracy, and linking the VSLAs (that are intended to function as long-term "community banks") to MFIs for sustainable access to finance. MRRD, with MISFA's support, will promote access to credit for SMEs with strong backward linkages to rural areas to increase their investment capacity and subsequently boost their role in rural economic growth. MRRD will advocate for Islamic finance, build the capacity of VSLAs in lending and borrowing using Islamic finance models, and work with partners, particularly with MISFA, to increase the range of Islamic financial products.

Provision of business development services along the value chain

Equally important to access to finance is the provision of end-to-end Business Development Services (BDS). Such services will include useful market information based on value chain

analysis and market studies, business planning, management and financial training, support with production, packaging, certification, branding and marketing of products, and exposure of rural entrepreneurs to domestic, regional and international markets. MRRD will deliver tailored business development services and marketing support for rural SMEs that have strong direct and indirect employment effects and which provide first-order market demand for rural products and raw materials. To begin with, BDS and trainings will need to be provided free of cost, but MRRD intends to gradually support the formation and strengthening of private sector BDS providers. Furthermore, MRRD will establish support institutions to serve the needs of rural entrepreneurs and SMEs across the country on a long-term basis and will invest in the capacity of these public institutions.

Development and promotion of rural technologies

MRRD will promote the use of rural technologies in support of off-farm enterprises, rural energy and access to water and sanitation. Rural technologies will be tested and showcased in technology parks. MRRD will strive to locate national indigenous technology and also capture the experience of neighbouring countries in order to adapt / develop environmentally-friendly, cost-effective technologies that can create jobs, improve livelihoods and ease women's workload.

Improving coordination for rural economic growth

Internally, MRRD will improve coordination among its infrastructure development and enterprise development initiatives such that investments in infrastructure (including energy, physical access and irrigation) will directly support rural enterprise development. Externally, MRRD will establish mechanisms and platforms to encourage and facilitate dialogue among actors working on rural access to finance and service provision. It will also work to align activities of various governmental and non-governmental actors on rural economic development both at national and provincial levels. MRRD will also establish or strengthen linkages with programmes and initiatives that could maximise the impact of its interventions, such as the National Skills Development Programme, rural credit initiatives and the Integrated Trade and SME Support Facility.

3. Cross-cutting issues:

In all infrastructure projects, MRRD will ensure that the specific needs of women are taken into consideration, both in the project identification and implementation phases. MRRD will provide equitable inputs for equal results, so that women can receive the additional and extra inputs needed to be at par with men in the same situation or position.

Through environmental impact assessments and the use of environmental check-lists, MRRD will ensure that its activities do not degrade the environment but protect it and promote sustainable natural resources management.

Strategic Focus Area 2: Local Governance

1. Rationale

MRRD defines local governance as ***the governing system at the local level viewed broadly to include not only the machinery of government, but also the community at-large and its interaction with local authorities.***

Good local governance emanates from the empowerment of communities and rests on the principles of:

- inclusiveness and participation so that marginalised and vulnerable people take part in decision-making,
- equity, so that all communities receive an appropriate support based on their needs and on their level of vulnerability,
- transparency and accountability, so that rural Afghans gain trust in their government and its representatives,
- representation through the organisation of transparent, fair and regular elections,
- capacity development so that local governance bodies are capable of fulfilling their responsibilities.

District Development Assemblies (DDAs) and Community Development Councils (CDCs) have proved to be the most efficient entities for delivering development at the grassroots level. MRRD has empowered rural communities to plan for their future and has provided them with the necessary tools to realise their aspirations. This approach has significantly increased communities' ownership over the development process. It has also paved the way for top-down planning, a process that will tighten the link between the government and rural Afghans. MRRD has been supporting CDCs and DDAs on behalf of the Government of Afghanistan and it envisions these institutions to be generally recognised as the long-term national delivery mechanisms for partners involved in rural development, thus streamlining development processes, increasing cost-effectiveness and promoting consistency in the way development actors interact with communities.

These local institutions have gained responsibilities beyond delivering development. Their representative feature and their capacity to respond to people's needs have raised their credibility and have led communities to increasingly rely on such bodies to address social and governance issues. Hence, DDAs and CDCs constitute some of the building blocks of responsive decision-making and policy mechanisms, forming the link between people and government officials. By increasing the ranges of services offered to their communities (for instance conflict resolution, dialogue with and advocacy to local authorities, provision of social protection services, etc.), CDCs and DDAs contribute to strengthening the social fabric into which citizenry can be woven. MRRD expects that locally elected representatives, being directly accountable to their constituencies, will continue to drive the evolution of the local political landscape from an elite-captured system which focuses on the protection of its own assets to a system based on the protection of public interest and public goods.

Overall, by building social cohesion, providing anyone with the possibility to access power at the local level, by enabling local leadership to emerge and fostering dialogue between the

governing institutions and the people, MRRD contributes to stabilising Afghanistan. This approach not only builds a cohesive nation of well-empowered citizens, it also combats the feeling of disaffection, disempowerment, and injustice that usually drives people towards violence.

