

Afghanistan: Monitoring Women's Security in Transition

Cycle 5 – January 2015



موسسه مطالعات عامه
افغانستان



د افغانستان
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Acknowledgements

This is the fifth monitoring report following the baseline study: “Afghanistan: Monitoring Women’s Security in Transition”, published in May 2014. Monitoring Women’s Security in Transition initiative was conceived by Cordaid, the Afghan Women’s Network (AWN), and Afghanistan Public Policy Research Organization (APPRO) and funded by Cordaid to monitor and assess the impact on women of the security transition from international security forces to their national counterparts. This transition was concluded in December 2014. This monitoring report focuses on how the transition has affected Afghan women using the proxy indicators of Overall Security, Mobility and Access to Public Life, Access to Services (Health and Education), Access to Justice, Violence Against Women, and Women and Current Affairs.

APPRO is responsible for the research component of this project while AWN and Cordaid conduct outreach and advocacy at the national and international levels based on the findings from this research.

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APPRO takes full responsibility for all omissions and errors.

About APPRO

Afghanistan Public Policy Research Organization (APPRO) is an independent social research organization with a mandate to promote social and policy learning to benefit development and reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan and other less developed countries through conducting social scientific research, monitoring and evaluation, and training and mentoring. APPRO is registered with the Ministry of Economy in Afghanistan as a non-profit non-government organization and headquartered in Kabul, Afghanistan with satellite offices in Mazar-e Sharif (north), Herat (west), Kandahar (south), and Jalalabad (east). APPRO and its individual researchers have undertaken projects in Central Asia, Pakistan, India, Africa, China, and Turkey.

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About AWN

The Afghan Women's Network (AWN) is a non-partisan, non-profit network of women that serves as an umbrella organization for 112 NGO members, and 5,000 individual members who are committed to support the women of Afghanistan. AWN has offices in Kabul, Herat and Jalalabad and works through local partners in several Afghan provinces. Primary concerns for AWN are issues related to: gender-based violence, youth empowerment and girl's education. The network also represents and promotes the views of Afghan women in political and social arenas through advocacy and by challenging Afghanistan's leaders to enforce legislative reforms for the protection of women's rights.

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About Cordaid

Cordaid, based in the Netherlands, has a focus on international development and collaboration in vulnerable regions and areas of conflict. Its mission is to build flourishing communities in fractured societies. Monitoring the transition in Afghanistan is part of Cordaid's program on Women's Leadership for Peace and Security (WLPS). This program aims to increase the capacity of women's networks, give a voice to women at the local level in processes of peace and security, and promote the women's agenda in national and global arenas.

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List of Abbreviations

AIHRC	Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission
ALP	Afghan Local Police (Arbaki)
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANP	Afghan National Police
ANSF	Afghan National Security Forces
APPRO	Afghanistan Public Policy Research Organization
AWN	Afghan Women's Network
BSA	Bilateral Security Agreement
CE	Community Elders
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DoWA	Department of Women's Affairs
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FRU	Family Response Unit
GHS	Girl High School
GOV	Government Employee
HC	Health Clinic
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
LIT	Literacy Training Center
MoI	Ministry of Interior Affairs
MoWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
PW	Prominent Women
UNSCR 1325	United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325
VAW	Violence Against Women
VTC	Vocational Training Center
WIT	Monitoring Women's Security in Transition project
WW	Working Women

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Executive Summary

Afghanistan is currently undergoing political, security, and socio-demographic transition. By the end of 2014 the international forces had handed over the responsibility for national security to their Afghan counterparts and Afghanistan experienced a peaceful transition of government following the two rounds of presidential elections. Recognizing the significance of these developments, at the London Conference in December 2014 international donors renewed their commitments to continue assistance to Afghanistan in the post-2014 period. As before, a crosscutting theme in the renewed international commitment to Afghanistan will be gender-focused aid programming with efforts to support the rights of Afghan women.

Despite these significant developments at the formal level, and despite the many achievements made by and for women since 2001 in Afghanistan, there is broad recognition that many of the gains made are at the risk of being severely undermined in the aftermath of the transition of security responsibilities from the international forces to their Afghan counterparts. In efforts to protect and build on these achievements the role of donors and the international community in supporting gender programming in Afghanistan will continue to be crucial.

In 2015 the new government of Afghanistan, supported and reassured during the December 2014 London Conference by a host of international donors, remains committed to effecting measurable improvements in women's conditions, opportunities, and access to and control over their productive assets and income. The post-2014 period thus presents numerous opportunities, as well as risks, for advancing toward greater gender equality in Afghanistan.

As with the previous four monitoring reports, this report examines the impact of the transition of the responsibility for national security from international to Afghan national security forces to establish whether there are grounds for concern regarding the gains made for and by women in Afghanistan since 2001. The findings from this report, and the recommendations based on these findings, are intended to inform programming and action by the Government of Afghanistan, Afghan civil society organizations, and Afghanistan's international donors in meeting their commitments to gender equality in Afghanistan.

The data for this monitoring report were collected from October 2014 to December 2014, after the inauguration of the new government in September 2014. The concerns about the outcome of the presidential elections and the signing of the Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) had been resolved prior to the commencement of the data collection for this report though the uncertainties relating to the appointment of the new Cabinet remain.

Since this monitoring process began in September 2012, the continuing loss of employment opportunities for women and men has been a major concern among women and men. Numerous aid programs have ceased to operate due largely to the transition but also because of reduced aid funding from international donors. The departure of international security forces has resulted in the loss of the many auxiliary local businesses and services that emerged since 2001 and served the international security force bases throughout the country. Many of the thousands of women who worked for the international security forces, auxiliary businesses serving international security forces, or numerous humanitarian and other NGOs have lost their jobs due to the negative economic impact of the transition.

For many of the women engaged for the data collection during this round of monitoring the instability and uncertainty caused by the transition, the subsequent decline in the number of women-centered programs, and increased unemployment among women and men are among the key contextual factors for increased domestic violence against women. As with Cycle 4, in Cycle 5 the vast majority of the women attribute the increase in violence against women to poverty, increased unemployment, and drug addiction. The transition has affected women's access to justice and services. Arguably, the deterioration in security conditions and rise in poverty and unemployment have limited women's access to justice and services (especially education) significantly in some districts. However, traditionalism, societal conservatism, corruption and discrimination against women remain the key constraints for women.

The widespread participation of women in the elections, especially during the first round in April 2014 was significant in many ways. At around 38%, the estimated percentage of female voters in the first round of 2014 presidential elections was lower than the first and second presidential elections in 2004 and 2009. But, in absolute terms the turnout by women to vote in the presidential elections of 2014 was the highest ever throughout Afghanistan's history. Even if discounted for questionable or fraudulent votes, the number women that voted remains very significant. However, the initial sense of enthusiasm about participation in the elections and increased trust in ANSF have given way to continued despair and disenchantment, first with the delay in announcing a winner for the presidential elections and subsequently because a Cabinet not being formed months after the announcement of the new presidency.

Regardless of the political rationale for the delayed outcome of the elections and the Cabinet, to many ordinary Afghan women and men the delay in having a fully functioning government remains a major source of disappointment and worry. The strong feeling of despair that overshadowed the findings in Cycle 4 persists in the findings for this cycle also. The vast majority of the women and men engaged for data collection in late 2014 worried about the future and the increased level of lawlessness that set in since the first round of presidential elections in April 2014. While some districts monitored in this cycle show signs of improvement in some respects, the overall security situation all districts has deteriorated. The main causes of deterioration appear to be the post-election uncertainties, from which many provinces have not recovered, and the increase in unemployment caused by the security transition. The deterioration is most evident in increased AOG activity and increased criminality.

Recommendations

The recommendations for this report are based entirely on the key findings from the analysis of the monitoring data and insights from a critical review of the gender strategies and policies of major international donors and their Afghan counterparts.

Overall Security	Relevant Entities
1. Provide earmarked training programs, uniforms, and equipment for ALP as a means to integrate them and make them accountable to ANSF command structure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoI • UNDP/LOTFA • International Donors
2. Continue to provide trainings to the ANSF (ANP and ALP) on gender-sensitivity and engagement with civilians.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSOs • MoI • MoWA • UNDP/LOTFA • International Donors
3. Ensure monitoring and evaluation of provincial and local security forces by central authorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoI
4. Hold senior members of ANSF accountable for respecting gender equality by evaluating them for their ability to address cases of unfair treatment of women in the forces under their command.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSOs • MoI • MoJ • MoWA
5. Continue efforts to recruit more women for ANSF, increase female friendly amenities and facilities in ANP and ANSF more generally, and ensure identical processes for promotion are applied to female and male ANSF officers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoI • MoWA • UNDP/ LOTFA • International Donors
6. Efforts in support to the ANSF for sustained presence in districts following the resolution of armed conflict.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoI • MoD • International Donors
7. Concentrate specific efforts for logistical, strategic and tactical support to the ANSF in Kunduz province.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoI • MoD • International Donors
8. Conduct additional research and contextual/conflict analysis for lessons learned in Laghman to inform security management in other provinces such as Kunduz and Herat.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Donors • Research Organizations • UNAMA
9. Insure enhanced representation of women in leadership and decision-making position within ANSF at national and local level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Donors
10. Provide adequate compensation and support to women whose family members have died suffered severe injuries as a result of conflict-related violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Organizations

Access to Work and Public Life	Relevant Entities
11. Sustain development cooperation for income-generating projects for women at the community level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government of Afghanistan • International community
12. Earmark project funds for recruitment of local female staff by national implementing partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Community • INGOs and NGOs
13. Remove the freeze on recruitment in the civil service and ensure recruitment quotas for women are respected in civil service positions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government of Afghanistan
Access to Health and Education	Relevant Entities
14. Develop community monitoring mechanisms to ensure corruptive practices of health workers are reported and prosecuted; cases of ill-treatment of patients in health services need to be documented, prosecuted, and offenders brought to justice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoPH • MoI • MoJ • INGOs and NGOs • International Community
15. Increase staffing of health services at the local level by continuing to train and recruit professional medical staff, from doctors to nurses and midwives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoPH • INGOs and NGOs • International Community
16. Intensify efforts for provision of quality medicine in local health services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoPH • INGOs and NGOs • International Community
17. Continue training and mentoring of health personnel on gender sensitivity at all levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoPH • INGOs and NGOs • International Community
18. Increase the protection of girls' schools, particularly at higher grades.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoI • MoE
Violence Against Women	Relevant Entities
19. Sustain provision of awareness-raising on violence against women and women's rights for women and men; continue integrating awareness raising with vocational and literacy training programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSOs • IDLG • MoJ • MoWA • International community • INGOs and NGOs
20. Sustain training on the Family Law at the community level and include local decision makers, traditional justice providers, and male and female members of communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoJ • MoWA • MoE • International community • INGOs and NGOs

Access to Justice	Relevant Entities
21. Continue training and mentoring of ANP personnel in dealing fairly and equitably with domestic violence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoI • MoWA • UNDP/LOTFA • International community • INGOs and NGOs
22. Continue efforts to increase women’s access to formal justice by increasing the availability of courts at the district level; sustain providing women-centered legal awareness programs for women and men; make special provisions in formal justice system to fast track women’s legal cases.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoJ • MoWA • International community • INGOs and NGOs
23. Ensure that prosecution resulting in conviction in reported cases of violence against women is followed by correctional measures for the offenders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoI • MoJ • MoWA
24. Ensure effective prosecution of cases of violence against women in accordance with national and international legal frameworks, including through the adoption of measures to combat impunity when State actors perpetrate violence against women.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoJ • International community • INGOs and NGOs • MoWA • UNAMA
Women and Current Affairs	Relevant Entities
25. Strengthen active engagement of women in national and provincial High Peace Councils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government of Afghanistan • HPC • International Community
26. Increase involvement of CSOs and women’s rights organizations in the peace process, including engagement with the High Peace Council at national and provincial levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government of Afghanistan • International community • INGOs and NGOs
27. Increase advocacy and dialogue on including women in the peace process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government of Afghanistan • International community • NGOs
28. Raise awareness among female and male citizens about the High Peace Council, the peace process, and the rights of the citizens to participate in the peace process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government of Afghanistan • International community • INGOs and NGOs
29. Sustain existing position quotas for women, particularly in senior decision making positions, across all sectors (health, education, judiciary, sub-national governance structures, and Parliament).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government of Afghanistan
30. Strengthen measures for the security and protection of high ranking female government officials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoI

Further Research

31. **Gender relations and regional diversity:** Establish, through in-depth assessment, why the outcome of the security transition in some provinces has been more positive than other provinces, why some provinces have experienced little or no change after the transition, and whether there are lessons to be learned from these cases for critical provinces such as Kunduz.

32. **Benchmarking and baseline information:** Prior to any and all interventions on security and service provision in the transitioned provinces, government and international donor programming must be based on situation analyses and baseline assessments with a central focus on gender relations and how the proposed interventions affect, negatively and positively, pre-existing gender relations in the target communities.

Relevant Entities

- Government of Afghanistan
- International Community
- Research Institutes and Organizations

- Government of Afghanistan
- International Community
- Research Institutes and Organizations

1. Introduction

Afghanistan is currently undergoing political, security, and socio-demographic transition. By the end of 2014 the international forces had handed over the responsibility for national security to their Afghan counterparts and Afghanistan experienced a peaceful transition of government following the two rounds of presidential elections. Recognizing the significance of these developments, at the London Conference in December 2014 international donors renewed their commitments to continue assistance to Afghanistan in the post-2014 period. As before, a crosscutting theme in the renewed international commitment to Afghanistan will be gender-focused aid programming with efforts to support the rights of Afghan women.

Commitment to gender equality has been a major feature of post-2001 reconstruction and development programming in Afghanistan. This commitment was first made in the Bonn Agreement (December 2001), followed by similar commitments in the Constitution of Afghanistan (2003), Afghanistan Compact (2006), National Action Plan for Women in Afghanistan (NAPWA 2008 – 2018), and Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS 2008 – 2013). In addition, Afghanistan is signatory to the Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW 2003) and has made specific commitments to meet Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) including Goal 3, “Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women”.

As a member state of the United Nations, Afghanistan is bound by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325). Each of these commitments emphasizes gender mainstreaming as a crosscutting theme to be incorporated into all government policies and all manner of donor aid programming. Afghanistan is also signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW 1979), ratified by the Government of Afghanistan in 2003, the Platform of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (1984), and the Beijing Platform of Action from the Fourth World Conference on Women (1985).

UNSCR 1325, adopted on October 31, 2000 formally acknowledges women’s right to participate in all aspects of conflict prevention and resolution, peacekeeping, and peace building, and to be included in decision making bodies at all levels of government. UNSCR 1325 was followed by six subsequent resolutions on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), creating a normative policy framework for UN Member States to adopt a gender perspective in their peace operations and provide guidance for translating high level recommendations into concrete policies and action plans (Box 1).

Under UNSCR 1325 each member state has been expected to develop a National Action Plan as a national strategy to implement UNSCR 1325 and other resolutions of the Women Peace and Security agenda. UNSCR 1325 does not mention National or Regional Action Plans (N/RAPs) for implementation. The need for N/RAPs was further elaborated in the UN Security Council statement (2002), UN Secretary General’s Report (2004), and UNSCR 1889 (2009), inviting member states to prepare National Action Plans as a step towards the implementation of UNSCR 1325.

Through its Recommendation Number 30, issued in October 2013, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) further renewed the focus on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 through adequately funded National and Regional Action Plans, while calling on all member states to

... cooperate with all UN networks, departments, agencies, funds and programmes in relation to the full spectrum of conflict processes, including conflict prevention, conflict, conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction to give effect to the provisions of the Convention” and “enhance collaboration with civil society and non-governmental organizations working on the implementation for the Security Council agenda on women, peace and security.¹

Box 1. Subsequent Resolutions to UNSCR 1325

- Resolution 2122 (2013) on women’s leadership and empowerment as a central component for resolving conflicts and promoting peace through a number of specific calls for regular consultations, funding mechanisms to support women’s civil society organization and changes in the Council’s working methods in relation to WPS.
- Resolution 2106 (2013) on the need to better operationalize existing obligations, particularly those related to sexual violence.
- Resolution 1960 (2010) calls for refining institutional tools to combat impunity related to sexual violence, notably through the set up of a ‘naming and shaming’ list in annual reports.
- Resolution 1889 (2009) focuses on women’s participation in peace building and calls on United Nations Secretary General to develop a set of global indicator to measure impact of UNSCR 1325 at global and national levels. It further welcomes “the efforts of member states in implementing Resolution 1325 at the national level, including the development of national action plans”.
- Resolution 1888 (2009) calls for appointment of a Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, and the establishment Women’s Protection Advisors within Peacekeeping missions.
- UNSCR 1820 (2008) draws attention to sexual violence being used as a weapon of war and calls for the need for prosecution of gender-based war crimes.

Source: UN Women, *Global Technical Review Meeting: Building Accountability for Implementation of Security Council Resolutions on Women, peace and Security, Final Report*, November 2013.

A later (2014) interpretation of National Action Plans for UNSCR 1325 states:

.... [National Action] Plans should contain concrete recommendations on how women should be included in all peace and conflict related decisions and processes, and how a gender perspective should be included in efforts to prevent conflict and sexual violence, protect women and girls, and in relief and recovery activities. [The Plans] provide an opportunity to assess priorities for the states’ work both nationally and internationally and to co-ordinate relevant actors, including co-operation with civil society. Plans should contain clear goals, actions and responsibilities and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation.²

In Afghanistan the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has had the responsibility for developing a National Action Plan for WPS.³

Despite these significant developments at the formal level, and despite the many achievements made by and for women since 2001 in Afghanistan, there is broad recognition that many of the gains made are at the risk of being severely undermined in the aftermath of the transition of security responsibilities from the international forces to their Afghan counterparts. In efforts to protect and build on these achievements the role of donors and the international community in supporting gender programming in

¹ Adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly, ratified by Afghanistan in 2003.

² See: OSCE / PRIO (2014), “Study on National Action Plans on the Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325” (Oslo: PRIO)

³ At the time of writing, the Afghan NAP had not been made public.

Afghanistan will continue to be crucial. Concrete and effective measures will be needed to implement and move forward the WPS agenda formulated since 2000 following the passing of UNSCR 1325.

However, future gender-based programming in Afghanistan must be based on the recognition that the implementation of gender mainstreaming strategies and policies by the international donors in Afghanistan has consistently fallen short of meeting program objectives.⁴ The policies reflect the intentions of donors and what donors “stress”, “seek”, “should” do, or “will support” but fail to provide clear mechanisms for implementation guided by specific outcome-oriented indicators to monitor and evaluate progress. Moreover, intentions set out in the action plans are often not reflected in indicator matrices, if and when these are available. Several reports have pointed to a lack of understanding within the donor community and among the implementing organizations of the concept of gender and the challenging environment for implementing gender mainstreaming in Afghanistan.⁵

The overwhelming majority of gender policies are poorly designed, focus on inputs at the expense of outputs and outcomes, and lack adequate implementation plans and financial resources. In many instances the inclusion of a “gender perspective” in programming, a consistent requirement by the donors, has not gone beyond being a mere item to tick off on the checklist used for releasing development funds. As a result, several reports have raised major concerns about gender-based development programming and the lingering misunderstanding of what gender mainstreaming entails.⁶ First among these concerns is that gender mainstreaming has been consistently equated with women’s rights, which, while an integral component of gender mainstreaming in patriarchal societies such as Afghanistan, is only one (albeit key) component of gender mainstreaming. This approach has been described as “women highlighting”.⁷

Second, though acknowledged as necessary, the inclusion of men and boys in gender programming remains minimal, or poorly conceptualized.⁸ In the least, gender mainstreaming in such contexts as Afghanistan must include a particular focus on the rights of boys who, like girls and women, are systematically exposed to the risks of physical and sexual abuse and violence. Third, and as a consequence of male exclusion, advocacy for gender rights and gender mainstreaming has become, in most cases, women’s rights activism. While rights activism is and must remain an integrated component of advocacy, advocacy should also have elements of engagement and awareness changing through dialogue, incentives, and education of men and women, girls and boys.⁹ Fourth, regardless of the inadequacies in conceptualizing women’s rights in the Afghan context by different national and

⁴ For a critical self-assessment confirming this, see, for example, Norad (2012), *Evaluation of Norwegian Development Cooperation with Afghanistan (2001 – 2011)*.

⁵ See, for example, AREU (2013), *Women’s Rights, Gender Equality, and Transition: Security Gains, Moving Forward*, (Kabul: AREU); AREU (2008), *Moving to the Mainstream: Integrating Gender in Afghanistan’s National Policy*, (Kabul: AREU); Abirafeh, L. (2005), *Lessons From Gender-focused International Aid in Post-Conflict Afghanistan... Learned?*, (Berlin: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung); and Kandiyoti, D. (2005), *The Politics of Gender Reconstruction in Afghanistan*, (Geneva: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development).

⁶ See, for example, AREU (2008).

⁷ Abirafeh (2005).

⁸ BAAG (2014), *Getting it Right: Examining Gender Programming in Afghanistan*, (London: BAAG), available from: http://www.baag.org.uk/sites/www.baag.org.uk/files/resources/attachments/Getting%20it%20Right%202014_FINAL.pdf.

⁹ See, for example, APPRO (2013), *Gender Screaming versus Gender Mainstreaming in Afghanistan*, available from: <http://appro.org.af/blog/gender-screaming-versus-gender-mainstreaming-in-afghanistan/> and BAAG (2014).

international actors, the need remains for ongoing efforts and mechanisms through which to relay and highlight the plight of Afghan women.¹⁰

Approaches to women's integration in decision-making processes thus remain wanting both at the institutional and grass-root levels. The presence of women in political participation is often presented from the perspective of participation through the number of seats reserved for women at the Parliament, Provincial Councils, Community Development Councils, or national security forces, without much thought given to the conditions in which these women must function. At the grass-root level women's participation in decision-making remains minimal at best while there are numerous barriers for women in terms of access to work and public life, health, education, and justice.¹¹

There is now an urgent need for clear WPS policies, informed and driven by up-to-date contextual knowledge and achievable goals based on research, implemented through conscientious coordination mechanisms and sustainable financial planning, and monitored and evaluated systematically to inform future programming. In 2015 the new government of Afghanistan, supported and reassured during the December 2014 London Conference by a host of international donors, remains committed to effecting measurable improvements in women's conditions, opportunities, and access to and control over their productive assets and income.¹² The post-2014 period thus presents numerous opportunities, as well as risks, for advancing toward greater gender equality in Afghanistan.