2. Local governance objective and priorities

The objective of MRRD is to empower communities in promoting grassroots democracy and in delivering rural development and to institutionalise DDAs and CDCs nationwide. This will be done through:

Strengthening the role of DDAs and CDCs as governance bodies

MRRD is committed to use the established human capital it has created to further generate wealth and good governance. It is by building on the level of investment and a successful approach, in an inclusive manner, that the Government can achieve its sub-national governance objectives and better respond to the needs of the people it is serving.

MRRD is committed to work in cooperation with the IDLG, the IEC and line ministries to formalise DDAs and CDCs and to widen their mandate by transforming them into District Councils and Village Councils respectively. Based on its extensive experience of community-level elections, MRRD intends to work with relevant partners to ensure that each DDA and CDC meets agreed representation and Constitutional standards.

In addition, MRRD intends to invest further in social processes by increasing mobilization efforts and by enhancing capacity building of DDAs and CDCs in governance and conflict resolution. MRRD will also raise awareness on the roles DDAs and CDCs as community leaders accountable to the people. This long-term process, which invests in helping communities and individuals to better understand their social responsibilities and rights, will contribute in enhancing people's trust towards its government, and therefore to stabilisation, growth and prosperity.

Strengthening the role of DDAs and CDCs as development gateways

Over the next five years, MRRD will establish DDAs and CDCs in all districts and communities that have not yet been covered (5% of the districts and 30% of the communities) and will further strengthen DDAs' and CDCs' capacity through additional training on participatory planning and on project implementation. Mobilisation efforts will increasingly focus on encouraging communities to self-finance some of their priority projects, so that CDCs and DDAs are perennial and active, regardless of the availability of grants, and are able to respond to the basic needs of the people they represent due to sustained community participation.

With the considerable increase of communities' capacity to plan and implement projects, it is all the more important that ministries contributing to rural development are supported in using these bodies as the main development gateway at the local level. Using these already functioning mechanisms greatly enhances their efficiency and cost-effectiveness. MRRD is committed to make all efforts to facilitate such a process, based on the successful experiences of some ministries, NGOs and UN agencies. This will include further developing guidelines on how to deliver projects through DDAs and CDCs, briefing ministries' staff and

other development partners and establishing CDC clusters to reduce the delivery cost at the village level.

In order to support the decentralisation process, a link between the DDAs and the provincial administration needs to be formally established. MRRD envisages linking DDAs with the Provincial Councils. DDAs will provide necessary feedback to Provincial Councils, which, as official members of the Provincial Development Committee (PDC), will raise the voice of rural communities in a more informed manner. Provincial Councils will then provide feedback to DDAs on the main PDC's decisions.

3. Guiding principles and cross-cutting issues

One of the major lessons learnt is the need to take into account local specificities and to find creative solutions when insecurity or the cultural and traditional environment constitutes an obstacle to the implementation of a standard approach. MRRD is committed to remain flexible and to adapt its policies in a way that does not jeopardize longer term objectives and minimum quality standards.

MRRD is committed to promote the active participation of groups systematically excluded from the decision making process. For instance, MRRD will conduct studies to better understand how its programmes address the needs of vulnerable groups with specific needs or minorities. MRRD will strive to design innovative solutions to better support such groups, including returnees, IDPs, people with disabilities, women, especially in the most conservative or insecure areas and nomadic populations.

MRRD will engage in pursuits that promote women's empowerment at the community level by increasing women's representation in DDAs and CDCs, by strengthening their capacity to participate in and influence decision-making processes.

Environmental protection has been streamlined throughout programmes, through the use of environmental compliance guidelines and check-lists. MRRD staff and partners will continue to be trained on such guidelines so they understand how they can ensure their actions do not bear a negative impact on the environment.

MRRD is committed to comply with the "Do no harm" principles to ensure that none of its interventions fuels conflicts or raise inequality which might trigger new local conflicts. This is particularly relevant when establishing new DDAs and CDCs. MRRD will maintain a continuous dialogue with communities to understand what the potential triggers of conflict are and will diffuse any risks through mediation. In addition, MRRD will also train communities on conflict resolution.

In cooperation with ANDMA, MRRD will mobilise communities to lead disaster management. It will continue promote awareness regarding disaster mitigation and management at the community level through the formation of Disaster Management Committees within DDAs. Communities are also trained on disaster management.

Strategic Focus Area 3: Rural Development Policy and Planning

1. Rationale

With the term rural development policy, MRRD refers to ***the set of measures designed to guide and promote interventions for enhancing the standard of living and the overall well-being of the rural people.*** Rural development planning is understood as ***the elaborate mechanism of setting and directing the course of actions, resources and processes developed to help achieve the rural development policy objectives.***

With an estimated 74 percent of Afghans living in rural areas (approximately 18.5 million people)², it is vitally important for MRRD to develop and maintain a comprehensive rural development policy framework to better advocate for and on behalf of the rural people. To date, MRRD has mainly designed its policies emergent on programmatic findings and requirements. Having widened its programmatic scope and services, MRRD is thus changing its policy focus from short-term project-based time horizons, principally covering the humanitarian and reconstruction sectors to increasingly including local governance, sustainable economic development and institutional sustainability. This evolution represents an opportunity for MRRD to design broader comprehensive policies and strategies for addressing the complex causes of poverty in rural areas.

Due to limited delivery mechanisms at the outset, the Government relied on centrally-generated priorities and a dependency on non-governmental interlocutors. Gradually, MRRD has rolled out and established decision-making mechanisms generating planning at the local level. The Government of Afghanistan understands the importance of incorporating district and village development plans into the overarching national plan and has thus started decentralising the prioritisation and planning process with the objective to create an inclusive and equitable approach that will take into account the needs of rural people alongside national targets.

With a presence in virtually all districts of Afghanistan, MRRD has amassed significant primary and baseline information and data on the condition of rural communities. Compiling, analysing and disseminating this information will help MRRD design innovative and more responsive policies based on grassroots realities. In addition whilst MRRD has successfully established programme-level Monitoring and Evaluation systems a cohesive and integrated framework will need to be developed to ensure adequate opportunity for impact assessment of the overall activities of MRRD.

The institutional mainstay of MRRD remains the advocacy, design and delivery of national programmes. The continued success of existing and planned programmes remains dependant on non-preferenced funds for support; this has proven more and more challenging with the fragmentation of development funding based upon the geographical preferences by donors. MRRD continues to work closely with donors to find appropriate

² NRVA 2007/8

solutions to reconcile the imperatives of the international community with the need for equitable development benefiting rural Afghanistan.

2. Rural development policy and planning objectives and priorities

The objectives of MRRD are to (i) develop and advocate for policies that provide a comprehensive and equitable response to poverty challenges in rural areas and to (ii) strengthen planning processes by reinforcing the links between sub-national planning and national planning mechanisms.

- ***Objective 1: To develop and advocate for policies that provide a comprehensive and equitable response to poverty challenges in rural areas***

Utilise disaggregated data and research as a basis for policy development

In order to better inform existing policy and policy development, MRRD will compile and analyse existing data on rural development. These data will be broken down by gender, age, minority groups geographic areas etc, so policies can be tailored to the specific needs of vulnerable groups. MRRD will utilise the Vulnerability Analysis Unit (VAU) through its regular National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (NRVA), and the Afghanistan Institute for Rural Development (AIRD) for more complex research undertakings as the main tools for collecting such data, will be conducted on a regular basis. Based upon this, more research on economic and social conditions in rural areas will be conducted and will guide policy-making.

Leading the design of a national rural development policy

In partnership with relevant stakeholders, MRRD will lead the design of a national rural development policy which will establish a comprehensive framework for all rural development interventions.

Increasing the integration of the MRRD portfolio

To underpin the development of a cohesive policy framework, MRRD will continue to integrate its interventions by initiating joint planning and by creating synergies between programmes to nurture mutual reinforcement and have a greater impact on poverty reduction.

Enhancing coordination in the Agriculture and Rural Development Sector

The current momentum to strengthen the coordination of the Agriculture and Rural Development sector presents an opportunity for better aligning sector policies and planning. MRRD will strengthen inter-ministerial partnerships to ensure sectoral alignment, the maximisation of finite resources to support and promote unison with a commonality of purpose.

By advocating for equitable development

The principle of equitable development is not only an obligation for the public service, but a way to maintain citizens' trust in the Government. Disparities tend to fuel resentment between various groups and can lead to greater instability. MRRD will continue advocating for donors to increasingly provide un-preferenced grants in support to national programmes.

- **Objective 2: To strengthen planning processes by reinforcing the links between sub-national planning and national planning mechanisms**

Incorporating both local and national priorities into MRRD planning

Through its national programmes, MRRD works towards the ANDS objectives while responding to specific needs identified at the grassroots level. MRRD intends to strengthen the link between these two levels of planning by continuing to build communities' capacity to identify and prioritise projects in line with national priorities, and by supporting the provincial-level planning process.

Facilitating the incorporation of local level plans into other Ministries' planning

In support of the decentralisation process led by the Ministry of Finance, MRRD will support line ministries at the provincial level to incorporate rural people's priorities into their plans, as laid out in District Development Plans and Community Development Plans. This will help line ministries identify projects and will enable them to meet communities' priorities.

3. Guiding principles and cross-cutting issues

Evaluations will be conducted to better assess the overall impact of policies and plans. A centralised M&E system will allow measuring MRRD progress towards ANDS and MDG targets as well as towards relevant international treaties concerning which Afghanistan is required to report regularly.

In translating ANDS objectives and MDG targets into its plans, MRRD endeavours to promote women's empowerment. Policies will always consider the ways to advance the role of women at every level, be it at the community level or in MRRD Human Resources policies.

MRRD intends to build upon the NSP experience by adapting policies for working in challenging environment (due to insecurity, terrain, cultural restrictions, etc.). All policies will thus consider the specific conditions in places where conditions are challenging and will include a set of measures that will enable MRRD to deliver services in such areas.

Policies and plans will include provisions on MRRD contributions to the overall stabilization process. Such provisions will consider the "Do no harm" principles as well as recommendations specific to the Afghan context to avoid fuelling further local conflicts for instance.