As with the previous four monitoring reports, this report examines the impact of the transition of the responsibility for national security from international to Afghan national security forces to establish whether there are grounds for concern regarding the gains made for and by women in Afghanistan since 2001. The findings from this report, and the recommendations based on these findings, are intended to inform programming and action by the Government of Afghanistan, Afghan civil society organizations, and Afghanistan's international donors in meeting their commitments to gender equality in Afghanistan.

2. Objectives and Methodology

This fifth monitoring report sought to assess the likely impact of security transition on the lives of Afghan women based on changes observed in the following proxies:

1. Overall Security
2. Mobility and Access to Public Life
3. Access to Services (Health and Education)
4. Access to Justice
5. Violence Against Women, and
6. Women and Current Affairs (Peace Process, Bilateral Security Agreement, Elections).

¹⁰ The project, Monitoring Women's Security in Transition, a partnership of APPRO, AWN, and Cordaid, funded by Cordaid since September 2012, was conceived with this main purpose. For the monitoring reports from the four previous cycles see: www.appro.org.af/publications/

¹¹ See, for example, APPRO (2014), Monitoring Women's Security in Transition – Cycle 4, available from: <http://appro.org.af/preview/women-in-transition-cycle-4-findings/>

¹² The reports and communiqué of the London Conference of December 2014 are available through: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/international-community-welcomes-afghan-reform-vision-at-london-conference>; and https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/383205/The-London-Conference-on-Afghanistan-Communique.pdf

Data and other information from secondary sources were used for the overview in the introduction to this report. Primary data were collected during October-December 2014 in 12 provinces (Appendix 1) through interviews with 178 women and 68 men, focus group discussions with 28 groups of women and 28 groups of men, and a survey of 683 individuals consisting of 409 women and 274 men. The sources for all the quotes and points made by the participants are coded and footnoted in the text. All the codes in the footnotes are described in full in Appendix 2.

3. Findings From Interviews and Focus Group Discussions

Faizabad, Badakhshan Province

Date of Visit:
October 30, 2014

Transition Period:
December 2012

Transition:
Transition Completed

Overall Security

The security situation has remained unchanged in Faizabad but deteriorated in Jurm, Baharak, Argo, and especially Warduj districts.¹³ The heightened armed conflict has resulted in a high number of casualties in Warduj, with the district being nicknamed as the village of the widows.¹⁴ Poverty, unemployment, and divisions among communities supporting and opposing AOG are said to be the main causes of tension and insecurity in the province.¹⁵

The views on the police and ANSF are largely positive.¹⁶ ALP is viewed as a source of fear, with some stating that they find it difficult to distinguish ALP members from AOGs partly because ALP members do not wear official uniforms.¹⁷

Access to Work and Public Life

There are no complaints about employment opportunities for women lacking in Badakhshan. Women state that they are not harassed in public and men are described as having a positive and helpful attitude toward their female colleagues in the workplace.¹⁸

The opinions of traditional leaders about women in public life have not changed compared to the previous cycle with some being supportive while others disagreeing with women leaving their homes:

There are the enlightened imams and conservative ones. The conservative ones preach against women working outside the home and some state the women that do so ought to be divorced.¹⁹

More generally there is a negative perception of women who work for NGOs or professions requiring them to share spaces with men.²⁰ There are no reservations about women working in the health and education sectors, however.²¹

Access to Services (Health and Education)

Girls' access to education in some districts has been significantly affected by the deterioration in security. In insecure districts such as Warduj and Argo the presence of AOGs has led to many girls not

¹³ KI-M-FRU-Bad, FGD-Bad-WW, confirmed by two key informants and two focus groups

¹⁴ FGD-Bad-WW, confirmed by eight key informants

¹⁵ KI-M-FRU-Bad, confirmed by nine key informants and one focus group

¹⁶ All interviewees (eighteen key informants and four focus groups)

¹⁷ KI-M-MED-Bad-2, confirmed by five key informants and two focus groups

¹⁸ KI-F-GOV-Bad-1, confirmed by ten key informants

¹⁹ KI-F-VTC-Bad-1, confirmed by four key informants and one focus group

²⁰ KI-F-GOV-Bad-2, confirmed by two key informants and two focus groups

²¹ KI-F-GOV-Bad-3, confirmed by three key informants and one focus group

attending schools and some schools being closed.²² In Faizabad access to education remains unchanged.²³

The deterioration in security has had a major impact on women's access to services in the more remote districts. Fewer women take the risk of going to health centers while mobile medical teams do not want to take the risk of visiting the insecure districts.²⁴ However, the interviewees state that on the overall maternal mortality rate throughout the province has declined because of the continued provision of services for pregnant women despite the general insecurity.²⁵

Access to Justice

The provision of legal aid in some districts has been adversely affected by the deterioration in security.²⁶ Where there is access, there are complaints about corruption, delays, and unfairness toward women in the judicial system.²⁷ As a result many women are either deterred from seeking formal justice or drop their cases part way through the legal proceedings.²⁸ Most cases that concern domestic disputes are solved through mediation of the police and the elders.²⁹

Violence Against Women

Increasing awareness of women's rights by involving religious leaders is said to have played a major role in the reduction of domestic violence against women:

There is more awareness among men and women about their rights, which has led to a decline in violence against women. Also, many women now contribute to family income, have access to the internet, and have access to new technologies and libraries, all of which have contributed to increased awareness against women ...The Department of Women's Affairs invites prominent religious leaders in their gatherings and meetings to preach against violence against women in their Friday sermons.³⁰

In unsafe districts, however, many women and girls risk being kidnapped by criminal gangs. ANSF is said to have helped the evacuation of some families to safer villages as a means to protect the women.³¹ According to some interviewees there are increases in some districts in beatings, forced marriages, running away from home, suicides, self-immolations, and rape, however.³²

Women and Current Affairs

Compared to the previous cycle, women in Badakhshan are less keen to participate in political activities and campaigns:

²² KI-F-PW-Bad-2, confirmed by two focus groups

²³ All interviewees (eighteen key informants and four focus groups)

²⁴ KI-F-Bad-3, confirmed by two key informants and two focus groups

²⁵ KI-M-MED-Bad-2, confirmed by two key informants and two focus groups

²⁶ KI-F-NGO-Bad-1, confirmed by one key informant

²⁷ KI-F-PW-Bad-2, confirmed by four key informants and two focus groups

²⁸ KI-F-PW-Bad-2, confirmed by one key informant

²⁹ KI-M-FRU-Bad, confirmed by one focus group

³⁰ FGD-Bad-WW, confirmed by three key informants

³¹ FGD-Bad-WW

³² FGD-Bad-Lit, confirmed by five key informants

Women's political participation has declined. The allegations of fraud and the uncertainty that set in after the second round of the elections led to many women losing their interest in politics. It is possible that many women will not participate in parliamentary elections. People feel that their efforts to vote are not being taken seriously.³³

Women's participation in leadership is also limited. The number of female representatives in the Provincial Council declined from four to three and the Provincial Peace Council of 26 individuals has only two female members.

The general opinion among the interviewees is that women can contribute to peace by utilizing their roles in the society as mothers, sisters, and wives:

Women, as mothers and sisters, seek and strive for peace and unity inside the family. They can extend this role toward the society and encourage peace within the society. We can never achieve peace in the political arena if there is no peace in the society.³⁴

³³ FGD-Bad-WW, confirmed by four key informants

³⁴ KI-F-PW-Bad-2.

Balkh, Balkh Province

Date of Visit:
November 30, 2014

Transition Period:
April-May 2013

Transition Status:
Completed

Overall Security

Overall security has improved compared to the previous cycle in Balkh district.³⁵ The initial post-election rise in AOG activity has decreased significantly.³⁶ The primary cause for the improvement in security is attributed to more effective policing and security maintenance and involving the community.³⁷ However, there is still heightened criminality, especially in ChaharBolak and Chemtal districts.³⁸

People are generally satisfied with ANP and attribute the decline in AOG activity to the effectiveness of ANSF.³⁹ There are praises about the new police chief who is said to have instituted stability and security since his appointment.⁴⁰ ALP continues to be considered as groups of armed men with no responsibilities and a source of instability. The fact that many ALP members do not wear uniforms adds to confusion and mistrust of ALP by community members.⁴¹

Access to Work Public Life

Access to work in Balkh has declined compared to the previous cycle. The post-election decline in employment opportunities has continued and the labor market has not yet recovered.⁴² Another cause of the decline in employment opportunities is the governmental freeze on hiring new personnel.⁴³

The general perception of women working outside the home is generally positive as long as they abide by traditional dress codes.⁴⁴ There are some fears among the women about becoming victims of attacks by AOGs. However, women's access to public life has not changed over the past four months. There are very few complaints by women about being harassed in public.

Access to Services (Health and Education)

Girls' access to education has not changed compared to four months ago.⁴⁵ People are generally supportive of education for girls. The new head of the Department of Education is said to be strict in implementing and executing educational strategies.⁴⁶ The main complaint regarding girls' access to education is the low competence level of the teachers and the quality of teaching, which according to many is caused by the low salaries of teachers and teaching as a profession not recruiting the most

³⁵ KI-M-MED-Bal-2, confirmed by three key informants

³⁶ FGD-Bal-LIT, confirmed by four key informants and one focus group

³⁷ FGD-Bal-CE, confirmed by four key informants and one focus group

³⁸ FGD-Bal-WW, confirmed by seven key informants

³⁹ FGD-Bal-CE, confirmed by ten key informants and three focus groups

⁴⁰ KI-M-MED-Bal-2, confirmed by two key informants

⁴¹ KI-M-MED-Bal-2, confirmed by four key informants and two focus groups

⁴² FGD-Bal-LIT, confirmed by eight key informants and two focus groups

⁴³ KI-F-NGO-Maz-3, confirmed by one key informant

⁴⁴ FGD-Bal-Lit, confirmed by ten key informants and two focus groups

⁴⁵ FGD-Bal-WW, confirmed by three key informants and one focus group

⁴⁶ FGD-Bal-WW, confirmed by three key informants and one focus group

suitable candidates.⁴⁷

Access to health has improved compared to four months ago though some have attributed this to increased access due to relatively better weather.⁴⁸ The complaints about the quality of health services persist with the main concerns being a lack of proper medication and the unfriendly attitude of the medical personnel.⁴⁹

Access to Justice

Improvements are reported in terms of access to justice at the provincial level. The main reason is given as the more positive attitude of the judiciary officials toward women and a decline in corruption in the formal justice system, caused in part by the hard stance of the new government on corruption.⁵⁰ The Department of Women's Affairs provides 24-hour advisory service for women in need while ANP and family response units are described as helpful.⁵¹

Fear of stigmatization and retaliation deter many women from seeking formal justice outside.⁵² The vast majority of the cases involving women are resolved through mediation by community elders.⁵³

Violence Against Women

Violence against women has increased compared to four months ago. The most common types of violence are physical abuse, and forced or underage marriages, sometimes resulting in escaping from home. There are also different forms of economic violence against women including denial of inheritance.⁵⁴ Almost all violence against women are of a domestic nature.⁵⁵ Higher unemployment and general poverty among men and women are said to be the main causes of violence against women.⁵⁶

Women and Current Affairs

Women's political participation in Balkh has increased since the presidential elections:

Many women voted during the elections. We even have a female MP and a female senator from our district. We have a council for preservation of Ancient Balkh, which also has female members. At the provincial level and we have a Peace Council with female members.⁵⁷

However, the number of women in leading positions remains low.⁵⁸ The number of female representatives in Balkh's Provincial Council has declined from five (out of twenty) to four (out of twenty). The decline is the result of the reduction in female representation quota from twenty five percent to twenty percent in the new Afghan Electoral law.

⁴⁷ KI-M-GHS-Bal-1, confirmed by three key informants and one focus group

⁴⁸ KI-M-MED-Bal-1

⁴⁹ FGD-Bal-CE, confirmed by seven key informants and three focus groups

⁵⁰ FGD-Bal-CE, confirmed by six key informants and one focus group

⁵¹ KI-F-PW-Maz-1

⁵² FGD-Bal-LIT

⁵³ KI-M-ANP-Bal, confirmed by three key informants and one focus group

⁵⁴ FGD-Bal-CE, confirmed by seven key informants and two focus groups

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ KI-M-GHS-Bal-1

⁵⁷ FGD-Bal-CE, confirmed by five key informants and one focus group

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

Dawlatabad, Balkh Province

Date of Visit:
August 12-25, 2014

Transition Period:
April-May 2013

Transition Status:
Completed

Overall Security

The security has deteriorated in many villages and rural areas surrounding Dawlatabad.⁵⁹ There are concerns about heightened AOG and criminal activity, including robberies and theft.⁶⁰ The deterioration is most felt in the eastern districts.⁶¹ Many women are fearful of suicide attacks and other forms of AOG activity.⁶² Increased unemployment, particularly among youth, and the long period of uncertainty following the inconclusive presidential elections have weakened the confidence of the general population in governmental institutions.⁶³

People are generally happy with the police and ANSF and find them helpful and respectful toward women.⁶⁴ Opinions on ALP differ, however, with some accusing ALP of being a source of unrest in some districts.⁶⁵

Access to Work and Public Life

There have been some relatively new agricultural projects and investments in literacy trainings by some INGOs. However, the general consensus is that employment opportunities for women have declined.⁶⁶ Government offices are not hiring new staff largely due to the freeze on hiring until the new government is firmly established.⁶⁷ Some women-centered projects are being extended, however.⁶⁸

Women's access to public life has not changed significantly over the past four months though there are fears of becoming collateral damage in terrorist attacks when in public spaces.⁶⁹

The views of religious leaders and the community on women working outside the home differ:

We have two kinds of imam. The type trained within the environment of Afghanistan has no problems with women working outside the home. Others trained in more conservative countries like Pakistan are against women working. In the central regions [of Balkh province], the ones trained in Afghanistan make up the majority. But, in rural areas those trained abroad make up the majority of the imams.⁷⁰

⁵⁹ KI-M-MED-Daw-1, confirmed by five key informants and two focus groups

⁶⁰ FGD-Daw-WW, confirmed by four key informants and three focus groups

⁶¹ KI-M-GHS-Daw-2, confirmed by three key informants and two focus groups

⁶² KI-M-GHS-Daw-1, confirmed by four key informants and one focus group

⁶³ KI-FOPW-Maz-2, confirmed by four key informants

⁶⁴ KI-F-BW-Maz-2, confirmed by eleven key informants and two focus groups

⁶⁵ KI-F-GOV-Maz-2, confirmed by five key informants and two focus groups

⁶⁶ FGD-Daw-WW, confirmed by six key informants and three focus groups

⁶⁷ KI-F-GOV-Maz-3, confirmed by two key informants

⁶⁸ KI-F-NGO-Maz-1

⁶⁹ KI-F-NGO-Maz-1, KI-F-Gov-Maz-1, confirmed by four key informants and one focus group.

⁷⁰ FGD-Daw-LIT

Access to Services (Health and Education)

Girls' access to education in central Dawlatabad has not changed in the last four month.⁷¹ In rural areas, however, access to education has been adversely affected by the deterioration in security.⁷² Many girls have stopped going to school while women are reluctant to join or continue literacy classes:

Almost 50 percent of our students do not attend the classes anymore, because they are fearful of insecurity. With the support from UNESCO we started some new courses in remote areas a couple of weeks ago but we cannot go and inspect the classes and courses because we are afraid of becoming targets of attacks by AOGs.⁷³

Despite the founding of a new clinic in Chaghdak village and a mother and child care support program in the district, women's access to health has deteriorated compared to the previous cycle.⁷⁴ The main cause of deterioration is the deterioration in the security conditions, especially in remote areas, and a general lack of adequate transportation.⁷⁵

There are a number of complaints about the quality of health services and the attitude of the medical staff, some of which are attributed to lack of medicines and congestion at health centers.⁷⁶

Access to Justice

Women's access to formal justice has not changed over the past four months but remains limited.⁷⁷ The main impeding factor for women's access to justice is societal conservatism, sometimes with tragic consequences for women:

Victims usually do not seek justice because their families do not accept it. They endure the suffering and pain until they cannot take it anymore and then they either commit suicide or escape from home, [falling victim to additional forms of violence] ...⁷⁸

Another impeding factor in women's access to justice is corruption and unfair treatment of women within the formal legal system.⁷⁹ Many women seeking justice in Dawlatabad continue to go through the customary justice system.⁸⁰

Most of the women stated that there was some level of awareness of the formal justice system among most women and that the Department of Women's Affairs was adequately trained for handling women's cases.⁸¹

⁷¹ KI-F-BW-Maz-1, confirmed by six key informants and two focus groups

⁷² KI-F-NGO-Maz-1, confirmed by three key informants and one focus group

⁷³ FGD-Daw-LIT, confirmed by one key informant

⁷⁴ KI-M-MED-Daw-1,

⁷⁵ KI-M-MED-Daw-1,

⁷⁶ KI-F-GOV-Maz-1, confirmed by five key informants and two focus groups

⁷⁷ FGD-Daw-WW, confirmed by two key informants

⁷⁸ FGD-Daw-LIT, confirmed by one key informant

⁷⁹ KI-F-NGO-Bal-1, confirmed by three key informants and one focus group

⁸⁰ FGD-Daw-CE, confirmed by one key informant and one focus group

⁸¹ KI-F-PW-Maz-1, confirmed by three key informants and one focus group

Violence Against Women

Violence against women in Dawlatabad has increased compared to the previous cycle.⁸² The most common forms of violence are physical abuse and beatings, forced and underage marriage, rape, murder and economic violence such as denying woman their inheritance entitlements.⁸³ Most of the violence is of domestic nature, perpetuated by poverty, unemployment, and lack of awareness among men.⁸⁴

Women and Current Affairs

Women's political participation in Dawlatabad has declined compared to four months ago. After the high turnout for the first and second rounds of the presidential elections, political activity by women in the district has almost come to a halt.⁸⁵ The district has a Women's Council but it has a low membership and its activities are very few.⁸⁶ Three women hold leadership positions in the district and there are no female representatives in the Provincial Council.⁸⁷

The women complained that people in Dawlatabad have no knowledge of the peace process or women's participation in peace process.⁸⁸ The role of the Provincial Peace Council and its female members is described as symbolic by some of the interviewees.⁸⁹ However, many believe that women could convince other women to discourage their male family members from participating in armed conflict.⁹⁰

⁸² KI-F-NGO-Bal-1, confirmed by seven key informants and three focus groups.

⁸³ KI-M-FRU-Maz, confirmed by seven key informants and three focus groups.

⁸⁴ FGD-HW-Daw, confirmed by three key informants

⁸⁵ KI-F-GOV-Maz-1, confirmed by six key informants

⁸⁶ FGD-Daw-HW

⁸⁷ KI-F-NGO-Bal-1, confirmed by two key informants and one focus group

⁸⁸ FGD-WW-Daw, confirmed by four key informants and one focus group

⁸⁹ KI-F-NGO-Maz-1

⁹⁰ KI-F-NGO-Bal-1, confirmed by six key informants and one focus group

Bamyan, Bamyan Province

Date of Visit:
October 9-13, 2014

Transition Period:
April-May 2013

Transition Status:
Completed

Overall Security

With some exceptions, the overwhelming majority of the interviewees in Bamyan were of the opinion that the security situation in the province has deteriorated compared to cycle 4.⁹¹ In particular, the security situation in Kahmard, Sayghan and Shibar has worsened, caused primarily by heightened AOG activity.⁹² The main sources of insecurity are heightened AOG activity and crime rate:

A month ago, a driver was kidnapped and they found his dead body. A mechanic that accompanied the driver was murdered too. There are also fights going on between [AOGs] and the national army and both sides had casualties. Two months ago there was a bomb placed under a bridge which blew up a government car injuring a couple of provincial council employees.⁹³

Elections have contributed to the deterioration of security in Bamyan. The inconclusiveness and the uncertainties during and after the two rounds of the presidential elections impaired the already weak accountability mechanisms and led some security authorities not taking their responsibilities as seriously as they did before.⁹⁴

People's impression of ANP has not changed compared to the previous cycles. The police are considered to be helpful and respectful towards women.⁹⁵

Access to Work and Public Life

Women's access to work has declined compared to the previous cycles.⁹⁶ The negative effects of the transition on employment opportunities for women remain unchanged since the last cycle.⁹⁷ Uncertainties following the presidential elections led to a worsening of security situation and caused delays in investments and granting of loans, all of which negatively affected women's access to work and public life.⁹⁸

There are more complaints by women about increased levels of conservatism in their communities.⁹⁹ However, religious leaders remain generally positive about women working outside the home.¹⁰⁰

⁹¹ KI-F-PW-Bam-1, confirmed by five key informants and two focus groups

⁹² KI-M-GHS-Bam-1, confirmed by two focus groups

⁹³ KI-F-GHS-Bam-3

⁹⁴ KI-F-GHS-Bam-3, KI-F-PW-Bam-1

⁹⁵ KI-F-GOV-Bam-1, confirmed by eight key informants and two focus groups

⁹⁶ KI-F-BW-Bam-1, confirmed by three key informants

⁹⁷ FGD-Bam-CE, confirmed by three key informants

⁹⁸ KI-F-BW-Bam-1

⁹⁹ KI-F-GOV-Bam-1, confirmed by one key informant and one focus group

¹⁰⁰ KI-F-GOV-Bam-1, confirmed by six key informants

Access to Services (Health and Education)

Though access to education in Bamyan has not changed compared to the previous cycles, the presidential elections did have a negative effect on the quality of education:

The quality of education has deteriorated over the last four months because teachers were kept busy by the elections. Also, many schools were in the process of hiring new teachers but could not do so because of the uncertainties.¹⁰¹

Poverty, early or forced marriage, traditional conservatism and lack of awareness among men are still the main impeding factors in women's access to education.¹⁰²

Because of the worsening security situation in and around Bamyan province, women's access to health has declined compared to the previous cycles:

In the past four months, because of the [presidential] elections medicines could not be delivered to many health centers. Many doctors that used to come to Bamyan to work stopped doing so because of the uncertainties and insecurity of the elections.¹⁰³

Many complained about the deteriorating quality of health services such as lack of sufficient medicine and doctors as well as the bad attitude of some health professionals in health centres.¹⁰⁴ Medical personnel complained of lack of basic facilities such as electricity, ambulances and medicine.¹⁰⁵

Access to Justice

The presidential elections have negatively affected women's access to justice in Bamyan:

The extent of corruption within the judiciary and legal institutions has increased significantly over the past four months. The reason has been the inconclusive outcome of the elections which has allowed everyone to take advantage of their positions.¹⁰⁶

There are complaints by women about being treated unequally in the formal justice system.¹⁰⁷ The fact that women's cases take a long time to be handled also deters many women from seeking justice in the formal justice system.¹⁰⁸ Despite these challenges, women are said to have become more aware of their rights and are more willing to approach legal NGOs for legal help.¹⁰⁹

Violence Against Women

Violence against women in Bamyan has increased compared to the previous cycles. Besides the common types of violence such as forced and underage marriages and physical, psychological and economic abuse, the number of suicides among women has increased. There are more cases of women

¹⁰¹ FGD-Bam-WW

¹⁰² KI-F-GOV-Bam-1, confirmed by three key informants

¹⁰³ FGD-Bam-WW

¹⁰⁴ KI-F-GOV-Bam-1, confirmed by four key informants and two focus groups

¹⁰⁵ KI-F-MED-Bam-1

¹⁰⁶ FGD-Bam-WW, confirmed by one focus group

¹⁰⁷ KI-F-GOV-Bam-3, confirmed by five key informants and two focus groups

¹⁰⁸ KI-F-GOV-Bam-2

¹⁰⁹ KI-F-NGO-Bam-1, confirmed by two key informants

committing suicide by self-immolation and poison taking than before.¹¹⁰ The rise in incidents of suicide is primarily attributed to forced marriages, but also heightened awareness among women about their rights not being respected.¹¹¹

Among the reasons given for violence against women are lack of awareness and education among the men, poverty and familial hostilities.¹¹²

Women and Current Affairs

Due to lowering of the female representation quota, the number of female representatives in provincial council has declined from 3 to 2. Despite this setback, the two rounds of elections and the extensive participation of women in the voting process are said to have contributed to women's involvement in political activity and awareness of the political process.¹¹³

Women's contribution to peace is seen by many to consist of utilizing their roles as women within the society and as family members. For example:

Women can use their influence on members of their family to encourage them to follow a peaceful path ...¹¹⁴

Or

Women can talk to the wives of Taliban and encourage them to participate in peace talks, but they should have the [required awareness] to do so ...¹¹⁵

However, because of AOGs' unwillingness to talk to women, many are skeptical of opportunities for women to participate in the formal peace process.¹¹⁶

Presence of women in leadership positions is still limited. Of the nine Provincial Council members two are women. Of the 25 members of the Provincial Peace Council, four are women.