MRRD recognises that natural disasters often put at stake development achievements in rural areas through destroying people's assets, leading to further impoverishment. Natural disaster management, including risk mitigation and early recovery measures will thus be mainstreamed into MRRD policies and plans. When addressing natural disasters the role of natural resources management cannot be overlooked. Policies will thus mainstream environment as an enabler for the prevention of natural disasters.

Strategic Focus Area 4: Institutional and Sectoral Strengthening

1. Rationale

For MRRD, institutional strengthening encompasses ***the set of measures that improves the capability and performance of the Ministry in order to attain its mission and strategic goals.*** As for sectoral strengthening, MRRD aims to ***coordinate stakeholders involved in rural development, identify complementarities, establish synergies and advocate for the well-being of rural communities so that rural development is more efficiently and cohesively delivered.***

MRRD is a relatively new institution with characteristics that differentiate it from most of the other ministries. It is particularly flexible, comprising a mix of civil servants and programme staff contracted for a limited duration. It is a dynamic institution with highly qualified staff delivering some of the biggest and most successful national programmes. MRRD is also well-connected to community-level realities having a strong presence in the field. It has a cohesive institutional culture which translates into high staff commitment. Yet, for MRRD to further build on its comparative advantages, and to establish itself in the long-run as a respected and essential institution, it needs to operationalise some internal changes which will lead to success beyond programmes' lifespan.

MRRD has been a precursor in decentralisation through the implementation of the Kandahar Model, where the provincial RRD Directorate has been empowered to directly manage funds and projects and to oversee community-based contracting. The Government as a whole has also engaged in a decentralisation process and MRRD will make all efforts to remain a leading ministry promoting the devolution of power to provinces.

Rural communities need a wide range of services that surpasses the MRRD mandate. This includes the supply of basic social services, the provision of agriculture inputs and extension services, the development of infrastructure, the expansion of good local governance, security, the availability of a reliable justice system, an enabling legislative framework, and a support to the industrial and service sectors. To claim a meaningful impact, these interventions have to complement each other, so that they address all hindering factors to rural development, in a holistic manner. Having the mandate to coordinate rural development, MRRD is the natural leader for promoting collaboration amongst all actors involved in rural development and for building partnerships. It thus positions itself as a strong contributor to the reinforcement of the Agriculture and Rural Development Sector.

2. Institutional and sectoral strengthening objectives and priorities

The objectives of MRRD are (i) to strengthen some of MRRD's functions thereby increasing, in the long-term, the Ministry's efficiency, programme quality and cost-effectiveness, (ii) to enhance MRRD's ownership by reinforcing partnerships with the international community and (iii) to enhance coherence of the rural development sector in order to maximise MRRD's impact.

- ***Objective 1: To strengthen some of MRRD's functions, thereby increasing, in the long-term, the Ministry's efficiency, programme quality and cost-effectiveness***

MRRD intends to reform some of its functions and to consolidate others, in order for the Ministry to adapt to new objectives and priorities and to an evolving work environment. Overall, this will include modifying MRRD's mandate, reviewing internal processes, procedures, institutional settings and functions, redefining areas of responsibilities and reporting lines, streamlining certain functions and establishing mechanisms for enhancing programmatic coherence. MRRD will consider, in priority:

Strengthening policy and planning functions

MRRD intends to establish, directly under the Minister, a Policy and Planning Unit, which will be responsible for identifying policy needs, leading the policy-making process, providing general direction to the MRRD Planning Department and coordinating MRRD's reform activities. It will be supported by a Policy Review Committee which will assess the quality of policies and their alignment to national objectives. This unit will promote policies across the ministry so to ensure their implementation. The Planning Department will be restructured and strengthened to effectively translate general policies at the programmatic level.

Establishing a centralised platform for information management, data analysis and monitoring

MRRD will establish a platform which will collect, compile and analyse data from the various programmes and departments and will set up an interface for rendering data available to all. MRRD will also create a common M&E framework based on the existing programme-based M&E systems. Both the data analysis and the M&E results analysis will support the policy function.

Strengthening the Afghanistan Institute for Rural Development

AIRD, with strengthened capacity, will promote a learning and research culture within MRRD. AIRD will continue to coordinate the ongoing training and research initiatives. It will develop its capacity to gradually takeover training and research activities from national programmes. Its research activities, including the publication of an Afghanistan Rural Development Report, will be used as a main source for MRRD policy-making and information dissemination. A Board of Directors and a technical Steering Committee will be formed within AIRD to ensure coherence and transparency.

Operationalising decentralisation

MRRD will bring decision-making processes closer to the people, by replicating the Kandahar Model. It will follow a phased approach, decentralising at the regional level to start with. This will entail devolving more responsibilities to one provincial directorate in each region. The selected provincial directorates will perform some of the functions traditionally handled at the central level, serving all provinces in the region. Some Kabul-based staff will be transferred to these provinces to support the decentralisation.

- ***Objective 2: To enhance MRRD's ownership by reinforcing partnerships with the international community***

Civil-Military cooperation towards PRTs' transition

MRRD has designed creative cooperation mechanisms with some PRTs and wishes to replicate successful ones, in order to reinforce service delivery at the provincial level and

thereby facilitate PRTs' exit strategy. MRRD will continue to develop and disseminate guidelines for PRTs, to help them make the best decisions on using their funds in rural areas, while PRTs will increase their civilian component to strengthen the capacity of the provincial RRD directorates.

Securing donors' long-term commitments for MRRD national programmes

The strong partnership between donors and MRRD has created a virtuous circle: donors have granted MRRD opportunities to gain ownership over its programmes, and MRRD has used this chance to improve its capacity and deliver successful programmes, making the most of donors' investments. To build upon this successful approach, MRRD will advocate for donors to provide multi-year, un-preferenced funding to national programmes. MRRD will actively inform 'Whole of Government' debate on revenue and expenditure sustainability in the sector by contributing to a healthy dialogue between the Afghan Government and donors. MRRD commits to continue engaging in institutional strengthening and capacity development so that it can demonstrate growing capacity to run programmes, with the intention of raising further donors' confidence towards MRRD.

- ***Objective 3: To enhance the coherence of the rural development sector in order to maximise MRRD's impact***

Supporting the Agriculture and Rural Development Sector Wide Approach

MRRD will draw on the intensifying sectoral and cluster-level coordination to strengthen its partnership with MAIL, MoEW and MCN, among others. MRRD intends to identify synergies and to seamlessly integrate interventions with other ministries when appropriate so that ANDS targets for the agriculture and rural development sector are met. This may include for instance joint planning between MAIL and MRRD on economic regeneration, an area in which both ministries are active. This will also cover the support to and the scaling up of CARD-F, as a mechanism to promote the provision of integrated rural intervention at the district level.

Promoting policies driven by the voice of rural communities

Very often, MRRD's achievements depend on the availability and quality of policies that fall under other ministries' mandates. MRRD thus intends to identify policy gaps and advocate to government partners the revision of existing policies or the development of new ones. It will also be an active partner in advising other ministries on rural development matters, including rural enterprise development and will promote the best interests of rural communities and rural entrepreneurs. Through advocating to all development stakeholders the use of DDAs and CDCs as development gateways, MRRD will strive to bring about more cohesion in the way services are delivered at the local level.

Partnering for strengthening local governance

Based on the strategy cited in the local governance section, MRRD intends to build synergies with all relevant stakeholders, making its expertise available in support to a coordinated process to local governance. It will ensure a smooth transition from the DDAs and CDCs to District Councils and Village Councils. MRRD commits to work in a collaborative and transparent manner in order to ensure that the interests of all constituencies are best served in a coherent and cost-effective manner.

Participating in the design of sustainable solutions for peace and stabilisation

MRRD will further engage with actors involved in stabilisation and peace building efforts and will advocate for a long-term approach involving fostering trust between communities and the government. This can be developed through a sound local governance system, based on the principles of representation and accountability. This approach, seeking to enhance the sense of citizenry and social cohesion, will contribute to stability.

3. Cross-cutting issues

As part of the institutional strengthening process, transparency and anti-corruption measures will be promoted with the help of the General Independent Administration for Anti-Corruption (GIAAC) and by open and regular reporting to elected bodies (Meshrano Jirga, Wolesi Jirga, Provincial, Districts and Village Councils) and the public through the media.

For MRRD, one particularly key aspect to sectoral strengthening consists in building synergies with NEPA so to promote environmental sustainability in all aspects of rural development. This will not only contribute to mitigate the effect of climate change, but it will also guarantee the durability of development interventions by reducing rural people's vulnerability to natural disasters, through sound natural resources management.

Strategic Focus Area 5: Human Capital Development

1. Rationale

MRRD sees human capital *as an individual's or a community's sum of knowledge, skills, abilities and competences which can be gained through capacity development efforts and experience*. MRRD is dedicated to continuous learning whereby all individuals are responsible for sharing knowledge with colleagues, partners and clients and for learning to enhance their own abilities.

MRRD's strategy is driven by a philosophy centred on people, whereby investing in people, at all levels, constitutes the cornerstone of poverty reduction. It does not only include the transfer of knowledge, skills building and competence development, it also encompasses building people's self-confidence so they are able to raise their voices and participate in decision-making processes. MRRD will develop these two facets of human capital for its staff, its partners and communities' members.

So far, multiple partners have provided capacity development support to MRRD. While results are visible, activities have not been sufficiently coordinated, sometimes leading to duplication. Therefore, there is a need for a more systematic, ministry-wide approach to capacity development within the framework of the National Capacity Building Strategy. The creation of the AIRD, the launch of the Civilian Technical Assistance Programme and the IARCSC support to MRRD constitute opportunities for developing a sound capacity building plan around which all partners can rally.

NGOs and the private sector have supported MRRD in reaching out to almost all rural communities in Afghanistan. As much as their expertise of field work is extremely valuable to MRRD, they need the Ministry's support to improve the quality of their work and expand their range of services. It is particularly true for private companies involved in building infrastructure on behalf of MRRD, since they are the face of the institution and they can tarnish its image if the quality of their work does not meet standards. MRRD will thus scale up its capacity development efforts for all its partners.