¹¹⁰ KI-F-FRU-Bam, confirmed by four key informants and two focus groups

¹¹¹ KI-F-GOV-Bam-2

¹¹² KI-F-FRU-Bam, confirmed by four key informants and three focus groups

¹¹³ KI-F-FRU-Bam, confirmed by nine key informants and three focus groups

¹¹⁴ KI-F-GOV-Bam-1, confirmed by six key informants and two focus groups

¹¹⁵ KI-F-PW Bam-2

¹¹⁶ KI-F-NGO-Bam-1, confirmed by three key informants

Lashkargah, Helmand Province

Date of Visit:
December 20, 2014

Transition Period:
December 2012

Transition Status:
Completed

Overall Security

The overall security situation in Helmand has deteriorated significantly over the last four months.¹¹⁷ The main source of insecurity is heightened AOG activity, attributed by some to retaliatory attacks by AOGs in response to the signing of the Bilateral Security Agreement and the delay in the elections results.¹¹⁸

Most of the AOG activities take place in the northern districts of Sangin, Kajaki, Musa Qala, and Nawzad.¹¹⁹ Incidents of assassination of government officials such as prosecutors in Lashkargah have also been reported.¹²⁰

People are generally satisfied with ANP and ANA and find them professional and helpful.¹²¹ However, there is also a belief that the ANSF is ill prepared to maintain security in the province.¹²² Some female interviewees emphasized the need for more female police officers.¹²³

Access to Work and Public Life

Women's access to work in Helmand has decreased over the past four months.¹²⁴ The main cause of deterioration is the lack of women-centered projects and funding, exacerbated by the worsening security.¹²⁵ Some new projects have been initiated but the overall number of women employed has dropped compared to four months ago.¹²⁶

Women's access to public life throughout the province has been adversely affected by the worsening security situation.¹²⁷ This is particularly the case in the more remote districts with women feeling afraid of leaving their homes for work or other reasons due to the increase in terror threats.¹²⁸

The overwhelmingly traditionalist views within the communities are not supportive of women working outside the homes.¹²⁹ Despite the prevalent social conservatism some women continue to work and many state that they intend to continue doing so.¹³⁰

¹¹⁷ KI-F-GOV-Hel-2, confirmed by all interviewees

¹¹⁸ FGD-WW-Hel, confirmed by twelve key informants and two focus groups

¹¹⁹ FGD-CE-Hel, confirmed by eight key informants and one focus group

¹²⁰ FGD-HW-Hel, confirmed by six key informants and two focus groups

¹²¹ KI-F-GOV-Hel-3, confirmed by twelve key informants and two focus groups

¹²² KI-M-FRU-Hel, confirmed by two key informants and one focus group

¹²³ KI-F-PW-Hel-1, confirmed by two key informants

¹²⁴ KI-F-GOV-Hel-1, confirmed by seven key informants and three focus groups

¹²⁵ KI-F-GOV-Hel-1, confirmed by six key informants and two focus groups

¹²⁶ KI-F-GHS-Hel-1

¹²⁷ KI-F-GHS-Hel-3, confirmed by four key informants

¹²⁸ KI-F-GHS-Hel-3, confirmed by four key informants

¹²⁹ FGD-LIT-Hel, confirmed by four key informants

¹³⁰ FGD-WW-Hel

Access to Services (Health and Education)

Girls' access to education in Lashkargah has increased compared to four months ago due to the founding of new private educational institutions.¹³¹ However, absenteeism has increased due to the increase in terror threats.¹³² In the more remote districts heightened AOG activity has had a direct adverse impact on girls' access to education.¹³³

Access to health in Lashkargah has improved compared to four months ago.¹³⁴ There are no complaints about congestion at health facilities, lack of hospitals, service at health centers, or medication. Community members from the surrounding districts frequently use health services in Lashkargah.¹³⁵ In the more remote districts there are concerns and complaints about the insufficiency in the number and inadequacy in the services of health centers. Most the available centers struggle with lack of medicines and female medical personnel which limits access for women.¹³⁶

Access to Justice

Compared to four months ago women's access to justice in Helmand has improved.¹³⁷ This improvement is attributed to increased awareness of basic rights among women as a result of women's rights awareness programs implemented by numerous civil society organizations:

... Much has changed over the last four months. Legal organizations have become much more active than in the past. They cooperate more with women and a Council in Helmand has been set up to ensure that women's needs are met through the formal legal entities. The Council consists of different organizations such as the Attorney's Office, Department of Women's Affairs, Department of Public Health, Department of Education, Department of Justice, Human Rights Commission, Department of National Security, and Department of Social Affairs. The Council has monthly meetings where they discuss women's issues. Each organization discusses its own achievements and challenges and new decisions are made.¹³⁸

With some exceptions the interviewees stated that the attitude within the formal judiciary system has improved and that the level of corruption has declined compared to the recent past.¹³⁹ The main obstacle to women's access to justice is the traditional conservatism which disapproves of women seeking justice outside the home.¹⁴⁰

Violence Against Women

There is more violence against women compared to four months ago. The main causes are stated as a lack of awareness and illiteracy exacerbated by poverty, economic hardship, loss of jobs, and drug addiction.¹⁴¹ The most common types of violence against women are underage marriages and physical

¹³¹ KI-M-MED-Hel-1, confirmed by two key informants two focus groups

¹³² KI-F-GHS-Hel-1, confirmed by four key informants and one focus group

¹³³ KI-F-GHS-Hel-1, confirmed by eight key informants and two focus group

¹³⁴ KI-F-GHS-Hel-1, confirmed by three key informants and two focus groups

¹³⁵ KI-F-GHS-Hel-1, confirmed by eight key informants and two focus group

¹³⁶ KI-F-BW-Hel-1, confirmed by four key informants and two focus groups

¹³⁷ FGD-HW-Hel, confirmed by eight key informants and one focus group

¹³⁸ KI-F-GOV-Hel-2

¹³⁹ KI-F-GOV-Hel-3, confirmed by two key informants

¹⁴⁰ KI-F-GHS-Hel-1, confirmed by three key informants

¹⁴¹ KI-F-GHS-Hel-2, confirmed by seven key informants and two focus groups

abuse, which have contributed to higher rates of suicide and self-immolation among women.¹⁴² Incidents of exchange of girls and women to settle disputes (*bad dadan*) continue to be reported though some of the community elders interviewed claimed that bad dadan has been eliminated completely.¹⁴³

Despite the increase in violence there are claims that access to justice has improved and that there is a higher degree of trust between complainants and the formal justice officials.¹⁴⁴

Women and Current Affairs

Women's political participation in Helmand has increased slightly compared to four months ago.¹⁴⁵ A new women's Council has been founded to represent women and increase women's participation in women-centered projects.¹⁴⁶ There remains, however, a high level of discontent among women about men's opposition to women being active in politics and the peace process. Many of the women would like to see more attention by the government to increase women's political participation.¹⁴⁷ Helmand Provincial Council consists of 15 members, three of whom are women.

Women's participation in the peace process in Helmand remains limited and its potential contribution to effecting peace by engaging other women is seen by the women as underutilized.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴² KI-F-GHS-Hel-3, confirmed by eight key informants and two focus groups

¹⁴³ KI-F-GOV-Hel-2, confirmed by two key informants

¹⁴⁴ FGD-CE-Hel, confirmed by four key informants

¹⁴⁵ KI-F-NGO-Hel-1, confirmed by four key informants and one focus group

¹⁴⁶ KI-F-NGO-Hel-1, confirmed by four key informants and one focus group

¹⁴⁷ KI-F-GHS-Hel-1, confirmed by five key informants and one focus group

¹⁴⁸ FGD-HW-Hel, confirmed by three key informants and one focus group

Herat, Herat Province

Date of Visit:
October 10-17, 2014

Transition Period:
March 2011

Transition Status:
Completed

Overall Security

There appears to have been a reversal in some of the improvements reported in Cycle 4 (June-August 2014). The data gathered during September-December 2014 suggest an overall deterioration in security. The main cause is cited as the uncertainties following the inconclusive elections and the rise in unemployment and poverty.¹⁴⁹ A prime manifestation of the overall insecurity is heightened criminality. Many cases of murder, assassination, kidnapping, and robbery are reported:

Insecurity increased after the second round of the [Presidential] Elections. There have been many incidents of girls being kidnapped, employees of international NGOs being kidnapped and murdered, a number of teachers in Herat City being stabbed in broad daylight, and young women being kidnapped by motorcyclist and robbed of their jewelry and other possessions.¹⁵⁰

Many of the women interviewed complained about the unhelpfulness of ANP. The broad perception is that ANP does not take its responsibility seriously in fighting crime and does not respond to reports by community members about criminal cases and activities.¹⁵¹

Access to Work and Public Life

Women's access to work in Herat is more limited compared to the previous cycles. The main reason is the decline in employment opportunities for women, viewed as an outcome of the uncertainties caused by the inconclusive elections and BSA not being signed. The uncertainties have resulted in a general loss of confidence among the investors and a willingness to continue or start new projects.¹⁵²

Some women working for governmental departments and NGOs complain that they are denounced by the conservative elements while those working in health and education continue to be encouraged.¹⁵³ Others stated that religious leaders remain supportive of women working outside the home.¹⁵⁴ In all cases, the attitude of male colleagues is reported as supportive and professional.¹⁵⁵

Access to Services (Health and Education)

Girls' access to education in Herat is more limited compared to the previous cycle and the worsening security situation is stated as the main reason for the loss of access. In less secure districts such as Shindand many schools have closed, limiting girls' access to education.¹⁵⁶ The increase in criminality

¹⁴⁹FGD-Her-CE, confirmed by seven key informants and three focus groups.

¹⁵⁰KI-F-PW-Her-1, confirmed by nine key informants and three focus groups.

¹⁵¹FGD-Her-CE, confirmed by eight key informants and three focus groups.

¹⁵² FGD-Her-CE, confirmed by five key informants and one more focus group.

¹⁵³KI-F-NGO-Her-1, confirmed by ten key informants and two focus groups.

¹⁵⁴KI-F-PW-Her-1, confirmed by seven key informants and one focus group.

¹⁵⁵KI-F-NGO-Her-2, confirmed by six key informants.

¹⁵⁶KI-F-PW-Her-1, confirmed by a businesswoman.

including stabbings of teachers in Herat City has deterred many parents from sending their children to school.¹⁵⁷

Women's access to health centers has not changed compared to the previous cycle. However, there are complaints about the inadequacy of services and the quality of care provided by the health centers:

There are many health centers but the quality of their services and the quality of medication are very low. When we approach a hospital, the doctor directs us to his private practice. From there, we are then sent to their specific drug store. The prescriptions are written in a way that only that one particular drugstore can understand it.¹⁵⁸

Access to Justice

Women's access to justice in Herat has not changed in the last four months. In urban areas, the main impeding factor for women seeking justice outside the home is the unfair and rude attitude of the judiciary and the prosecution toward women.¹⁵⁹ The distinction between urban and rural areas in Herat is most visible in women's access to justice with women in rural areas lacking sufficient awareness about their rights and the formal legal system being insufficiently sensitized to women's legal needs and issues.¹⁶⁰

Violence Against Women

Violence against women in Herat continues to increase and a general increase in cases of suicide is reported.¹⁶¹ The rise in poverty, unemployment, and insecurity has resulted in higher rates of criminality while increased drug addiction among men is often the underlying cause for the rise in domestic violence against women.¹⁶²

Women and Current Affairs

Women and men are generally optimistic about the potential role for women in the peace process. However, the role assigned to women is limited to one of encouraging their male family members to join the peace process.¹⁶³

There are four women in key positions in Herat: Director of DoWA, Head of Women's Council, Chief Attorney, and head of the Department of Work and Social Affairs. Women's participation in political life and their role in leadership positions remain limited.¹⁶⁴ The number of female representatives in the provincial council has dropped from five to four.

¹⁵⁷KI-F-VTC-Her-2, confirmed by four key informants and one focus group.

¹⁵⁸FGD-Her-CE.

¹⁵⁹KI-F-GOV-Her-2, confirmed by five key informants and two focus groups.

¹⁶⁰KI-F-NGO-Her-2, confirmed by nine key informants and one focus group.

¹⁶¹FGD-WW, confirmed by nine key informants and one focus group.

¹⁶²KI-F-PW-Her-2, confirmed by four key informants and two focus groups. Also, KI-M-ANP-Her, confirmed by nine key informants and three focus group.

¹⁶³FGD-Her-CE, confirmed by five key informants and two focus group.

¹⁶⁴KI-F-GHS-Her-3, confirmed by six key informants and three focus group.

Paghman, Kabul Province

Date of Visit:
December 17th, 2014

Transition Period:
March 2013

Transition:
Transition Completed

Overall Security

The security situation in Paghman has improved compared to the previous cycle, in part due to closer collaboration between the community and ANP. Reportedly, there have been a number of reportings by community members to the security authorities of roadside bombs or suspected bombs.¹⁶⁵ However, the improvement is limited to Paghman district during the daytime.¹⁶⁶ Women remain fearful of being outside the home during the dark because of incidents of rape and robberies that happened four months ago and heightened AOG activity in Kabul.¹⁶⁷ The community is generally satisfied with ANP and regards security personnel helpful and respectful towards women.¹⁶⁸

Access to Work and Public Life

With a few exceptions, many interviewees stated that employment opportunities for women in Paghman have decreased significantly over the past four months.¹⁶⁹ The main reason for the decrease is said to be the reduction in the number and size of projects, due largely to reduced funding.¹⁷⁰ The vast majority of the working women are employed in the education and health sectors, both deemed as appropriate sectors in which women could work by the more traditionalists elements.¹⁷¹

Despite the concerns about heightened AOG activity in Kabul City women in Paghman are remain comfortable in carrying out their daily chores outside the home, with many seeing the security situation as having improved significantly compared to four months ago.¹⁷²

Access to Services (Health and Education)

Access to education remains the same as four months ago with parents feeling comfortable about their daughters continuing to go to school.¹⁷³ However, the number of absentees from school increases dramatically after explosions or attacks in or around Paghman.¹⁷⁴ There are shortages of textbooks at a number the girl schools, while the main cause of girls not attending school remains early marriage.¹⁷⁵

¹⁶⁵ KI-M-ANP-Pagh-1, confirmed by two key informants and one focus group

¹⁶⁶ KI-M-MED-Pagh-1, confirmed by seven key informants and one focus group

¹⁶⁷ FGD-CE-Pagh, confirmed by two key informants and two focus groups

¹⁶⁸ KI-M-GHS-Pagh-3, confirmed by eight key informants and two focus groups

¹⁶⁹ KI-M-MED-Pagh-2, confirmed by four key informants and two focus groups

¹⁷⁰ KI-F-NGO-Pagh-1, confirmed by four key informants and two focus groups

¹⁷¹ FGD-LIT-Pagh, confirmed by three key informants and one focus group

¹⁷² KI-M-MED-Pagh-2, confirmed by three key informants and one focus group

¹⁷³ KI-M-MED-Pagh-1, confirmed by six key informants and three focus groups

¹⁷⁴ KI-F-BW-Pagh-1, confirmed by two key informants

¹⁷⁵ FGD-LIT-Pagh, confirmed by two key informants and one focus group

Women's access to health in Paghman has not changed compared to four months ago.¹⁷⁶ The main source of complaint remains the lack of medicine.¹⁷⁷ Women find health centers generally accessible and there is widespread acceptance of women visiting clinics alone.¹⁷⁸

Access to Justice

Women's access to justice has not changed compared to four months ago. Customary law and informal justice remain the preferred mechanisms for conflict resolution:

Women do use formal justice [though] the District Attorney is present. Nothing has changed in this regard. When women have legal issues, they approach their community elders and the elders solve their cases accordingly and report their findings to the District Attorney. When women seek help directly from the District Attorney's office, the office redirects the case to the community elders or a representative of the village is asked to participate in solving the case.¹⁷⁹

Seeking formal justice is accepted by the society only if it concerns women demanding their inheritance.¹⁸⁰ It is unusual for cases of domestic violence to go through due to the potential for subsequent stigmatization of the family within the community.¹⁸¹

There are complaints about unfair treatment of women by formal officials and the negative attitude toward female complainants. There are also complaints about corruption.¹⁸²

Violence Against Women

It remains difficult to establish the true extent of violence against women and whether or not there have been changes compared to the past. Some of the women claimed that the level of violence against women has remained unchanged compared to four months ago. At the same time, many of the women state that the recent rise in unemployment and general poverty are the main causes of violence against women.¹⁸³ Almost all violence against women is of a domestic nature with the most common types of violence being physical and verbal abuse and forced and underage marriages, which sometimes result in escapes from home.¹⁸⁴

Women and Current Affairs

Women's political participation has declined compared to four months.¹⁸⁵ There are no organized events or forums to engage women. There are very few women in leadership positions while the Community Development Council does not have female members.¹⁸⁶

¹⁷⁶ KI-M-MED-Pagh-1, confirmed by five key informants and two focus groups

¹⁷⁷ KI-F-PW-Pagh-1, confirmed by three key informants and two focus groups

¹⁷⁸ FGD-WW-Pagh, confirmed by two key informants

¹⁷⁹ KI-M-MED-Pagh-1, confirmed by three key informants and two focus groups

¹⁸⁰ FGD-HW-Pagh

¹⁸¹ FGD-WW-Pagh, confirmed by two key informants and one focus group

¹⁸² KI-F-BW-Pagh-1, confirmed by all interviewees except KI-M-ANP-Pagh.

¹⁸³ KI-M-MED-Pagh-2, confirmed by five key informants and one focus group

¹⁸⁴ KI-M-FRU-Pagh, confirmed by six key informants and one focus group

¹⁸⁵ KI-F-GHS-Pagh-1, confirmed by six key informants and two focus groups

¹⁸⁶ FGD-Pagh-CE, confirmed by two key informants

There is a broad consensus among the women that women’s more direct involvement in the peace process could make a major contribution to the cause of peace through women convincing their sons, husbands, and brothers to resolve conflicts without resorting to violence.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁷ KI-F-GHS-Pagh-2, confirmed by all interviewees

Kandahar, Kandahar Province

Date of Visit:
December 27, 2014

Transition Period:
December 2014

Transition Status:
Completed

Overall Security

The overall security situation in Kandahar has improved compared to four months ago due to lower AOG activity such as suicide attacks.¹⁸⁸ The main causes of the improvement are better and more effective strategies employed by the new chief of security, better trained police officers, and the announcement of the election results.¹⁸⁹ However, women still live in fear because of the targeted killings of prominent individuals and government employees, which has not declined.¹⁹⁰

Though views on ALP are divided. Many are satisfied with ANSF and find them professional, helpful, and respectful towards.¹⁹¹ However, there were some complaints about ANP harassing girls and women, or driving too fast and dangerously in the urban areas.¹⁹²

Access to Work and Public Life

Employment opportunities for women in Kandahar have declined significantly compared to the previous cycle.¹⁹³ There are fewer new women-centered projects and many of the older projects are coming to an end.¹⁹⁴ At the same time, the political instability caused by the post-election uncertainties has led to governmental organizations not hiring women and a decline in investments.¹⁹⁵

The community is generally conservative and not supportive of women working outside the home.¹⁹⁶ Women working for NGOs are exposed to more negative reactions and risks than those working in health and education sectors.¹⁹⁷ Religious leaders do not usually include women's rights in their sermons and many speak negatively about women working. This disapproval of women working is sometimes due to fear of retaliation by AOGs:

Religious leaders talk positively about women's rights in front of us, but when we tell them to express these opinions during their preaching and prayers, they tell us that if they did that, they would get killed the next day.¹⁹⁸

Access to Services (Health and Education)

Girls' access to education has improved since four months ago, particularly in terms of the quality of education being provided. The number of girls attending schools remains unchanged.¹⁹⁹ The

¹⁸⁸ KI-M-ANP-KDH, confirmed by seven key informants and two focus groups

¹⁸⁹ KI-F-PW-KDH-2, confirmed by six key informants and two focus groups

¹⁹⁰ KI-F-MED-KDH-3, confirmed by four key informants

¹⁹¹ FGD-LIT-KDH, confirmed by six key informants and two focus groups

¹⁹² FGD-LIT-KDH, confirmed by two key informants

¹⁹³ KI-F-PW-KDH, confirmed by eight key informants and two focus groups

¹⁹⁴ KI-F-NGO-KDH-2, confirmed by five key informants and two focus groups

¹⁹⁵ KI-M-MED-KDH-1, confirmed by five key informants and two focus groups

¹⁹⁶ KI-F-GOV-KDH-2, confirmed by four key informants

¹⁹⁷ FGD-LIT-KDH, confirmed by three key informants

¹⁹⁸ KI-F-NGO-KDH-1, confirmed by two key informants

improvement in quality is attributed to a more serious attitude of the Department of Education since the inauguration of the new president.²⁰⁰ Interviewees also stated that new private educational centers have opened, increasing women's access to education.²⁰¹ The main impeding factor for girls attending schools is traditional conservatism, with many families not allowing their girls to attend school.²⁰²

Women's access to health has improved compared to the previous cycle. New clinics have opened in Panjab and Arghandab districts of the province and medical personnel claim that they have more medicines in their inventory than four months ago.²⁰³ However, there are complaints by the service recipients about the quality of medication provided by health clinics. Private health centers are praised as providing good services to those who can afford to pay the fees.²⁰⁴ The vast majority of the people rely on public health service centers.