2. Human capital development objectives and priorities

The objectives of MRRD are (i) to improve the quality of services delivered by MRRD through developing the capacity of staff and partners and (ii) to provide awareness, skills and knowledge to individuals and communities so they can lead their own development.

- ***Objective 1: To improve the quality of services delivered by MRRD through developing the capacity of staff and partners***

Designing and implementing a ministry-wide capacity development plan

MRRD will design a capacity development plan based on capacity needs assessments' results and in alignment with the National Capacity Development Strategy. Capacity development activities will, in priority, support MRRD's reform by providing staff with the tools

required to adapt to change. These include the need to bridge the capacity gap between programme staff and civil servants so that civil servants are increasingly capable of taking on some of the functions currently performed by programme staff. In addition, specific attention will be paid to building staff capacity in provincial RRD Directorates where responsibilities will be transferred as part of the decentralisation process so they can gradually take over some of the functions currently implemented at central level. The capacity building of administrative and managerial functions will continue to be led by the Civil Service Institute, while AIRD will focus on building the capacity of civil servants engaged in community work, by providing them with skills and competences required for MRRD's long-term involvement with communities. A mechanism will be put into place to monitor the implementation of the capacity development plan.

Building capacity of and enhancing dialogue with selected partners

NSP facilitating partners, microfinance institutions and private companies contracted by MRRD are directly involved in the implementation of MRRD programmes. On them depends the quality of services delivered to rural people. It is thus critical to give them all necessary tools, skills and support they need to achieve high quality results. MRRD will transfer knowledge to them, disseminate best practices, promote cross-fertilisation among partners so they can learn from each other, and train them on new skills so they can implement MRRD's new priorities. MRRD also intends to improve its policies using recommendations from its partners, based on their extensive experience in the field.

➤ Objective 2: To provide awareness, skills and knowledge to individuals and communities so they can lead their own development

Beyond the training offered to communities, which aim to develop a wide range of skills and knowledge, MRRD intends to help communities weave links with government officials and gain their own experience through directly being involved in development and local governance activities. This functional approach to capacity development will not only provide rural people with the capabilities necessary to secure their livelihood but it will also form them as active and responsible citizens. Capacity development for individuals and communities is mainstreamed in all programmes, so infrastructures are better maintained, communities are more resourceful and individuals become more hopeful for their future.

3. Guiding principles and cross-cutting issues

Within the Ministry, a specific emphasis will be put on developing women's capacity. Among other things, MRRD will strive to increase the number of female staff and will give women the priority for benefiting from capacity development efforts. At the community level, MRRD will continue to encourage women to participate and to train them so they are empowered within their communities.

Cross-cutting issues

1. Women's empowerment

MRRD is firmly committed to consolidating a coherent and pragmatic Gender policy and framework that form a cross-cutting element of its institutional development. Overall guidance in achieving this will be positioned within the ANDS gender outcomes, with support from the National Action Plan for Women of Afghanistan, linked to Millennium Development Goal 3. The cross-cutting approach within MRRD will involve the development and implementation of a gender mainstreaming policy for MRRD, supporting and promoting programme-wide integration by providing expert advice and guidance on national and sectoral level gender issues. At programme level, gender concerns from all practice areas will be integrated in order to provide gender-responsive policy advice and practices that promote gender equality and women's empowerment. Lessons from existing innovative in-country models and approaches will be used to strengthen this approach.

In collaboration with the MRRD Gender Unit, MRRD will strengthen its mechanism for reviewing recruitment, placement and promotion within the Ministry and propose new ways to integrate women at all levels of assistance efforts and the programme management structure. Furthermore, a capacity building framework will be developed that would include updated training modules on theoretical and practical aspects to women rights and empowerment and a variety of other topics including, gender analysis and monitoring tools, communication and negotiation, decentralisation and local development, personal development, institutional development, racism and discrimination. In addition, the policy will ensure delivery of a gender-responsive M&E mechanism and indicators, so that programme policy, planning and budgeting intentions are enabled to apply the 'gender-lens' and include sex disaggregated targets and benchmarks and measures that support women's empowerment. This will lead to the development of systems that ensure knowledge development and dissemination on good practices and lessons learnt in affirmative actions introduced to mainstream gender into programmes and policies.

2. Environmental protection

Up to 90% of the Afghans directly depend on the environment and natural resources for their livelihoods. However, many sources of livelihoods are under threat by the alarming rate of environmental degradation caused by a combination of conflict, poverty, population growth and poor environment management practices. The deteriorating quality and quantity of environment and natural resources in Afghanistan has led to increased vulnerability of rural communities, to increasing poverty and decreasing opportunities for sustainable livelihoods. Environment being one of the pillars of sustainable development, MRRD places greater emphasis on sustainable environmental management as a mechanism for attainment of ANDS targets and fulfilment of Afghanistan commitment to MDG 7-Environmental Sustainability. As a member of the Inter-Ministerial Co-ordination Committee on Environment (CEC), MRRD continues to co-ordinate with the National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA) and other Ministries.

MRRD, through some of its programmes, has developed an Environmental and Social Management Framework and an Environmental Impact Assessment tool aimed at assessing likelihood of adverse environmental and social impacts resulting from the implementation of the programmes. These tools propose mitigation measures and strategies to minimize those impacts through a monitoring and reporting mechanism. Furthermore, MRRD programmes will increasingly incorporate environment considerations into the design and implementation of their activities.

Under the new Strategic Intent, MRRD will undertake Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) to guide its institutional strategic level policy and decision-making processes in relation to environment mainstreaming into rural development initiatives. This will enable MRRD to systematically evaluate environmental consequences of proposed policies, plans or programmes and to ensure that appropriate and timely actions are taken to address the likely impacts beforehand. To do this effectively, the Ministry will develop and operationalise environment mainstreaming guidelines for integrating environmental considerations into programmes' plans and implementation mechanisms, including benchmarks and measurable indicators to deliver environmental compliant rural development benefits for the Afghan population.

3. Disaster Management

Frequent and recurrent natural and man-made disasters continue to result in the loss of lives, livelihood, and properties, resulting in increased poverty and the destabilization of communities living in at risk areas. Recognizing that natural and man-made disasters can wipe out decades of progress in poverty reduction and sustainable development efforts, MRRD considers disaster management as an essential component of its mandate in alleviating poverty and empowering communities. As a member of the National Disaster Management Committee and in coordination with the Afghan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA), MRRD invests in social capital and in physical assets to reduce the vulnerability, support recovery of disaster-affected communities, and assist in long-term reintegration needs of returnees and Internally Displaced People (IDPs).

By integrating disaster management issues in the strategic focus areas and streamlining disaster management policies in its National Programmes, the Ministry will deliver, at national and sub-national levels, initiatives and activities that will allow communities to decrease their vulnerability to natural and man-made disasters. This more coherent approach will help increase the effectiveness and sustainability of development efforts of all ministries concerned in this sector.

4. Stabilisation and conflict mitigation

The current instability in Afghanistan has a number of causes, some of them being beyond MRRD's immediate sphere of operation and influence. However, one main root of conflict can be addressed through well-targeted local governance and development interventions: people's frustration, usually based on the feeling of disenfranchisement, being disregarded and unable to take decisions on issues that matter to people, or the feeling that their rights have been violated. In insecure areas, effective long-term development assistance is diverted to other places and thus increases people's frustration, feeding a vicious cycle based on distrust towards the government.

MRRD has the responsibility to contribute to building people's confidence through empowerment. This can be achieved through engaging in meaningful dialogue and by building unity within communities through the realisation of common projects. The participatory approach, whereby all members of a community, even minorities and marginalised groups, can be part of, or influence decision-making has proved to be effective in reducing internal tensions and in increasing trust towards governmental authorities. MRRD, through its programmes, inculcating democracy at the grassroots level, can thus have an impact on the stability of an area by creating a platform where dialogue and trust-building can be further cultivated and where the sense of citizenry can take root.

Beyond this general nation-building approach, MRRD builds community's capacity to solve local disputes, which are usually exploited by insurgents to gain access, through conflict resolution training. MRRD also constantly assesses the risks to awaken an old conflict, to fuel an existing one or to create a new one, when working at the community or district level, by applying the "do no harm principles" in all its programmes.

Annex 1: LOGFRAME SUMMARY
MRRD Strategic Intent 1389 – 1393

Strategic Focus Areas	Outcomes	Outcome Indicators	Outputs	Risks or Assumptions
Objective 1: To contribute to poverty alleviation through the delivery of a comprehensive package of services				
Strategic Focus Area 1: Rural Infrastructure and Economic Development	Outcome 1: To increase access to basic services and economic opportunities through the provision of sustainable infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Percentage of rural population with access to energy and to potable water - Percentage of infrastructure projects that undergo quality control at all stages based on harmonised standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Output 1.1.: Rural people's needs of schools, clinics, roads, water, sanitation, and other infrastructure are better covered by MRRD Output 1.2.: An increased number of rural people have access to rural energy Output 1.3.: Infrastructure norms and standards are fully harmonized within MRRD departments and programmes and are in line with national standards Output 1.4.: A quality control mechanism is established at all stages of infrastructure projects Output 1.5.: Efficient community-based maintenance systems are set up where needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Risks: deteriorating security, lack of funding - Assumptions: level of MRRD access to projects remain unchanged, MRRD programmes have the flexibility to adapt their norms and standards, the engineering department's capacity improves over the next five years (see outcome 9)
	Outcome 2: To increase sustainable job creation and long-term livelihood opportunities through the provision of services which help rural people make the most of the economic potentials in their areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Percentage of the population living below and just above the poverty line in areas of intervention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Output 2.1.: Saving groups, Enterprise groups, VSLAs and producer associations are formed in areas with high economic potentials Output 2.2.: Adapted rural microfinance services are increasingly available in places where business development services are provided Output 2.3.: Rural SMEs increase profits thanks to end-to-end business development services training Output 2.4.: Adapted rural technologies are increasingly accessible to rural people Output 2.5.: Efficient mechanisms are put in place to coordinate and integrate economic development activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Risks: deteriorating security, major natural or man-made disaster, lack of funding - Assumptions: partners involved in economic development in rural areas remain committed to cooperate with MRRD