Access to Justice

Women's access to justice has not changed and remains very limited. Strong traditional beliefs in keeping family honor by not discussing domestic matters in public remain prevalent despite numerous awareness programs. Generally women do not make formal complaints due to a fear of retaliation from their family members or the perpetrators.²⁰⁵

Complaints about the negative attitude of the formal justice officials toward women persist. Women complain that they are unfairly and unequally treated. There are also general complaints about corruption in the formal justice system.²⁰⁶ Even if women make official complaints, their cases are not prioritized and take a very long time to be attended to, creating additional impediments in access to justice.²⁰⁷

Violence Against Women

Violence against women has increased compared to four months ago.²⁰⁸ One of the main causes is said to be the higher level of rights awareness among women who sometimes choose to exercise their rights and thus cause tensions with the men. The high level of illiteracy among the population combined with poverty and unemployment are also cited as contributing causes of violence against women.²⁰⁹ Most of the violence against women is of a domestic nature. The main types of violence against women are physical abuse, forced and underage marriages, escaping from home and subsequent shunning or punishment by the family members, rape, exchange of girls and using women to settle conflicts, and murder.²¹⁰

¹⁹⁹ KI-F-NGO-KDH-2, confirmed by three key informants

²⁰⁰ KI-F-GHS-KDH-2, confirmed by two key informants

²⁰¹ FGD-HW-KDH

²⁰² KI-M-ANP-KDH, confirmed by three key informants

²⁰³ KI-M-MED-KDH-1, confirmed by four key informants and one focus group

²⁰⁴ KI-F-NGO-KDH-2, confirmed by five key informants and one focus group

²⁰⁵ KI-F-MED-KDH-3, confirmed by five key informants and two focus groups

²⁰⁶ KI-M-MED-KDH-3, confirmed by six key informant and two focus groups

²⁰⁷ KI-F-MED-KDH-3, confirmed by three key informants and one focus group

²⁰⁸ KI-M-ANP-KDH, confirmed by five key informants and one focus group

²⁰⁹ KI-F-NGO-KDH 2, confirmed by eight key informants and two focus groups

²¹⁰ KI-F-NGO-KDH-2, confirmed by eight key informants and one focus group

Women and Current Affairs

Women's political participation in Kandahar has not changed over the last four months.²¹¹ The main impediments to women's participation are traditional conservatism and targeted killings of women involved in politics.²¹² The women feel confident, however, that they could play a key role in bringing about peace as mothers and wives.²¹³

The number of available seats (for men and women) in the Kandahar Provincial Council has increased from fourteen in 2009 to nineteen in 2014. In 2009, there were three female (21 percent) members while in 2014 the number was four (also 21 percent). The Provincial Peace Council of Kandahar has 40 members of whom four are women.²¹⁴

²¹¹ KI-M-ANP-KDH, confirmed by four key informants

²¹² KI-F-GHS-KDH-1, confirmed by five key informants

²¹³ KI-F-GOV-KDH-2, confirmed by seven key informants and one focus group

²¹⁴ KI-F-PW-KDH-2

Kunduz, Kunduz Province

Date of Visit:
October 17-22, 2014

Transition Period:
March 2011

Transition Status:
Completed

Overall Security

Despite small improvements over the last month, the overall security situation in Kunduz has deteriorated significantly compared to the previous monitoring round.²¹⁵ The main source of insecurity is heightened AOG activity and more crime.²¹⁶ The post-election uncertainties, the delay in signing BSA, and the rise in unemployment and poverty, especially among the youth, are said to be the prime causes of the deterioration in security conditions.²¹⁷

There are more terror attacks and there is continuous armed conflict between the AOGs and the ANSF.²¹⁸ In Chahar Dara, Imam Sahib and Dashte Archi districts, police stations and posts are constantly under attack by AOGs.²¹⁹ The heightened conflict and fighting in the districts have resulted in a significant rise in the numbers of displaced people who are either staying with relatives or have set up tents along the roads in the provincial capital.²²⁰

The rise in criminality is attributed to the increase in numbers of the so-called “armed individuals without responsibilities”, who are essentially armed gangs involved in robberies, burglaries, rapes, and theft.²²¹

The police are considered as sympathetic and accommodating toward the victim but helpless against the better armed and organized AOGs.²²²

Access to Work and Public Life

There are fewer employment opportunities for women in Kunduz compared to the previous cycle. The main reasons for this decline are the general drop in the number of projects and development funds in the province and the post-election uncertainties.²²³

The deterioration in security and the rise in general harassment in public have limited women’s access to work and public life significantly.²²⁴ Religious leaders remain supportive of women working on the condition that the women dress conservatively and that their husbands are unemployed or unable to provide for the family.²²⁵ The attitude of men toward their female colleagues remains positive and helpful.²²⁶

²¹⁵ KI-F-PW-Kun-2, confirmed by ten key informants and four focus groups

²¹⁶ KI-F-Gov-Kun-1, confirmed by ten key informants and four focus groups

²¹⁷ FGD-Kun-WW, confirmed by seven key informants

²¹⁸ KI-F-PW-Kun-1, confirmed by eight key informants and three focus groups

²¹⁹ KI-F-PW-Kun-3

²²⁰ KI-F-GHS-Kun-1, confirmed by four key informants

²²¹ FGD-Kun-WW, confirmed by four key informants

²²² FGD-Kun-WW, confirmed by four key informants

²²³ KI-F-VTC-Kun-2, confirmed key informants and one focus group

²²⁴ KI-F-VTC-Kun-2, confirmed by two key informants and one focus group

²²⁵ KI-F-PW-Kun-1, KI-F-NGO-Kun-1

²²⁶ KI-F-NGO-Kun-1, confirmed by one key informant and one focus group

Access to Services (Health and Education)

Girls' access to education in Kunduz has deteriorated significantly. The rise in terror attacks, criminality, and harassment have deterred many parents from sending their children to school.²²⁷ Teachers compensate for the forced absences by not reporting the long-term absentees, with the intention of keeping access to schools open until the situation improves:

Girls' access to education is very limited. Because there has been no security, many girls who live in insecure regions cannot attend school ... although they were absent for a long time, we did not mark them as absent so they will not be denied access later.²²⁸

Women's access to health in insecure districts has deteriorated compared to the previous cycle.²²⁹ Because of insecurity many women seek medical help in secure regions of the province, which leads to congestion at the health centers and reduced quality in service provision.²³⁰ Perhaps relatedly, there are complaints by health service users about the attitude of the doctors, lack of medicines, and lack of attention to those who need assistance.²³¹

Access to Justice

Access to justice has been impeded by the increase in insecurity.²³² The main hurdles for women seeking justice remain traditional conservatism, corruption among some justice officials, technical incompetence, and bias against female complainants.²³³

At the same time, some of the women state that there have been some improvements in the attitude of justice officials in the last few months because of a demonstration that took place against corruption within the judiciary.²³⁴ However, no comments were made about the sustainability of these improvements, pointing to the need for sustained pressure by civil society organizations for an equitable, transparent, and accountable justice system.

Violence Against Women

Violence against women in Kunduz has increased significantly over the last four months.²³⁵ The causes for the rise in violence are said to be poverty, unemployment, drug addiction, but also more women demanding their rights.²³⁶ The most common form of violence against women in Kunduz is of a domestic nature and includes violence by women against women.²³⁷

Women and Current Affairs

The interviewees in Kunduz are optimistic about the role of women in bringing peace to Afghanistan. However, this perceived role does not appear to include participation of women in the formal peace

²²⁷ FGD-Kun-WW, confirmed by seven key informants and two focus groups

²²⁸ FGD-Kun-WW, confirmed by five key informants and two focus groups

²²⁹ KI-M-MED-Kun-1, KI-M-MED-Kun-2

²³⁰ KI-M-MED-Kun-1, KI-M-MED-Kun-2, FGD-Kun-WW, confirmed by three key informants

²³¹ FGD-Kun-HW, confirmed by three key informants and one focus group

²³² KI-F-GOV-Kun-3

²³³ KI-F-BW-Kun-1, confirmed by three key informants and three focus groups

²³⁴ KI-F-PW-Kun-3, confirmed by one focus group

²³⁵ KI-F-GHS-Kun-1, confirmed by seven key informants and three focus groups

²³⁶ FGD-Kun-WW, confirmed by seven key informants and one focus group

²³⁷ FGD-Kun-WW, confirmed by seven key informants and one focus group

process. Mostly, women are expected to utilize their influence within their households and communities to encourage their male relatives to pursue peace.²³⁸

After an initial rise in interest by women in current affairs due to the first and second rounds of the presidential elections, there has been a general loss of interest.²³⁹ The decline is attributed largely to the uncertain aftermath of the elections, allegations of fraud, and the discouraging attitude of community leaders about women's presence in public life.²⁴⁰

The number of female representatives in the provincial council declined from four to three females. Women's role in leadership remains limited to the Department of Women's Affairs, a female head physician, and principals of girls' high schools.

²³⁸KI-F-BW-Kun-1, confirmed by seven key informants and one focus group

²³⁹KI-F-GOV-Kun-2

²⁴⁰KI-F-GHS-Kun-1, confirmed by two key informants

Mehtarlam, Laghman Province

Date of Visit:
November 2014

Transition Period:
March 2011

Transition Status:
Completed

Overall Security

According to most of those interviewed the security situation in Laghman has improved compared to four months ago.²⁴¹ The improvements are said to be due to the elimination by ANSF of key members of the command chain of the AOG, responsive government officials, and better collaboration between ANSF (including ALP) and the communities in the province.²⁴² There are frequent confrontations between AOGs and ANSF, however, often resulting in civilian casualties and thus being a source of much fear among the women.²⁴³

With a few exceptions, there is general satisfaction with how ANP interacts with women. ANP is said to be helpful and respectful to women.²⁴⁴

Access to Work and Public Life

Women's access to work has increased compared to four months ago.²⁴⁵ The Department of Health and the Department of Education have both increased the numbers of their female personnel, creating new positions nurses, midwives, and teachers.²⁴⁶

The attitude of religious leaders and the society toward women working outside the home has become more positive over the last four months.²⁴⁷ The main employers of women remain, however, the health and education sectors. There remains disapproval of women working for NGOs.²⁴⁸ The primary constraint in women's access to public life is terror attacks.²⁴⁹

Access to Services (Health and Education)

Women's access to health in Laghman has increased compared to the previous cycle. This improvement is attributed to the announcement by AOGs that they are not against girls' education and recent support by UNESCO for the education sector to enhance women's access to education in the province.²⁵⁰ UNESCO's funds have created a number of new jobs for female and male literacy teachers.²⁵¹

²⁴¹ KI-F-GOV-Lag-2, confirmed by all interviewees except FGD-Lag-CE, FGD-Lag-LIT

²⁴² KI-F-GOV-Lag-4, confirmed by FGD-Lag-LIT,

²⁴³ FGD-Lag-CE, confirmed by three key informants and two focus groups.

²⁴⁴ KI-M-MED-Lag-2, confirmed by eight key informants and two focus groups

²⁴⁵ KI-M-MED-Lag-2, confirmed by three key informants and two focus groups

²⁴⁶ FGD-Lag-WW, confirmed by three key informants and one focus group

²⁴⁷ KI-F-GOV-Lag-2, FGD-Lag-LIT

²⁴⁸ KI-F-PW-Lag-1, confirmed by two key informants and two focus groups

²⁴⁹ KI-F-GOV-Lag-2, confirmed by three key informants

²⁵⁰ FGD-Lag-LIT, confirmed by four key informants

²⁵¹ 110 new teachers, 64 of them are female.

The quality of the services in Laghman has deteriorated significantly over the last four months.²⁵² There are complaints about the lack of adequate medication, bad attitude of the medical staff, and overcrowding at the clinics.²⁵³ Access to health remains unchanged, however, with women expressing no security concern or fear about visiting medical facilities.²⁵⁴

Access to Justice

Access to justice by women remains limited though there are reports of the Department of Women's Affairs, Provincial Council, and Department of Security being more accessible than in the past.²⁵⁵ The main impeding factor is traditional conservatism and corruption, forcing women to resort to customary justice mechanisms:

... The people of Laghman try to solve their legal issues within their families. Seeking assistance from [formal justice system] is viewed as dishonor to the family. ...²⁵⁶

And,

Corruption and taking bribes within the judiciary continues and has increased in the past couple of months because some of the corrupt officials want to make as much money as they can now in case they get fired later by the new government ...²⁵⁷

There are also complaints about the unfair and unequal treatment of women by some judges and prosecutors.²⁵⁸

Violence Against Women

With a few exceptions, the general sentiment is that violence against women has decreased compared to four months ago.²⁵⁹ The main reason for this decrease is the heightened level of awareness among the general population of the province.²⁶⁰ However, women are still subjected to much domestic violence, which differ in type and extent.²⁶¹ Almost all violence against women is of a domestic nature with the most common forms being forced and underage marriages, polygamy, escaping from home, and physical abuse.²⁶²

Women and Current Affairs

Women's interest in current affairs has increased compared to the previous cycle, due mainly to a general increase in interest in politics during the first and second rounds of the elections.²⁶³ However,

²⁵² FGD-Lag-HW, confirmed by two key informants and two focus groups

²⁵³ FGD-Lag-HW, confirmed by two key informants and two focus groups

²⁵⁴ FGD-Lag-WW

²⁵⁵ KI-M-MED-Lag-2, confirmed by four key informants and two focus groups

²⁵⁶ KI-F-GOV-Lag-1, confirmed by five key informant and two focus groups

²⁵⁷ FGD-Lag-LIT

²⁵⁸ FGD-Lag-LIT, confirmed by five key informants and one focus group

²⁵⁹ KI-M-MED-Lag-2, confirmed by five key informants and three focus groups

²⁶⁰ KI-F-GHs-Lag-3, confirmed by five key informants and three focus groups

²⁶¹ KI-M-FRU-Lag, confirmed by seven key informants and two focus groups

²⁶² KI-F-Gov-Lag-4, confirmed by seven key informants and two focus groups

²⁶³ KI-M-ANP-Lag, confirmed by three key informants

the number of female representatives in the Provincial Councils has declined from three to two (out of nine) due in parts to the reduction of the quota for female members from 25 percent to 20 percent.

Women's participation in the peace process remains limited. The 25-member Provincial Peace Council has two female members who are said to serve mostly symbolic purposes.²⁶⁴ According to some, women are most effective in the informal peace process:

... For example, when there is a conflict between two tribes and it has the potential to get dangerous, women could put on their headscarves and talk to the armed parties and encourage them to negotiate peace. People here have a lot of respect for women and listens to them in these kinds of situations ...²⁶⁵

Others state that women could convince their sons and husbands to refrain from taking up arms and seek peace.²⁶⁶

²⁶⁴ FGD-Lag-CE, confirmed by two key informants

²⁶⁵ FGD-Lag-LIT

²⁶⁶ KI-F-GOV-Lag-2, confirmed by four key informants and three focus groups

Jalalabad, Nangarhar Province

Date of Visit:
November 10, 2014

Transition Period:
December 2014

Transition:
To be completed

Overall Security

The security situation in Jalalabad has deteriorated compared to the previous cycle. The main cause of insecurity in Jalalabad is AOG activity:

... Yesterday, there were rocket attacks, three days ago a suicide attack was conducted on the customs office, two to three months ago there were constant rocket attacks on the airport. This was the first time that rocket attacks had taken place in Jalalabad...²⁶⁷

The attacks and the heightened threat of attacks have caused much fear among women. Politically active women particularly threatened as potential targets for AOGs.²⁶⁸

The aftermath of the elections has contributed to the deterioration of security in Jalalabad. The inconclusiveness of the outcome of two rounds of presidential elections and the delay in the establishment of a full government have resulted in economic uncertainty, compounding the political uncertainty and thus a general feeling of insecurity.²⁶⁹

The views on the police and ANSF remain largely positive, despite their inability to maintain security due to lack of personnel, equipment, and adequate training.²⁷⁰

Access to Work and Public Life

Women's access to work has is less than the previous cycle. In addition to job losses resulting from a general decline in women-centered projects and funding, the government offices have stopped hiring new employees until the new cabinet is announced.²⁷¹

Women's access to public life has been adversely affected by the worsening security situation:

In the past four months, women in some districts cannot even leave their homes to get water ... There is no access to some districts from the outside. Inside the city, because of the bombs and explosions everywhere, movements have been severely affected. We leave our homes with a lot of fear.²⁷²

With some exceptions women are generally satisfied with the attitude of their male colleagues in the workplace.²⁷³

²⁶⁷ KI-F-PW-Jal-1, confirmed by seven key informants and two focus groups

²⁶⁸ KI-F-PW-Jal-4, confirmed by four key informants and two focus groups

²⁶⁹ KI-F-Gov-Jal-1, confirmed by two key informants and one focus group

²⁷⁰ KI-F-VTC-Jal-1, confirmed by six key informants and two focus groups

²⁷¹ FGD-Jal-LIT, confirmed by seven key informants and two focus groups

²⁷² KI-F-PW-Jal-1, confirmed by four key informants confirmed

²⁷³ KI-F-GHS-Jal-1, confirmed by three key informants

Religious leaders in the city are supportive of women working outside their homes. However, the support is limited to those working in the health and education sectors. Working for governmental organization and especially NGOs is discouraged.²⁷⁴

Access to Services (Health and Education)

Women's access to health has not changed compared to four months ago. Complaints about the quality of the services provided by the health centers remain and security transition is said to have led to a general deterioration in the last four months:

In the past, NGOs would help people get access to doctors and medication. Many of those NGOs are gone now. There is much less access to health services and the doctors do not have an incentive to work because the salaries that used to be paid by the NGOs are not being paid now.²⁷⁵

No deterioration is reported in access to education in Jalalabad. However, access to education has been severely affected throughout the province.²⁷⁶ Many schools report higher absentee numbers and in some districts such as Achin, Dorbawah, Nazyan and MomandDara, girls' schools have been closed down completely because of pressures by AOGs.²⁷⁷

The most significant event affecting access to education in the province has been the closure of 27 schools and education centers in Dehbala district by one of the AOGs, leading to more than 17,000 students, aged between 7 and 28 being deprived of their access to education. Of these, 7,000 are female.²⁷⁸

Access to Justice

Women's access to justice in Jalalabad remains limited and has not changed compared to the previous cycle. The main impeding factors are a fear of retaliation against the women who seek formal justice and the discriminatory attitude of some formal justice officials toward female complainants.²⁷⁹ However, some interviewees reported, at least temporarily, there is less corruption among the officials due to a fear of being reprimanded or punished by the new government:

The attitude of the police, the judiciary and the prosecution has improved since the arrival of the new government. One incident that I witnessed was of a person being asked to pay 10,000USD in bribes to get his case solved. But when the corrupt officials heard and saw the president's attitude toward corruption, not only did he not accept the money, he denied ever having asked for it.²⁸⁰

In the rural districts women have practically no access to formal justice. Domestic and other conflict cases are resolved by either the community elders or the AOG in charge.²⁸¹

²⁷⁴ KI-F-GHS-Jal-1, confirmed by four key informants

²⁷⁵ KI-F-PW-Jal-3, confirmed by seven key informants and one focus group

²⁷⁶ KI-F-PW-Jal-4, confirmed by three key informants and one focus group

²⁷⁷ FGD-Jal-WW and KI-F-PW-Jal-1.