Strategic Focus Areas	Outcomes	Outcome Indicators	Outputs	Risks or Assumptions
Strategic Focus Area 2: Local Governance	Outcome 3: To empower communities in promoting grassroots democracy and in delivering rural development and to institutionalise DDAs and CDCs nationwide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of Ministries using DDAs and CDCs to deliver services - Number of CDCs fulfilling governance functions after having received relevant training 	Output 3.1.: DDAs and CDCs become efficient governance bodies thanks to quality training on relevant topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Risks: Fluid insecurity situations and other constraints to the transitioning of DDAs to DCs and of CDCs to VCs - Assumptions: continuous donor support, effective partnership with IDLG
			Output 3.2.: DDAs and CDCs are increasingly used by all development actors as gateways for delivering projects	
			Output 3.3.: DDAs and CDCs become Village Councils and District Councils	
Objective 2: To create an enabling environment for sustainable rural development				
Strategic Focus Area 3: Rural Policy and Planning	Outcome 4: To develop and advocate for policies that provide a comprehensive and equitable response to poverty challenges in rural areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of MRRD programmes improved according to new evidence-based policies 	Output 4.1: Policies are developed based on disaggregated data and research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Risks: lack of access in some parts of the country to conduct research - Assumptions: continued strong cooperation with actors involved in rural development, internal capacities on policy and research functions develop swiftly (see outcome 6 and 9)
			Output 4.2.: A national rural development policy is developed, under MRRD lead	
			Output 4.3.: Inter-programme linkages institutionalised and integrated into operational practices	
			Output 4.4.: The Agriculture and Rural Development Sector is able to meet the targets set in the ARDSS (Also supports outcome 8)	
			Output 4.5.: Donor support and facilitation falls into alignment with programme requirements and priorities	
	Outcome 5: To strengthen planning processes by reinforcing the links between community planning and national planning mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of ministries having access to compiled and analysed district and community plans - Number of ministries using such information when designing their plans 	Output 5.1.: MRRD planning derives from both local and national plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assumptions: ministries' planning departments have the capacity to conduct bottom-up planning based on information provided by MRRD
Output 5.2.: Ministries involved in rural development increasingly incorporate local plans into their plans				

Strategic Focus Areas	Outcomes	Outcome Indicators	Outputs	Risks or Assumptions
Strategic Focus Area 4: Institutional and Sectoral Strengthening	Outcome 6: To strengthen some of MRRD's functions, thereby increasing, in the long-term, the Ministry's efficiency, programme quality and cost-effectiveness	- Percentage of reform steps achieved	Output 6.1.: MRRD's reform lead to increased efficiency and quality of service delivery	- Assumptions: continued leadership's commitment, successful implementation of MRRD's capacity development plan (see outcome 9)
			Output 6.2.: A Policy and Planning Unit is established in the Minister's Office and is functioning	
			Output 6.3.: MRRD data relevant to policy-making are analysed and easily accessible to all within the Ministry	
			Output 6.4.: AIRD leads quality training and research activities within MRRD	
			Output 6.5.: Elements of decentralisation approaches and models are consolidated and replicated in at least 5 provinces	
	Outcome 7: To enhance MRRD's ownership by reinforcing partnerships with the international community	- Percentage of increase of multi-year funding	Output 7.1.: Increasingly civilianised PRTs support MRRD's capacity building efforts at the provincial level	- Assumptions: donors are willing to abide by the Paris Declaration principles
			Output 7.2.: Donors increasingly provide multi-year funding to MRRD programmes	
	Outcome 8: To enhance the coherence of the rural development sector in order to maximise MRRD's impact	-Number of functioning inter-ministerial initiatives to enhance cooperation in the rural development sector	Output 8.1.: Needed rural related policies are developed by other ministries and reflect people's needs	- Assumptions: partners involved in rural development remain committed to cooperate with MRRD
			Output 8.2.: All relevant ministries collaborate to achieve the smooth transition of CDCs and DDAs to VCs and DCs	
Output 8.3.: MRRD's policies and values are incorporated in the design of sustainable solutions for peace and stabilisation				

Strategic Focus Areas	Outcomes	Outcome Indicators	Outputs	Risks or Assumptions
Strategic Focus Area 5: Human Capacity Development	Outcome 9: To improve the quality of services delivered by MRRD through developing the capacity of staff and partners	- Number of community complaints related to partners' work	Output 9.1.: A ministry-wide capacity development plan is developed and successfully implemented Output 9.2.: MRRD contractors have more capacity to build quality infrastructure and NSP Facilitating Partners and MFIs have access to relevant information to improve the quality of their work	- Assumptions: sufficient resources are available
	Outcome 10: To provide awareness, skills and knowledge to individuals and communities so they can lead their own development	- Percentage of CDCs and DDAs having initiated, funded and implemented at least 1 project of their own	Output 10.1.: Infrastructure are well maintained by communities and individuals and communities start projects on their own	- Risks: deteriorating security, lack of funding