²⁷⁸ KI-F-PW-Jal-2, the event and the numbers were confirmed by the department of education in the province during an additional interview on the subject

²⁷⁹ KI-F-BW-Jal-1, confirmed by one key informant and one focus group

²⁸⁰ FGD-Jal-CE, ten key informants and one focus group also stated that the change in government has helped

²⁸¹ FGD-Jal-CE, FGD-WW and KI-F-PW-Jal-3

Violence Against Women

Apart from a higher number of reports of escapes from home and physical abuse, overall violence against women has remained unchanged over the last four months.²⁸² However, there is still much violence and there has been a rise in the number of female patients suffering from mental illnesses.²⁸³

The most common mechanisms through which violence against women is perpetrated are forced marriages, escapes from the home, exchange of girls and women through *bad dadan* to resolve conflicts, and offering of daughters as compensation by parents whose sons' wedding expenses they cannot afford.²⁸⁴

The women feel that violence against women is likely to decline in future because of the awareness campaigns and reports of violence cases in the media.²⁸⁵

Women and Current Affairs

Women's participation in politics in Jalalabad has not changed compared to four months ago. However, the second round of elections and the subsequent irregularities and allegations of fraud have had a demoralizing impact on women's attitude about political participation:

I have been active in politics for a long time now but my confidence in the electoral system has declined over the last four months. The contentions following the second round of elections have had a negative effect on women's desire to participate in and perception of politics. I expect many women will not participate in future elections ...²⁸⁶

Most interviewees believe that women's role in the formal peace process is limited by the fact that the AOGs are not willing to engage women or on women's rights.²⁸⁷ The common view is that two female members of the Provincial Peace Council (out of 25 members) only serve a symbolic purpose.²⁸⁸

²⁸² KI-F-GHS-Jal-1, confirmed by five key informants and two focus groups

²⁸³ KI-M-MED-Jal-2

²⁸⁴ KI-F-GHS-Jal-2, confirmed by nine key informants and three focus groups

²⁸⁵ KI-M-MED-Jal-2, confirmed by four key informants and one focus group

²⁸⁶ KI-F-PW-Jal-4

²⁸⁷ KI-F-GHS-Jal-3, confirmed by five key informants and one focus group

²⁸⁸ KI-F-BW-Jal-1, confirmed by four key informants

Sorkhrod, Nangarhar Province

Date of Visit:
November 2014

Transition Period:
April-May 2013

Transition Status:
Completed

Overall Security

Overall security has improved compared to the previous cycle, due largely to less AOG activity.²⁸⁹ Incidents of crime such as robberies, kidnappings, and killings have, however, increased.²⁹⁰ The decline in AOG activity is attributed to higher ANP and ANSF presence and better collaboration between security forces and the local communities.²⁹¹

Women are generally satisfied with the attitude of the ANP towards them and find them respectful, helpful, and understanding.²⁹²

Access to Work and Public Life

Women's access to work in Sorkhrod has deteriorated compared to the previous cycle. The main reasons being a drop in the number of projects and amounts of funding dedicated to women-centered programming. The uncertainties following the two rounds of elections adversely affected project investments in Surkhrod.²⁹³

Women's access to public life has not changed significantly. Though there are some improvements in the security situation, but women are still hesitant to move around freely.²⁹⁴ There are also complaints of an increase in harassment of girls in public, which impedes their access to public life.²⁹⁵ Religious leaders in urban areas remain supportive of women working in specific types of employment, e.g., in health and education sectors. Traditional conservatism in rural areas remains a key obstacle to women's presence in public life and workplace.²⁹⁶

Access to Services (Health and Education)

In the central districts access to education by girls has improved but Sorkhrod has experienced a deterioration compared to four months ago.²⁹⁷ The main cause of deterioration is the worsening of the security situation particularly in Shamshapoor and Kakarak villages. A net result of this deterioration has been the overcrowding of girls' schools in Sorkhrod by students from Shamshapoor and Kakarak villages.²⁹⁸

There is optimism that access to education will increase as a result of new educational projects by international entities such as UNESCO, expected to lead more literacy courses and schools being opened

²⁸⁹ FGD-CE-Sor, KI-M-MED-Sor-2, confirmed by three focus groups and six key informants

²⁹⁰ KI-F-VTC-Sor-2, confirmed by three key informants and two focus groups

²⁹¹ KI-M-MED- Sor2, confirmed by three key informants and three focus groups

²⁹² KI-F-VTC-Sor-2, confirmed by two key informants and two focus groups

²⁹³ KI-F-BW-Sor-2, confirmed by seven key informants and two focus groups

²⁹⁴ KI-F-BW-Sor-2, Confirmed by two focus groups

²⁹⁵ KI-F-BW-Sor-2, Confirmed by two focus groups

²⁹⁶ FGD -LIT-Sor and KI-M-FRU-Sor.

²⁹⁷ KI-M-MED-Sor-1, confirmed by three key informants and two focus groups

²⁹⁸ FGD -CE-Sor, confirmed by four key informants and one focus group

and an increase in the number of teachers in the district.²⁹⁹

Religious leaders are generally supportive of women and girls receiving education, but on the condition that they do so by following the religious dress code.³⁰⁰

Women's access to health centers in Sorkhrod has not changed compared to the previous cycles.³⁰¹ Most quality-related complaints concern the attitude of the doctors, lack of adequate medication, and congestion caused by patients coming from unsafe districts.³⁰²

Access to Justice

There are no complaints by the women about access to the police. However, women's access to justice in Sorkhrod in general remains limited though unchanged compared to the previous cycle.³⁰³ The main impeding factors are traditional conservatism and unfair treatment of women by the prosecution and the judiciary.³⁰⁴ The general tendency in seeking justice by women is to resort to assistance from elders in the customary justice system.³⁰⁵

Violence Against Women

It is difficult to establish whether violence against women has changed over the last four months.³⁰⁶ However, the interviewees state that there is much violence against women in the district.³⁰⁷

The types of violence against women include domestic physical and verbal abuse, exchange of girls and women to settle disputes or provide compensation, and economic violence such as depriving women of their inheritance rights and not paying them alimony.³⁰⁸

Women and Current Affairs

Women's participation in politics and current affairs in Sorkhrod has not changed compared to the previous cycle but remains limited.³⁰⁹ The main limiting factors are traditional conservatism and lack of adequate security for those who are politically active:

Women can participate in elections as candidates, but once they do that they cannot live in Sorkhrod because they feel it endangers their lives. We had one candidate, who won a seat at the Provincial Council. She is from Sorkhrod but lives in Jalalabad.³¹⁰

Or

²⁹⁹ FGD-LIT-Sor

³⁰⁰ FGD-Sor-LIT and KI-M-FRU-Sor.

³⁰¹ KI-M-ANP-Sor, confirmed by two key informants and two focus groups

³⁰² FGD-HW-Sor, confirmed by four key informants and three focus groups

³⁰³ KI-M-FRU-Sor, confirmed by three key informants and one focus group

³⁰⁴ KI-M-MED-Sor-1, confirmed by three key informants

³⁰⁵ FGD-CE-Sor, confirmed by three key informants and two focus groups

³⁰⁶ KI-M-MED-Sor-2, KI-F-BW-Sor-2

³⁰⁷ All interviewees

³⁰⁸ FGD-CE-Sor, confirmed by four key informants

³⁰⁹ KI-F-BW-Sor-2

³¹⁰ KI-M-MED-Sor-2

Men do not allow women to leave home because participating in politics is a suicide mission for women, [AOGs] will cut the women's throats if they participate in politics.³¹¹

There is a general lack of information about women's participation in the formal peace process.³¹² The consensus among the interviewees is that women could contribute to peace through encouraging male members of their family not to engage in armed conflict or talk to other women whose male family members are members of AOGs.³¹³

³¹¹ FGD-Sor-HW

³¹² KI-M-ANP-Sor

³¹³ KI-M-FRU-Sor, confirmed by three key informants and one focus group

Charikar, Parwan Province

Date of Visit:
December 21, 2014

Transition Period:
May 2012

Transition Status
Completed

Overall Security

Despite a decline in AOG activity in Parwan, except for Shinwari, Siahgard and Ghorband districts, the overall security situation has deteriorated compared to the previous monitoring round.³¹⁴ The decline in AOG activity is attributed to government's employment of more experienced personnel and more effective counter-insurgency strategies.³¹⁵ The main source concern during this cycle is criminality, which has increased significantly.³¹⁶ This rise is attributed to an increase in firearm possession since the elections, combined a rise in unemployment and general poverty.³¹⁷

People are generally satisfied with ANSF and find its personnel helpful and respectful towards women. ANSF has also gained higher respect due to its effectiveness in combating and reducing AOG activity.³¹⁸ Views on ALP are divided, with some being supportive of their presence while others remain doubtful or are dissatisfied.³¹⁹

Access to Work and Public Life

There are fewer employment opportunities for women in Parwan compared to four months ago. The labor market has not recovered from the post-election decline in the number of jobs and the number of women-centered projects.³²⁰ At the same time, there are worries that the continued delay in forming a Cabinet by the new government will lead to a continuation of the freeze on recruitment by government and non-government organizations.³²¹

There are no complaints by women about harassment at the workplace. Access to public life has not been affected adversely despite the general deterioration in security.³²² Opinions of religious leaders about women working outside the home remain divided. There is more support for working women from their families and communities in urban areas compared to rural / remote areas.³²³ The shift in public opinion in favor of working women in urban areas is attributed to increased awareness about women's rights among men and religious leaders.³²⁴

Access to Services (Health and Education)

Girls' access to education has remained the same despite the deterioration of security in districts such as Shinwari, Siahgard, and Ghorband where access to schools for girls has been severely affected due to

³¹⁴ KI-F-PW-Par-1, confirmed by seven key informants and two focus groups

³¹⁵ KI-F-GHS-Par-1, confirmed by two key informants and one focus group

³¹⁶ KI-F-GHS-Par-2, confirmed by seven key informants and two focus groups

³¹⁷ KI-F-PW-Par-1, confirmed by three key informants and one focus group

³¹⁸ KI-F-GHS-Par-3, confirmed by eleven key informants and three focus groups

³¹⁹ KI-M-MED-Par-2, confirmed by three key informants and one focus group

³²⁰ KI-F-PW-Par-3, confirmed by four key informants and one focus group

³²¹ KI-F-GOV-Par-2, confirmed by four key informants and one focus group

³²² KI-F-GHS-Par-3, confirmed by seven key informants and two focus groups

³²³ FGD-WW-Par, confirmed by four key informants and two focus groups

³²⁴ FGD-WW-Par, confirmed by three key informants and two focus groups

insecurity.³²⁵ The quality of education is said to have improved compared to four months ago due to an increase in the number of better trained teachers, who have been receiving training from the Department of Education, and better and more advanced teaching materials used by the schools.³²⁶

Women's access to health services has remained the same as four months ago. The opening of a new health center with X-Ray facilities is seen by many as a major improvement in the quality of health services.³²⁷ The higher number of patients at health clinics is attributed to lower AOG activity in many districts.³²⁸ Complaints about the poor quality health services persist with concerns about the unhelpful attitude of some health service personnel and inadequate and insufficient medication.³²⁹ Health clinics counterclaim, however, that they have sufficient medicine to serve their patients in the coming year.³³⁰

Access to Justice

Access to justice is unchanged compared to four months ago though there are claims that in the recent period women have become increasingly more aware of their rights to seek justice through the formal justice mechanisms.³³¹ However, for the vast majority of the women in Parwan access to justice remains limited:

Women's access to courts and attorney's office is very limited. They cannot access any of the legal or judicial institutions because they are not even allowed to leave their homes. They are under a lot of pressure from their families and if they seek help from a third party, they get subjected to even more hardship.³³²

Apart from pressures within the families, a major impeding factor in women's access to justice is the attitude of the prosecutors and the judiciary, which is described by some as unfair and corrupt.³³³ The general tendency among many women is to resort to traditional justice for resolving domestic issues.³³⁴

Violence Against Women

Violence against women has increased compared to four months ago.³³⁵ The main causes for the increase are general poverty, increased unemployment, drug addiction, lack of awareness among men, and more awareness among women which sometimes increases tensions within families particularly if the male family members remain unaware or disrespectful of women's rights.³³⁶ Most of the violence against women is of a domestic nature, frequently involving violence of women against women.³³⁷ The most common types of violence are said to be forced and underage marriages, physical abuse, and economic violence (e.g., depriving women of inheritance or alimony rights).³³⁸

³²⁵ KI-F-GHS-Par-1, confirmed by seven key informants

³²⁶ FGD-CE-Par, confirmed by two key informants

³²⁷ KI-F-GHS-Par-3

³²⁸ KI-M-MED-Par-1, confirmed by two key informants

³²⁹ KI-F-VTC-Par-2, confirmed by four key informants and one focus group

³³⁰ KI-M-MED-Par-2

³³¹ KI-F-PW-Par-3, confirmed by three key informants

³³² KI-M-MED-Par-2, confirmed by five key informants

³³³ KI-M-MED-Par-1, confirmed by four key informants and one focus group

³³⁴ FGD-CE-Par

³³⁵ KI-F-GOV-Par-3, confirmed by six key informants and one focus group

³³⁶ KI-F-GOV-Par-3, KI-F-NGO-Par-2

³³⁷ KI-F-NGO-Par-2, confirmed by two key informants

³³⁸ KI-F-VTC-Par-3, confirmed by eight key informants and two focus groups

Women and Current Affairs

Political participation of women in the province has not changed compared to four months ago.³³⁹ In some districts, such as Ghorband and Siahgard, security is said to be the main obstacle for women to participate in politics.³⁴⁰ Other factors impeding women's participation are the lack of opportunities for them to work outside the home.³⁴¹

Women in Parwan hold leadership positions in the Department of Women's Affairs and the Department of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock, and the Provincial Council. There are ten female school principals in the province.³⁴² The number of female representatives in Parwan's Provincial Council has dropped from four to three.

Women's participation in the formal peace process in Parwan remains limited. The role of women in the Provincial Peace Council is seen by many as symbolic.³⁴³ However, many also believe that women could play a major role in effecting peace by encouraging their male family members to pursue peaceful means for resolving conflicts.³⁴⁴

³³⁹ KI-F-GHS-Par-3, confirmed by three key informants

³⁴⁰ KI-F-VTC-Par-3, confirmed by four key informants

³⁴¹ KI-F-GHS-Par-3

³⁴² KI-F-GHS-Par-3

³⁴³ KI-F-GHS-Par-3, confirmed by one key informant and two focus groups

³⁴⁴ KI-F-GHS-Par-3, confirmed by seven key informants

Aybak, Samangan Province

Date of Visit:
November 30, 2014

Transition Period:
April-May 2013

Transition Status:
Completed

Overall Security

Though some improvements are reported compared to the last cycle, the post-election deterioration in security continues. AOG activity remains limited in the province though there has been a significant increase in criminal activity including burglaries, murders, and kidnappings.³⁴⁵ There are complaints by the women about widespread ownership of weapons, which are used in committing general crimes and violently settling personal hostilities.³⁴⁶

People are generally satisfied with the attitude of the police toward civilians with ANP and ANA being described as helpful and respectful toward women.³⁴⁷

Access to Work Public Life

Some new women-centered projects in the province continue to generate jobs but there are concerns about a general drop in employment opportunities for women in the province with a number of existing women-centered projects ending and not being extended.³⁴⁸ The attitude of men toward female colleagues in the workplace is described as helpful and friendly.³⁴⁹

There are no objections about women working outside the home as long as they dress appropriately.³⁵⁰ Women's presence in public life diminished somewhat following the elections but is said to have normalized to previous levels.³⁵¹

Access to Services (Health and Education)

Women's access to education has remained the same, with a consensus among the interviewees that interest by families in girls' education has been steadily increasing.³⁵² Many families view education as an alternative to unemployment, particularly since some schools pay a stipend to students for attendance.³⁵³ In rural areas traditional conservatism remains the main obstacle to girls attending school.³⁵⁴ There are some complaints about the experience and qualification of teachers, many of whom are described as incompetent.³⁵⁵

³⁴⁵ KI-F-VTC-Sam-1, confirmed by eight key informants and two focus groups

³⁴⁶ FGD-WW-Sam, confirmed by eight key informants and one focus group

³⁴⁷ KI-F-PW-Sam-1, confirmed by six key informants and two focus groups

³⁴⁸ KI-F-VTC-Sam-1, confirmed by six key informants and two focus groups

³⁴⁹ FGD-WW-Sam, FGD-Sam-LIT

³⁵⁰ KI-M-MED-Sam-2, confirmed by five key informants and three focus groups

³⁵¹ KI-F-GHS-Sam-3, confirmed by five key informants and two focus groups

³⁵² KI-F-Gov-Sam-1, confirmed by two key informants and two focus groups

³⁵³ KI-F-PW-Sam-1, confirmed by six key informants and two focus groups

³⁵⁴ KI-F-Gov-Sam-1, confirmed by one key informant and two focus groups

³⁵⁵ KI-F-GHS-Sam-3, confirmed by two key informants and two focus groups

Women's access to health remains unchanged compared to the last cycle. There continues to be complaints about the lack of medicine and insufficient number of qualified medical personnel.³⁵⁶

Gynecological services have improved with some hospitals having heated rooms for women in labor. The attitude of the doctors toward pregnant women is described as friendly and helpful.³⁵⁷

Access to Justice

There have been some improvements in women's access to justice in Samangan though there continue to be complaints about corruption.³⁵⁸ Awareness training programs have been helpful to many women in learning about their rights.³⁵⁹ The women's views of the Department of Women's Affairs are largely positive.³⁶⁰

The main obstacle in access to justice by women is the dominant traditional conservatism within their families, according to which women seeking justice bring shame and disgrace to the family.³⁶¹ There are also complaints by the women about their cases taking longer to be addressed than men's cases in the formal justice system.³⁶²

Violence Against Women

Domestic violence against women is said to have declined compared to four months ago. The reasons given for this decline are the increased awareness within the community and some religious leaders having incorporated women's rights in their sermons.³⁶³ However, other forms of violence against women such as rape and murder are said to have increased.³⁶⁴

Women and Current Affairs

Women's participation in election in Samangan is described as having been extensive.³⁶⁵ The number of female representatives in the provincial councils has declined from three (out of nine) to two, due to a change in the female representation quota.

There is a general consensus that women could play an active role in the peace process through encouraging their male family members not to resort to armed conflict to settle disagreements and disputes.³⁶⁶ At the same time, there are strong sentiments against peace settlement with elements that refuse to acknowledge women's rights and continue to victimize and murder ordinary people for political ends.³⁶⁷

³⁵⁶ KI-F-Gov-Sam-1, confirmed by three key informants and two focus groups

³⁵⁷ KI-M-MED-Sam-3, confirmed by six key informants and one focus group

³⁵⁸ KI-F-VTC-Sam-1, confirmed by four key informants and one focus group

³⁵⁹ KI-F-PW-Sam-1, confirmed by seven key informants and one focus group

³⁶⁰ KI-F-PW-Sam-1, confirmed by seven key informants and two focus groups

³⁶¹ KI-F-GHS-Sam-2, confirmed by four key informants

³⁶² KI-F-GOV-Sam-1, confirmed by seven key informants and two focus groups

³⁶³ KI-F-GHS-Sam-3, confirmed by five key informants and two focus groups

³⁶⁴ KI-F-GOV-Sam-2, confirmed by six key informants and two focus groups

³⁶⁵ KI-F-VTC-Sam-1, confirmed by one key informant

³⁶⁶ KI-F-NGO-Sam-2, confirmed by five key informants and two focus groups

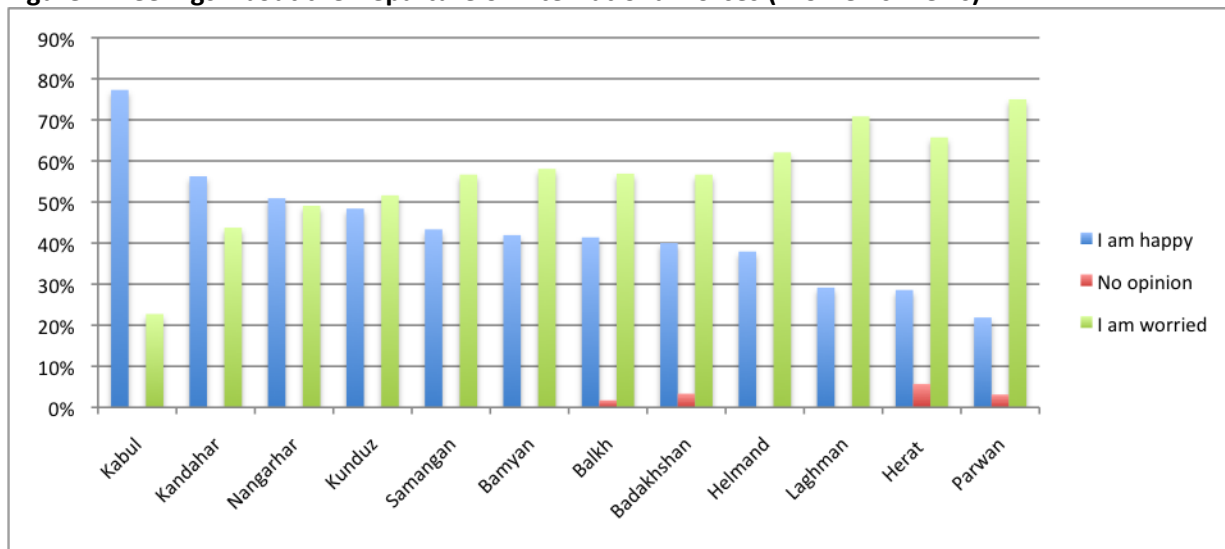
³⁶⁷ FGD-CE-Sam, confirmed by two key informants

4. Analysis of Aggregate Survey Data

The findings in this section are based on a quantitative survey of all 409 female and 274 male respondents from the twelve provinces who participated in interviews and focus group discussions. The survey findings are *not* statistically significant. The survey was conducted as an additional data collection tool since there was secure access to the respondents. The findings from the survey reported in this section are thus for illustrative purposes only.

In nine out of twelve provinces over 50 percent of the women stated that they were worried about international security forces moving out of their areas. This worry is significant in all but two provinces, Kabul and Kandahar, where there are higher percentages of women being happy about the transition than those worried (Figure 1).

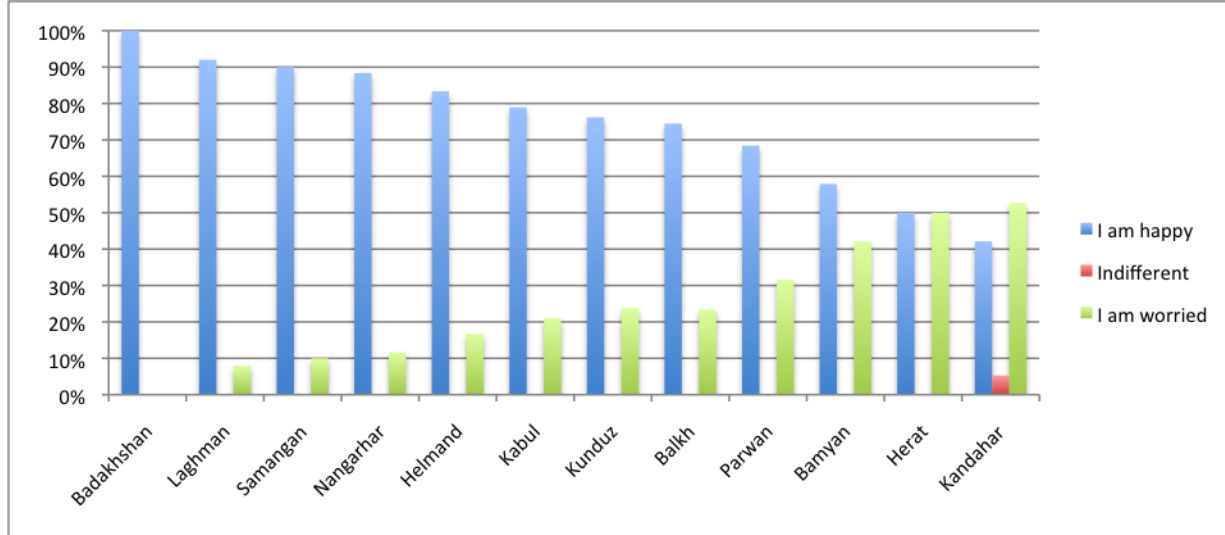
Figure 1: Feelings About the Departure of International Forces (Women’s Views)



n=409

Overall, the men are generally happier than women about the departure of international security forces. The exception is Kandahar where the percentages of men worried about the departure of international security forces is higher than those of women (Figure 2).

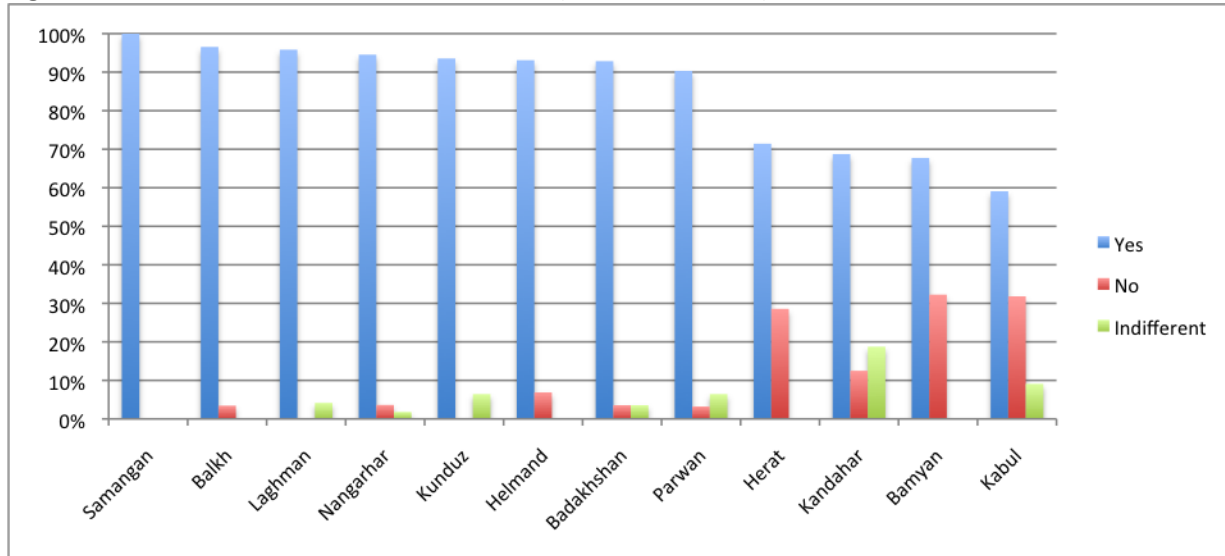
Figure 2: Feelings About the Departure of International Forces (Men's Views)



n=274

An overwhelming majority of both men and women think that ANA/ANP is capable of protecting women, with men being slightly more optimistic than women. In eight out of the twelve monitored provinces the percentage of women believing that the ANP is there to protect them is more than 80 percent. In Samangan, all those surveyed believed that the ANA/ANP could protect women (Figure 3).

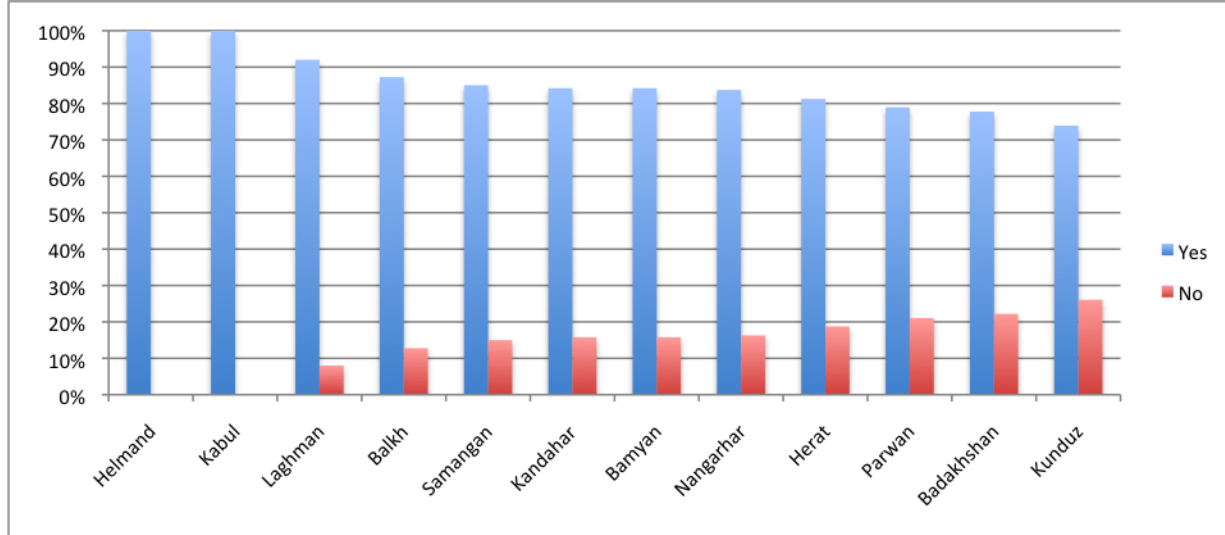
Figure 3: Can ANP and ANA Protect Women? (Women's Views)



n=409

In Kunduz, Badakhshan, and Parwan over 20 percent of the male respondents did not think that women could be protected by ANA/ANP (Figure 4).

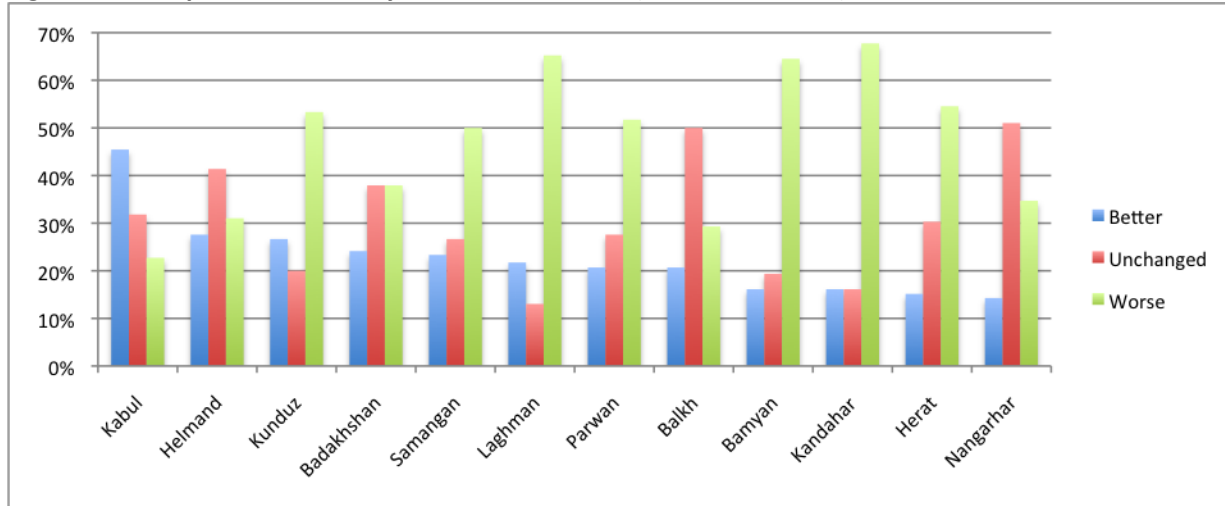
Figure 4: Can ANP and ANA Protect Women? (Men's Views)



n=274

Perceptions of security outside the home are diverse and inconsistent among women and men. In Kunduz, Samangan, Laghman, Parwan, Bamyan, Kandahar, and Herat a majority of the women feel less safe outside the home. Significantly, in Kabul the majority of the women surveyed believe that security outside the home has improved compared to four months ago (Figure 5).

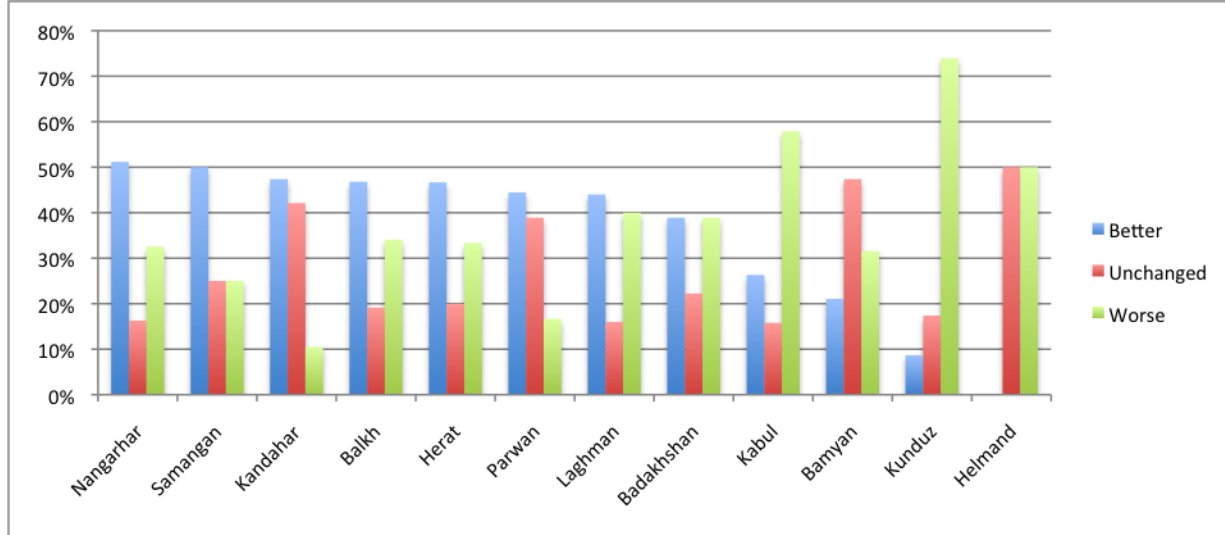
Figure 5: Perceptions of Security Outside the Home (Women's Views)



n=409

Most men feel that security for women outside the home has deteriorated in the past four months. The percentage of women who feel the security situation has deteriorated is generally higher than the same percentage for men (Figure 6). It is also noteworthy that in Kabul and Kunduz the percentages of men that feel security for women has deteriorated are higher than those of women (Figure 6).

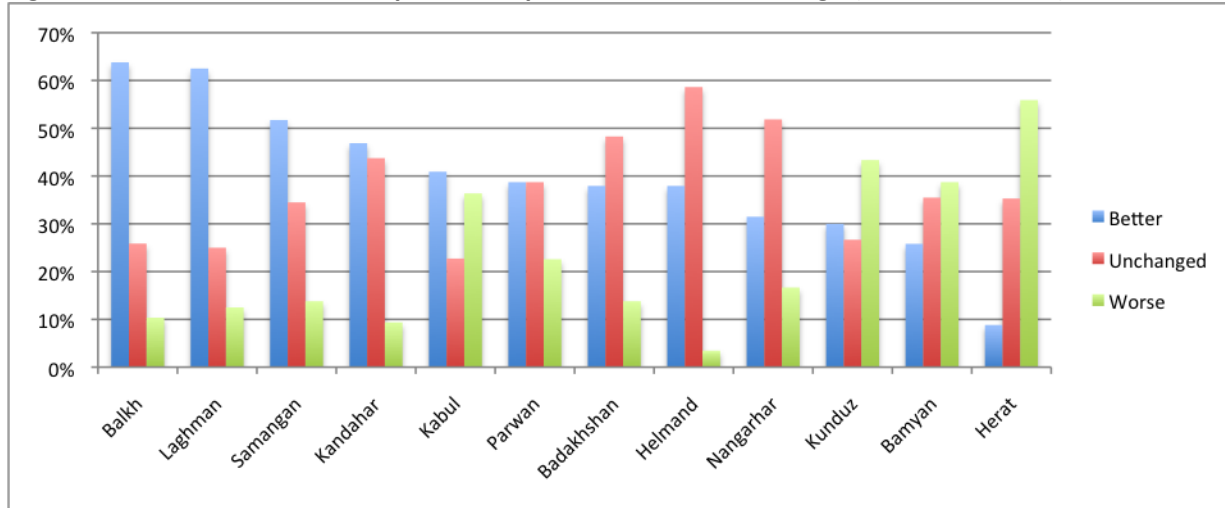
Figure 6: Perceptions of Security Outside the Home (Men’s Views)



n=274

Harassment of women in public spaces has increased significantly in Herat but improved in Balkh, Laghman, and Samangan (Figure 7). Harassment levels, however, remain high in all 12 provinces.

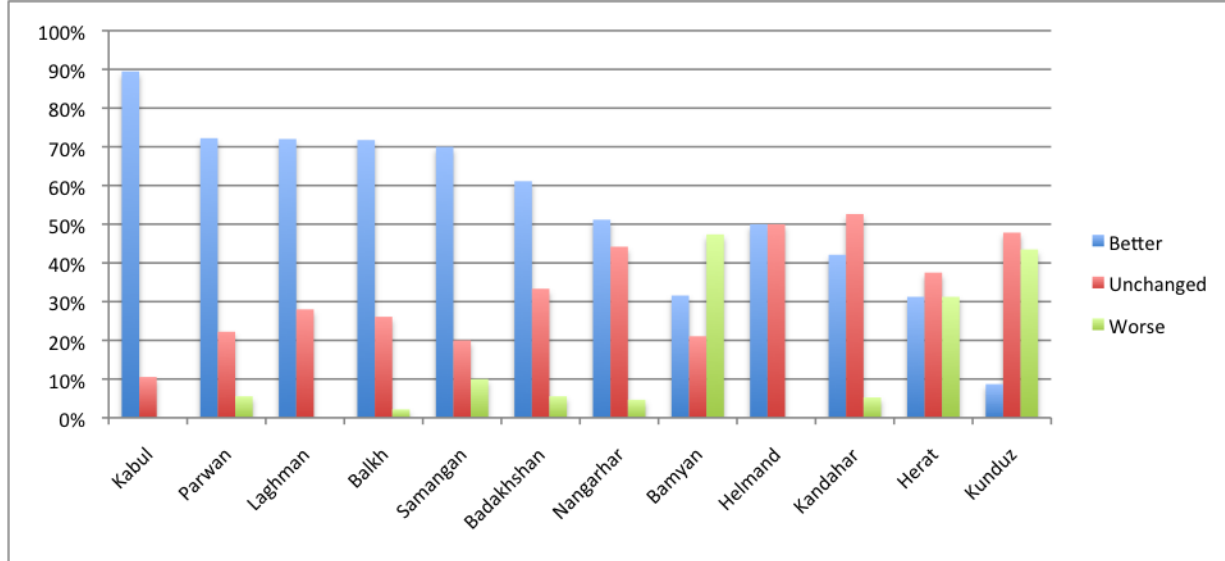
Figure 7: Harassment in Public Spaces Compared to Four Months Ago (Women’s Views)



n=409

A majority of the men in Kabul, Parwan, Laghman, Balkh, Samangan, and Badakhshan claim that harassment of women is lower than four months ago. In Bamyan the majority of the men believe that harassment of women has increased (Figure 8).

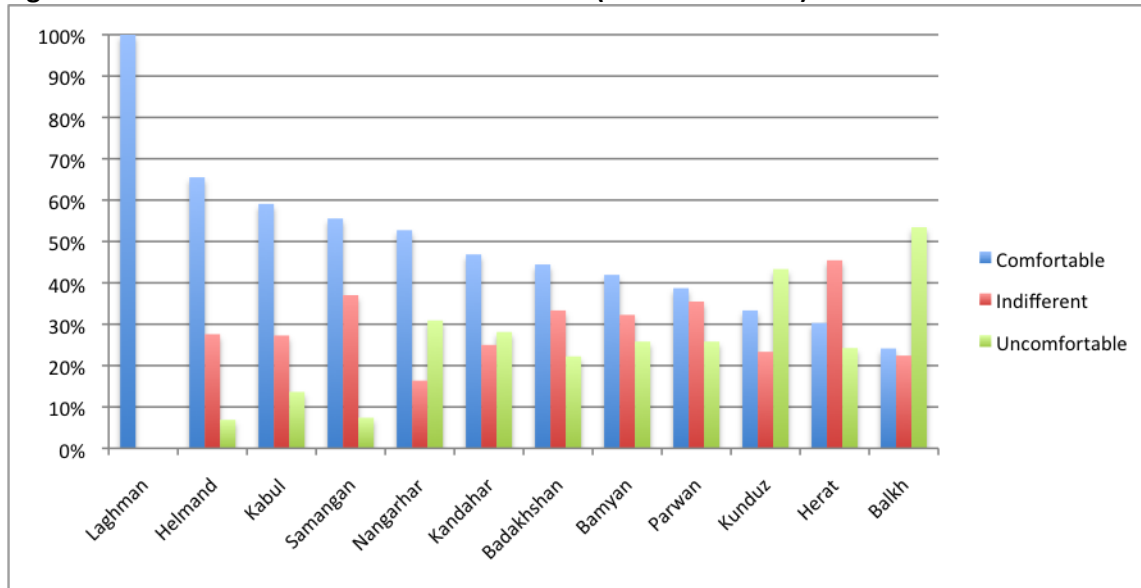
Figure 8: Harassment in Public Spaces Compared to Four Months Ago (Men’s Views)



n=274

The overwhelming majority of the women across the provinces felt comfortable about their interactions with ALP. There were, however, concerns about ALP by around 30 percent of the respondents in Balkh and Kunduz (Figure 9). Of note in Figure 9 is the finding that all women surveyed in Laghman feel comfortable in their interactions with ALP.

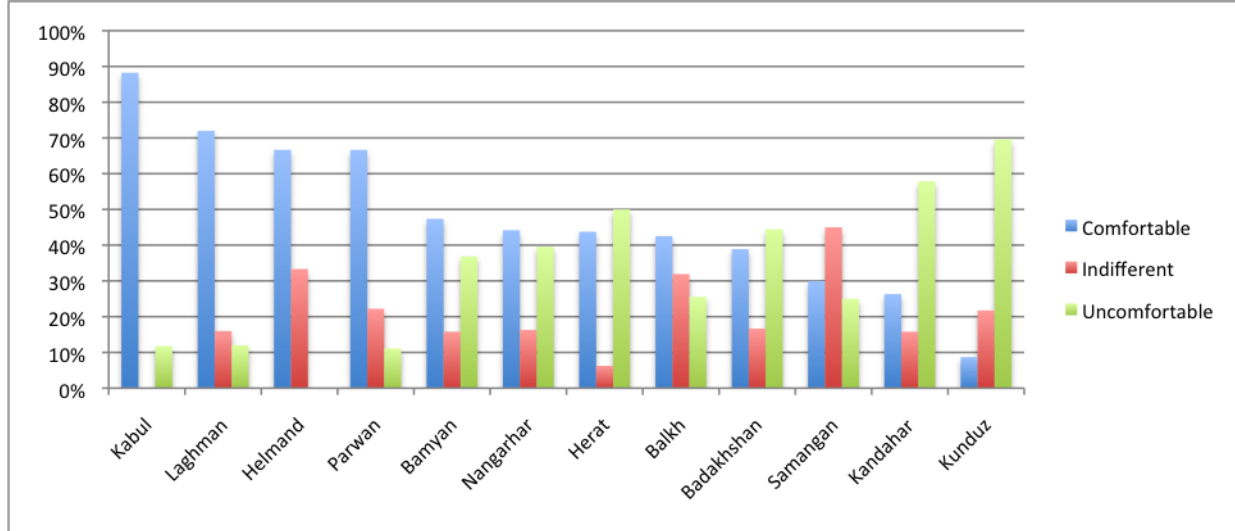
Figure 9: Comfort Level on Encounters With ALP (Women’s Views)



n=409

Men are generally more comfortable in their encounters with ALP than women. However, in Kunduz, Kandahar, Badakhshan and Herat, the majority of the men surveyed stated that they were uncomfortable in their interactions with ALP (Figure 10). Comfort level among men in interactions with ALP is highest in Kabul, Laghman, Helmand, and Parwan.

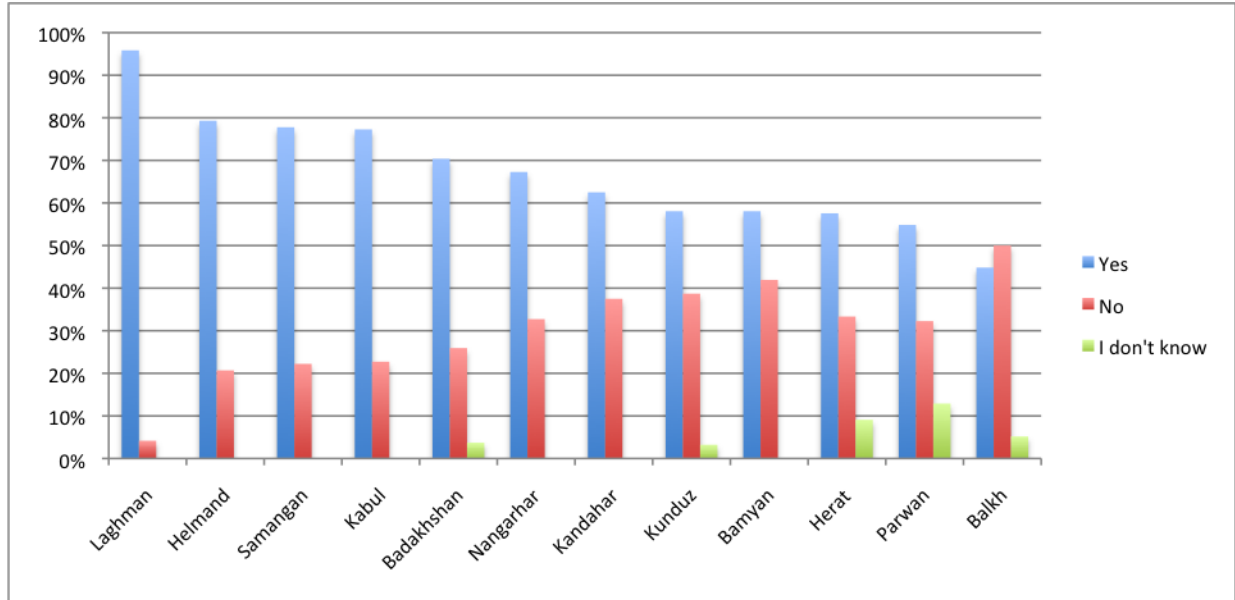
Figure 10: Comfort Level on Encounters With ALP (Men’s Views)



n=274

The majority of the women in all provinces except Balkh feel that it is necessary to utilize the services of ALP for maintaining security. However, in Nangarhar, Kandahar, Kunduz, Bamyan, Herat, Parwan and Balkh over 30 percent of the women do not feel that ALP should be used for security (Figure 11). In Laghman over 90 percent of the women feel that ALP must be used for security.

Figure 11: Is ALP Necessary for Security?(Women’s Views)

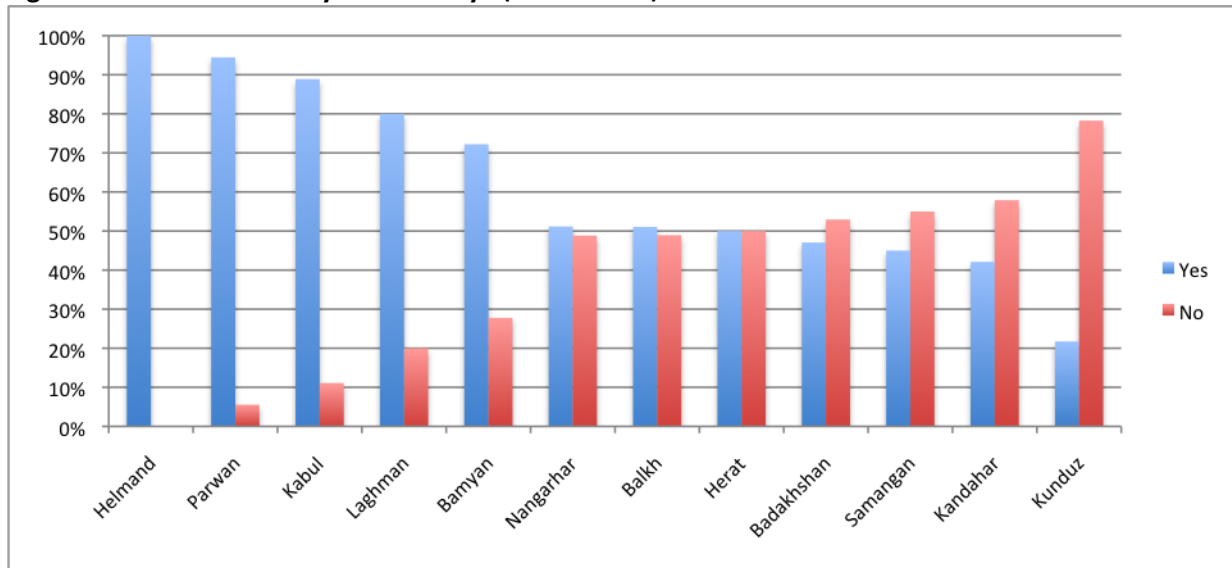


n=409

There is broad agreement between women and men on the need for using ALP for security. However, there are some locally specific and noteworthy differences. In Balkh, the majority of the women do not think ALP is needed (Figure 11). In Badakhshan, Samangan, Kandahar, and Kunduz the majority of the

men feel that ALP is not necessary. In Kunduz the percentage of the men against the use of ALP is almost 80 percent (Figure 12).

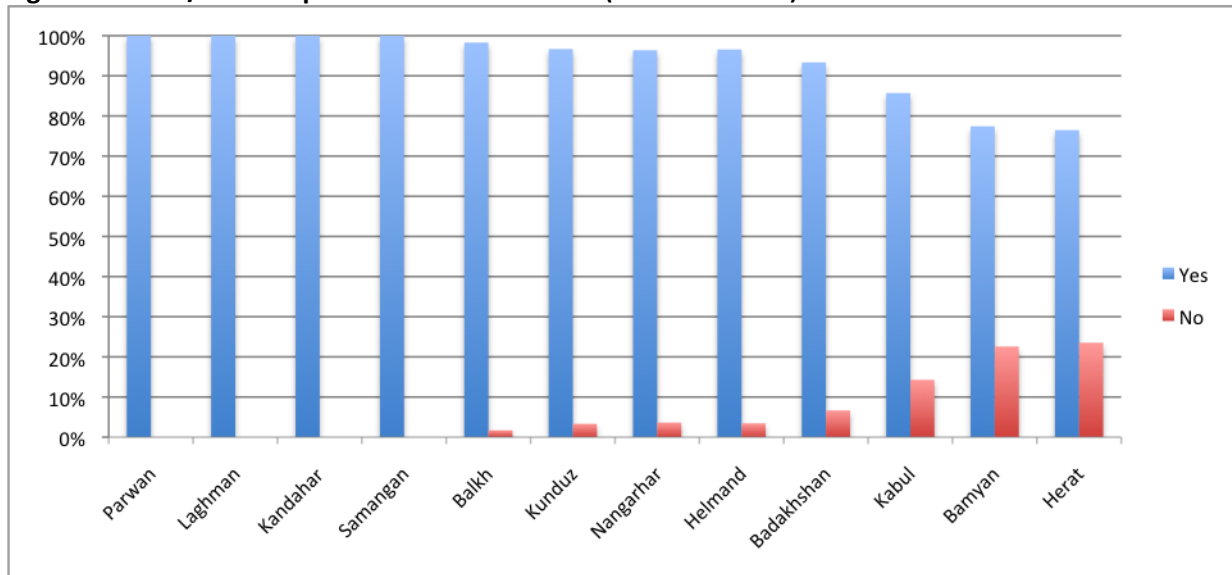
Figure 12: Is ALP Necessary for Security? (Men’s Views)



n=274

Herat and Bamyan are the only provinces where more than 20 percent of the women feel that ANA/ANP are not respectful toward women (Figure 13). All the women surveyed in Parwan, Laghman, Kandahar, and Samangan and the vast majority of the women surveyed in Balkh, Kunduz, Nangarhar, Helmand, and Badakhshan felt that ANA/ANP was respectful toward women (Figure 13).

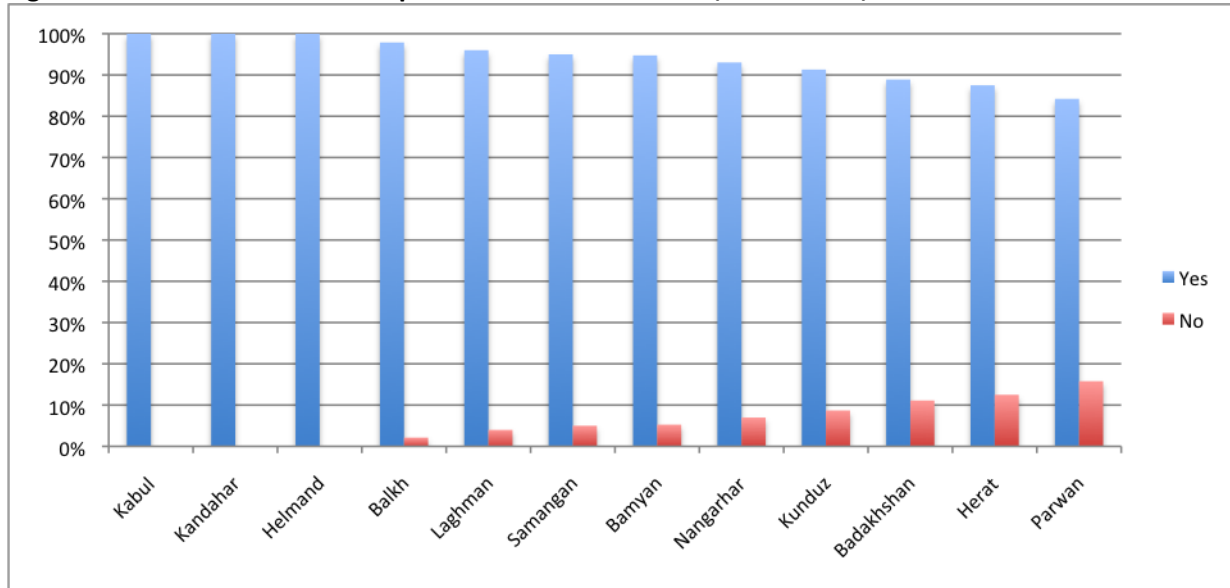
Figure 13: ANA/ANP Respectful Toward Women?(Women’s Views)



n=409

Similarly positive sentiments were expressed by men about the attitude of ANA/ANP toward women (Figure 14). Notable in Figure 14 is the small but significant number of men in Parwan, Herat, and Badakhshan who expressed reservations about the interactions between ANA/ANP and women.

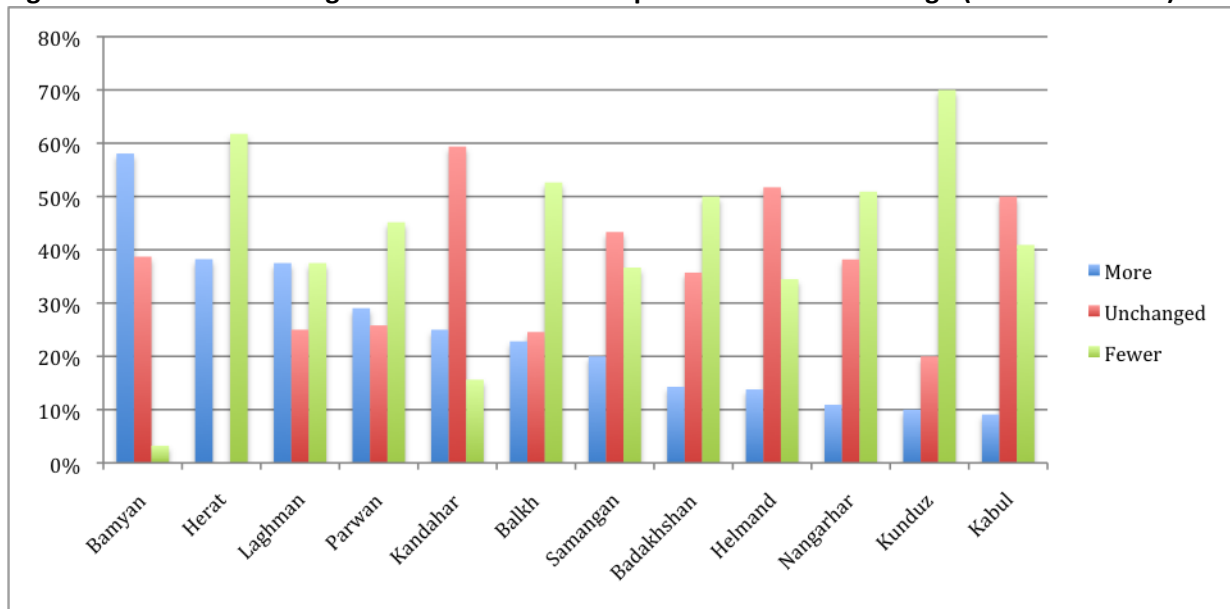
Figure 14: Are ANA and ANP Respectful Towards Women?(Men’s Views)



n=274

In all provinces the general feeling is that fewer women are able to work outside the home than four months ago. The situation is particularly acute in Badakhshan, Balkh, Herat and especially Kunduz (Figure 15). The notable exception is Bamyan where over 50 percent of the women feel that there are more women working outside the home compared to four months ago.

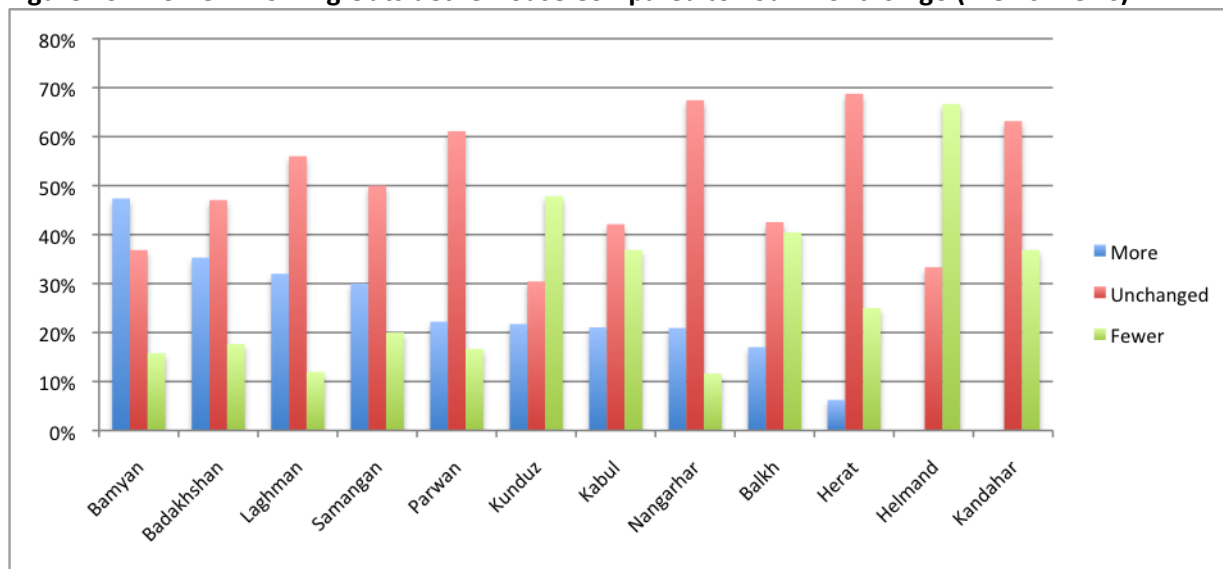
Figure 15: Women Working Outside the House Compared to Four Months Ago (Women’s Views)



n=409

From the men’s perspective in Kunduz and Helmand there are fewer women working outside the home compared to four months ago. In most other provinces, according to the men, the situation regarding work for women outside the home remains unchanged (Figure 16). The broad sentiment among both men and women across the 12 provinces is that there are fewer jobs in general, for men and women.

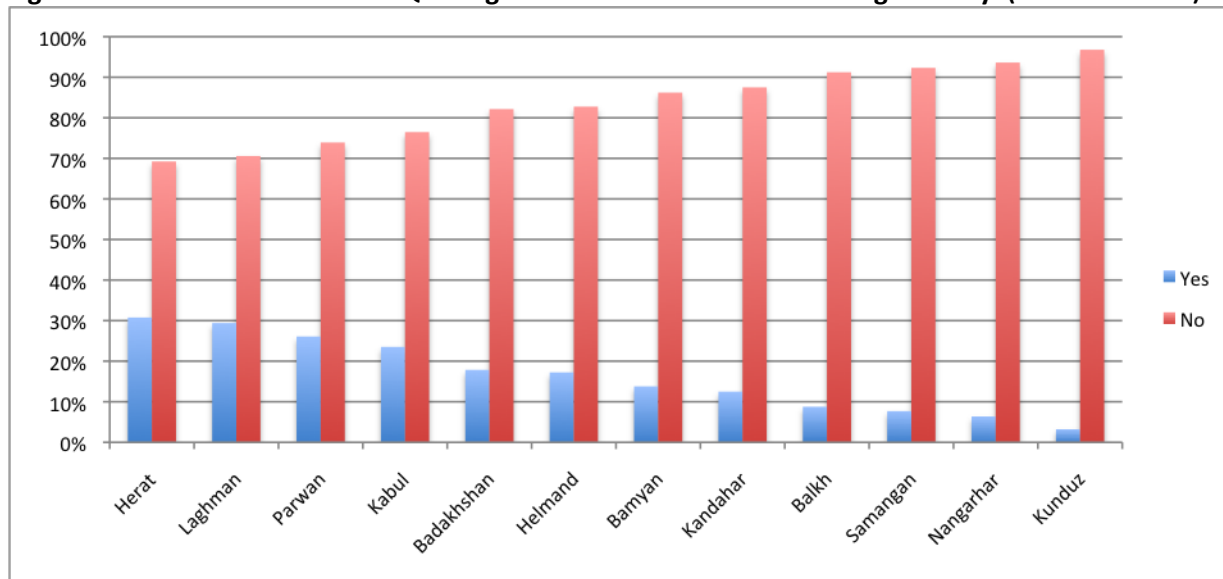
Figure 16: Women Working Outside the House Compared to Four Months Ago (Men’s Views)



n=274

Despite the security risks the vast majority of the women with jobs continue to work. The reasons for this persistence by women to continue to work range from the need for income to the belief in sustaining the hard earned right to work. There are relatively higher numbers of women who have at least thought about quitting employment in Herat and Laghman, at around 30 percent (Figure 17).

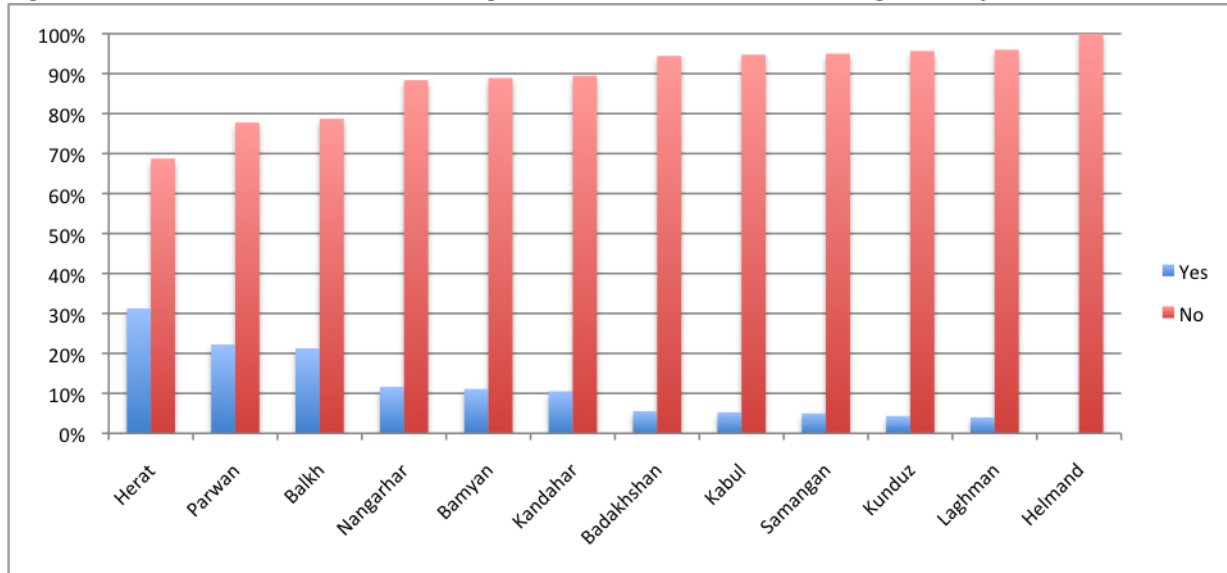
Figure 17: Have You Considered Quitting Your Job Because of Worsening Security?(Women’s Views)



n=409

The responses from the men to the question of whether or not they have considered quitting their jobs are not very different from the women's. In Herat around 30 percent of the men considered quitting their jobs because of the deterioration in security (Figure 18). Overall, in nine out of twelve provinces around 80 percent of the men stated to have not considered quitting their jobs.

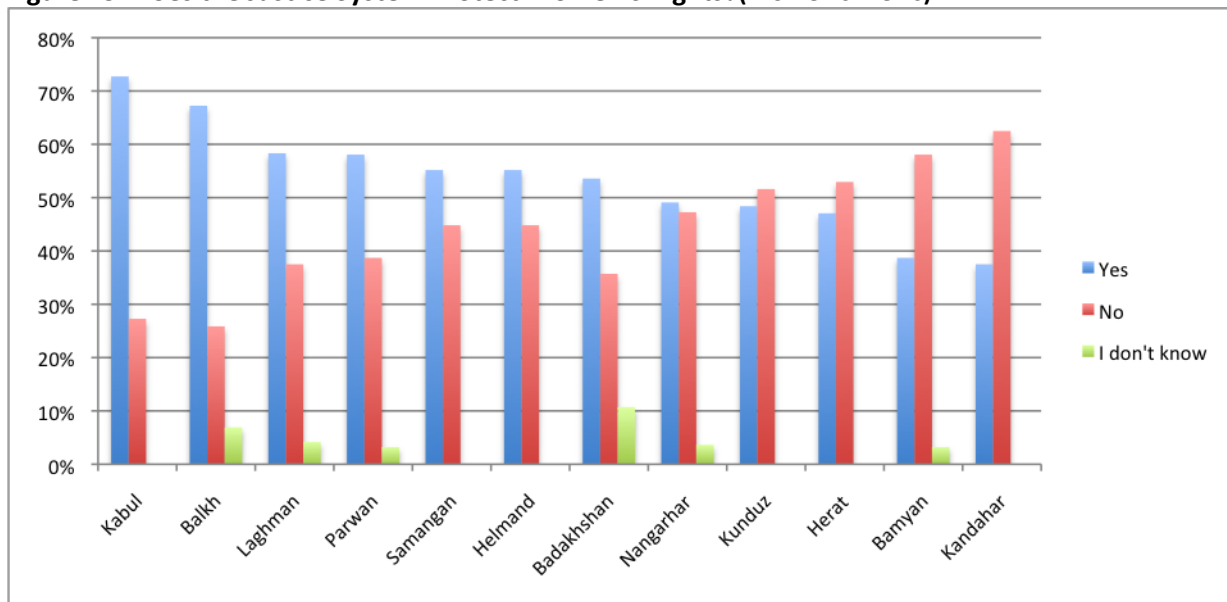
Figure 18: Have You Considered Quitting Your Job Because of Worsening Security?(Men's Views)



n=274

A majority of the women think that the justice system protects women's rights (Figure 19). Kandahar, Bamyan, Herat and Kunduz are notable exceptions where over 50 percent of the women felt that the justice system did not protect women's rights.

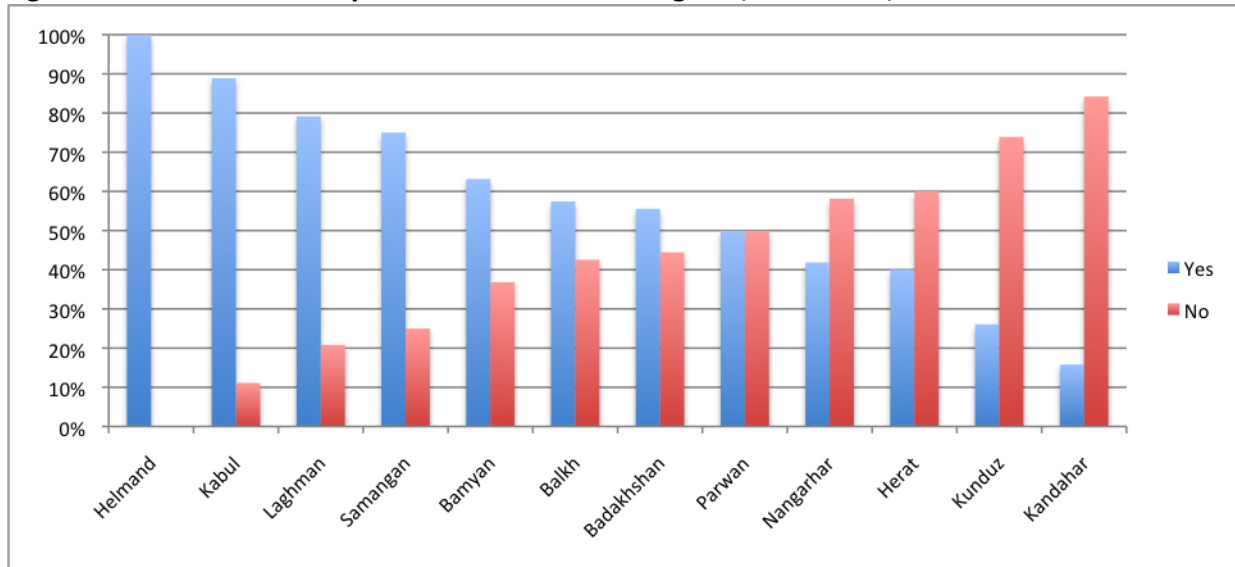
Figure 19: Does the Justice System Protect Women's Rights?(Women's Views)



n=409

The men’s view of how the justice system deals with women is more positive than the women’s (Figure 20). A notable is Kandahar where over 80 percent of the men think that the formal justice system does not protect women’s rights (Figure 20). This negative view of the justice system is also shared by the majority of the men in Kunduz (over 70 percent), Herat (60 percent), and Nangarhar (around 60 percent).

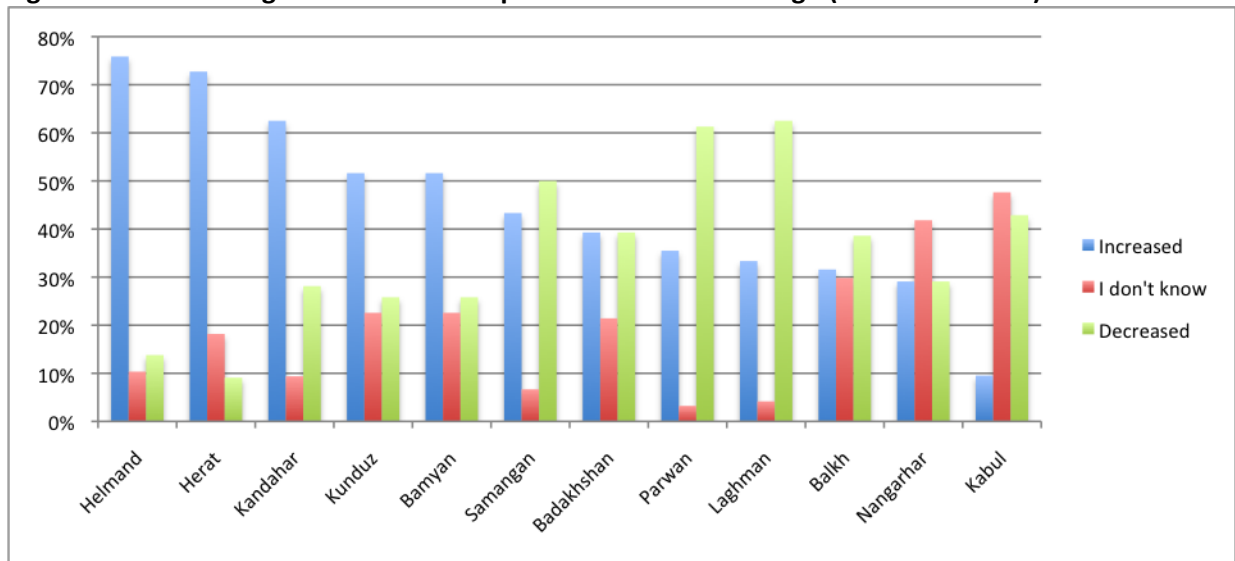
Figure 20: Does the Justice System Protect Women’s Rights?(Men’s Views)



n=274

Violence against women has increased compared to the previous cycles. In Badakhshan and Nangarhar women are evenly divided on the question of the increase in violence against women while in Helmand, Herat, Kandahar, Kunduz, and Bamyan the majority of the women feel that violence against women has increased compared to four months ago. There are claims that violence against women has decreased compared to four months in Parwan, Laghman, and to a lesser extent in Samangan (Figure 21).

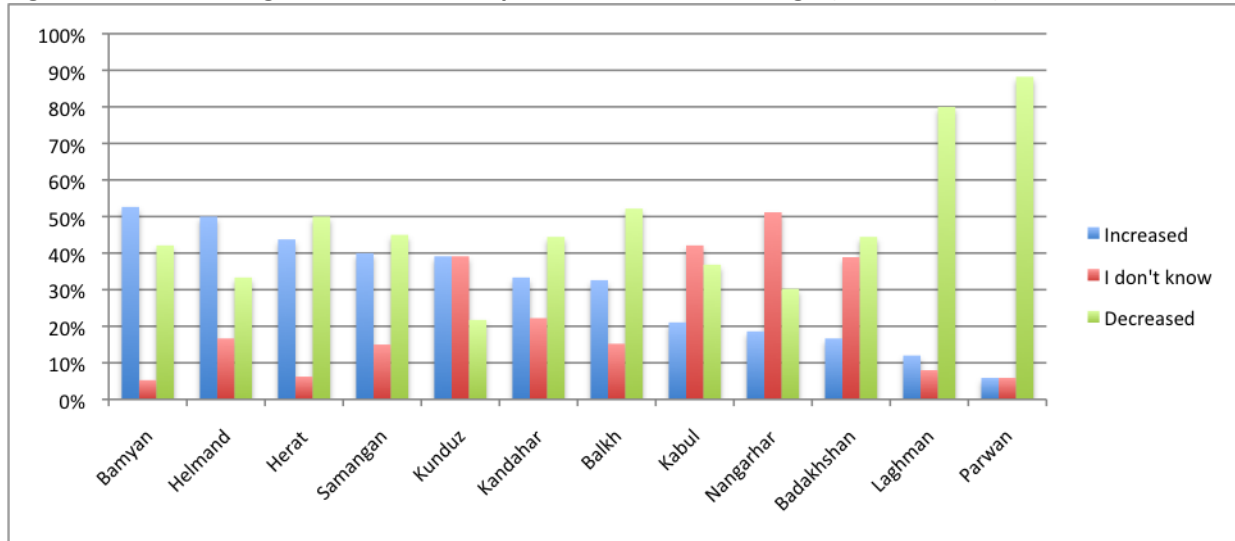
Figure 21: Violence Against Women Compared to Four Months Ago (Women’s Views)



n=409

In a significant contrast to the women, the majority of the men in Parwan, Laghman, Badakhshan, Balkh, Kandahar, Samangan, and Herat stated that there was less violence against women than four months ago (Figure 22).

Figure 22: Violence Against Women Compared to Four Months Ago (Men’s Views)



n=274

Conclusion and Recommendations

Data collection for this cycle started in October 2014 and ended in January 2015. By October 2014 the election deadlock had been resolved, the new president was sworn in, and the Bilateral Security Agreement between Afghanistan and its international allies had been signed. Another key milestone in this period was the completion of the security transition process on December 31, 2014 when ANSF assumed full responsibility for national security.

As with Cycle 4, the key underlying themes throughout Cycle 5 of this monitoring were economic and political uncertainty, combined with increased criminality. All provinces monitored still struggle with the irregularities caused by the inconclusive elections. The general sense of uncertainty that had set in after the first round of elections in April 2014 continued. There were, by all accounts, fewer employment opportunities for men and women and thus less overall access to work and public life for women. Domestic violence, attributed by many to widespread poverty and unemployment, increased in the last four months.

Using the six composite indicators, combined as appropriate with the findings from the quantitative survey, the following statements can be made based on the data collected for Cycle 5:

Overall Security

Five of the 14 districts monitored in this cycle showed signs of improvement, while the security situation in the other nine districts had deteriorated. The main causes of deterioration are said to be the post-election uncertainties, from which many provinces have not recovered, and the increase in unemployment caused by the security transition. The deterioration is most evident in increased AOG activity and increased criminality.

In Jalalabad, Helmand, Bamyan and some districts of Badakhshan province the main cause of the deterioration in security is heightened AOG activity. In Herat, Samangan, Parwan and in Chemtal and ChaharBolak districts of Balkh province the increase in criminality has been the main cause of insecurity. Kunduz province and Dawlatabad district of Balkh province reported increases in criminality as well as AOG activity.

Balkh, Kandahar, Laghman, Paghman district (Kabul), and Sorkhrod (Nangarhar) reported improvements in the overall security situation. The main causes of improvement were better and more effective policing and better collaboration between the security forces and the local population. The resolution of the election deadlock was also mentioned as a key contributing factor to improved security.

In all provinces except Herat the communities appear to be satisfied with ANP and ANA. In Kunduz the interviewees find ANSF cooperative and respectful, though inadequately prepared to withstand AOG offensives. The security situation in Kunduz has continued to deteriorate over the last 12 months. In Kandahar despite the overall satisfaction by a majority of people about ANSF, there were some complaints about ANP harassing girls on their way to school. In Herat most interviewees found ANP not responsive to the needs of the community in general and women in particular. In Badakhshan, Balkh and

Parwan, the interviewees found ALP a source of fear and demanded that ALP members must be identifiable by wearing proper uniforms.

Access to Work and Public Life

In almost all districts except Paghman (Kabul) where no change was reported, women's access to work has declined compared to the previous cycle. The main cause of the decline is the reduction in the number of women-centered projects and funding, compounded by post-election uncertainty resulting in a loss of confidence to invest or take on new employees. Governmental organizations have continued their freeze on hiring new employees.

The perception of women working outside the home remains positive on the condition that they abide by the traditional dress code. In all provinces communities approve of women working in health and education sectors while there are reservations about women working for NGOs. The opinions of religious leaders on working women vary significantly within and between provinces. However, in urban areas the attitude toward working women is significantly more positive than rural areas.

Insecurity, harassment in public spaces, and traditional conservatism remain the main impeding factors to women's presence in public life. Many women fear leaving their homes even in provinces where the security situation is relatively stable or has improved.

Access to Services (Health and Education)

Access to health and education has been subject to fluctuations in different provinces. Access to health has declined in Dawlatabad (Balkh), Bamyan, and Kunduz. The main cause for the decline is the deterioration in security situation, which has made making the journey to a health clinic a risky endeavor for many women. In Herat, Kabul, Nangarhar, Parwan, and Samangan women's access to health has remained unchanged. In Balkh health centers reported an increase in the number of their patients, attributed in part to the mild winter weather.

In Helmand, Kandahar, and Laghman women reported an improvement in access to health, attributed to better services and new hospitals. Complaints about the quality of health services, such as lack of medication, unhelpful attitude of health professionals, and congestion at the health centers persist in all provinces.

Women's and girls' access to education has declined in Badakhshan, Herat, Kunduz, and Nangarhar. The main cause of the decline is the deterioration in security conditions. In unsafe districts of Badakhshan most of the girls' schools have closed down. In Nangarhar a dispute between the AOG and the local authorities in DehBala districts led to the closing down of 25 education centers, depriving 7,000 female students from access to school.

In Balkh, Dawlatabad, Bamyan, Parwan, and Samangan access to education has remained unchanged while in Helmand, Kandahar, and Laghman the interviewees reported better access education. The improvement in Helmand is limited to the capital and attributed to the opening of new girls' schools in Lashkargah. In Kandahar the quality of education is said to have improved, due largely to efforts by the provincial Department of Education to recruit qualified teachers and monitor service provision.

Access to Justice

Access to justice remains very limited throughout the provinces. The overwhelming majority of the legal cases involving women concern domestic disputes, typically solved through mediation by the police, Family Response Units, Department of Women's Affairs, or community elders. The main impeding factors for women seeking formal justice are the unfair attitude of justice officials toward women, corruption, the disapproval of male family members of women using formal justice, and lack of rights awareness among women and justice officials.

In Badakhshan and Kunduz the deterioration in security conditions has been the main factor impeding women's access to justice. In Bamyan the post-election irregularities within the governmental organizations has led to a deterioration in service delivery by the judiciary, limiting women's access to formal justice. In Dawlatabad, Herat, Kabul, Kandahar, Jalalabad, and Parwan no change was reported in women's access to justice. The inauguration of the new government and its hard stance against corruption are said to have resulted in improvements in the formal justice system in Balkh, Laghman, and Helmand. In Samangan and Helmand higher awareness among women has also contributed to increases in access to justice for women.

Violence Against Women

There is a general increase in violence against women. The main causes of the increase are said to be persistent poverty, increased unemployment, drug addiction, and lack of awareness on women's rights among men. Balkh, Bamyan, Helmand, Herat, Kandahar, Kunduz, and Parwan provinces have reported increases in violence against women. In Bamyan and Herat there were higher numbers of suicide among women. Badakhshan, Laghman and Samangan reported declines in violence against women. The main reason for the decline in Laghman was given as the general improvement in overall security situation while in Badakhshan and Samangan the decline was attributed to higher levels of awareness about women's rights. Nangarhar was the only province where violence against women was said to have remained unchanged.

Women and Current Affairs

Women's participation in politics remains unchanged and limited throughout the provinces. Female candidacy rates for provincial council elections has never been higher than 16 percent of total candidates despite the 20 percent representation quota in provincial councils.

Women's participation in formal peace talks has also been limited. The number of female members of the Provincial Peace Councils is significantly lower than the number for male members. Women's role in the peace process is viewed by many as purely symbolic despite the strong sentiment within most communities that women could play a major role in effecting peace by encouraging their male family members to pursue peaceful means in resolving disagreements and conflicts.

Table 1 is a summary of the conditions in the 12 provinces based on the indicators used for monitoring.

Table 1: Women's Security During September – December 2014³⁶⁸

	Overall Security	Access to Work and Public Life	Access to Services (Health & Education)	Access to Justice	Violence Against Women	Women and Current Affairs
Badakhshan	Unchanged: In the center, but deteriorated in some districts. Main causes: unemployment and poverty among youth, which encourages them to join AOGs or commit crimes. Views on ANSF positive, ALP negative.	Unchanged: Access to work still very limited. Access to public life has not changed. There are no complaints of harassment. Access to public life limited in unsafe districts.	Worse: In some districts access to education is more limited than before. Some schools have even closed down. Access to health much more limited in rural areas.	Worse: There are more complaints about the judiciary particularly on corruption and unequal and unfair treatment of women.	Better: There is less violence in urban areas, but in unsafe districts violence has increased. The main causes are poverty, unemployment and lack of awareness among men and women.	Worse: Uncertainties following the elections discouraged many women from participating in politics. Women's role in formal peace talks is still very limited. No participation in informal peace talks.
Balkh	Better: Less AOG activity due to better policing and community involvement. More crime in some districts. People are happy with ANP and ANA but ALP causes confusion due to not wearing formal uniforms.	Worse: Post-election decline in employment opportunities persists with fewer projects and a freeze on hiring by the government. Access to public life unchanged, though women are fearful of AOG attacks.	Unchanged: Access to education is unchanged. The main complaint is lack of qualified teachers. Health services have remained the same though there is better access due to milder weather. Complaints about the quality remain.	Better: More positive views of the judiciary and less corruption, caused by the hard stance of the new government. DoWA provides 24-hour advisory service and ANP and FRU are viewed as helpful.	Worse: Higher levels of violence against women. Causes are given as higher unemployment and general poverty.	Better: More political participation. Women's participation in formal peace talks remains limited.
Dawlatabad	Worse: More AOG activity and higher criminality. Causes are given as increased unemployment among the youth. People are generally happy with ANP and ANA. Views on ALP generally negative.	Worse: Government freeze on hiring and fewer women-centered projects. Access to public life is unchanged, though women are more fearful of AOG attacks.	Worse: Less access to education in rural areas due to deterioration in security. Access to health has deteriorated because of the insecurity. Complaints about the lack of quality persist.	Unchanged: Access remains limited due to corruption and unfavorable attitude of judiciary toward women. Many women resort to customary justice system for resolving domestic conflicts.	Worse: There is more violence against women. Causes are given as general poverty, high unemployment, and lack of awareness among men.	Worse: Women's political participation has largely diminished since the presidential elections. Women's participation in peace remains limited with many in Dawlatabad being unaware of the peace process.

³⁶⁸ Shades of the cells indicate comparison with the previous cycle: Green: The situation has improved, Yellow: The situation has not changed, Red: The situation has worsened.

	Overall Security	Access to Work and Public Life	Access to Services (Health & Education)	Access to Justice	Violence Against Women	Women and Current Affairs
Bamyan	Worse: Heightened AOG activity and criminality. Women and men are generally positive about the role of ANP and ANA.	Worse: Fewer employment opportunities due to lack of projects and delay in investments due to the uncertainties following the elections and Cabinet appointment. Access to public life remains unchanged.	Worse: Access to education remains the same though the quality of education has deteriorated. Access to health is more limited due to deterioration in security. Quality of health services remains poor.	Unchanged: The judiciary does not take its role seriously and there is widespread corruption within the formal justice system. Women complain about being treated unfairly.	Unchanged: Women remain aware of their rights. Reports of suicide by women in forced marriages persist.	Better: More interest in politics since the elections. Women's contribution to formal peace process remains limited.
Helmand	Worse: Heightened AOG activity since the elections and the signing of BSA. Views of ANA/ANP remain unchanged.	Worse: Lack of women-centered projects exacerbated by the deterioration in security. Access to public is less due to fear of terror attacks.	Better: New educational centers have been set up in the last few months. Access to education in remote districts remains limited. Access to health has increased in Lashkargah but remains limited in rural areas.	Better: More women attempt to utilize the formal justice system. Attitude of the formal judiciary toward women has improved and there is less corruption than in the past. Traditional conservatism remains as a major obstacle, however.	Worse: More violence against women as a product of a general lack of awareness about women's rights, illiteracy, widespread poverty, and drug abuse among men. More reports of suicides among women and increased use of women to settle familial disputes.	Better: More interest in political participation by women compared to the previous cycle. There remains limited participation by women in the formal peace talks.
Herat	Worse: Heightened criminality such as kidnappings and murders caused by a general deterioration in law and order. People's view of the ANP is very negative.	Worse: Less access to work due to fewer employment opportunities resulting from fewer programs, investments, and freeze on hiring by the government. Less access to public life due to increased harassment.	Worse: Less access to education due to insecurity. Schools have closed in some districts. Access to health has remained unchanged, but the quality of services has deteriorated.	Unchanged: Institutionalized corruption and unfair treatment of women persists. Access remains very limited in rural areas.	Worse: More reports of violence against women and more cases of suicide. Causes are seen as the rise in unemployment, poverty and drug addiction among men.	Worse: Less political participation because of insecurity and diminished interest since the elections. Limited female participation in formal peace talks.

	Overall Security	Access to Work and Public Life	Access to Services (Health & Education)	Access to Justice	Violence Against Women	Women and Current Affairs
Kabul	Better: Better policing and better collaboration with local communities. People are generally happy with ANP and ANA.	Worse: Fewer employment opportunities for women due to fewer projects and freeze on government hiring. Access to public life remains unchanged.	Unchanged: Access to education remains unchanged. Access to health remains unchanged though the complaints about the lack of service quality persist.	Unchanged: Access to justice has not changed but remains limited. Complaints about corruption and unresponsiveness within the judiciary persist. Customary law and informal justice remain the preferred mechanism for conflict resolution.	Unchanged: Most women remain bound by traditional conservatism in cases of domestic conflict. The use of the formal justice system to resolve domestic conflict remains unchanged.	Worse: There has been a general loss of interest in politics due to frustrations experienced by many women after the presidential elections and the ongoing dispute over the appointments to the Cabinet.
Kandahar	Better: Fewer AOG activities and suicide attacks. ANSF is praised for its ability to maintain order. Views on ALP are divided.	Worse: Fewer women-centered projects and government freeze on hiring have contributed to a decline in the number of jobs for women. Access to public life remains limited, especially for prominent women.	Better: The number of girls attending schools remains unchanged. The quality has improved because of a more serious attitude by the Department of Education. Access to health has improved and new clinics have opened.	Unchanged: Access to justice remains limited due to traditional conservatism. Many complaints about the negative attitude of the judiciary toward women and widespread corruption.	Worse: There are more reports of violence against women attributed to high levels of illiteracy combined with poverty and unemployment.	Unchanged: Traditional conservatism remains the key barrier to women's participation in politics and the peace process.
Kunduz	Worse: The rise in armed conflict and criminality continues. However, the views on ANP and ANA remain largely positive.	Worse: Because of the ongoing conflict, there are less employment opportunities, almost no investment, and fewer projects. Harassment of women in public spaces deters women from leaving their homes.	Worse Less access to education and health services because of deterioration in security. Women only go to clinics in cases of emergency.	Worse: The negative attitude of the judiciary toward women remains and allegations of corruption among the judiciary officials have increased.	Worse: Violence against women has increased. This is attributed to widespread poverty, unemployment, drug addiction, lack of awareness among men, and lack of legal recourse for women.	Worse: Women are not active in the formal peace process. The allegations of fraud and the subsequent irregularities that followed the second round of the elections have discouraged women from participating in politics.

	Overall Security	Access to Work and Public Life	Access to Services (Health & Education)	Access to Justice	Violence Against Women	Women and Current Affairs
Laghman	Better: There has been continued improvement in collaboration between ANSF, community elders, and governmental authorities to maintain order for about one year. People remain generally happy with ANP.	Better: DoH and DoE have increased their numbers of female personnel. Religious leaders and the community are generally more supportive of women working, especially in health and education sectors. Access to public life has improved.	Better: More access to education due to coming and agreement between AOGs and community leaders. UNESCO has initiated a number of new projects. Quality of health services remains poor, however.	Unchanged: The justice officials are viewed as more available than in the past. Corruption and unfair treatment of women by justice officials remains unchanged. There is widespread use of the customary justice system.	Better: Less violence against women due to higher levels of awareness and the improvement of general security situation. However, levels of violence against women remain high.	Better: Women are more interested in current affairs after the two rounds of elections. Participation in the peace remains limited.
Jalalabad	Worse: Heightened AOG activity persists with many women in fear of attacks. People are generally positive about ANP and ANA. Views on ALP are divided, but generally negative.	Worse: Fewer employment opportunities for women due to a lack of projects, deterioration in security, and the government's freeze on hiring. Access to public life more limited due to deterioration in security.	Unchanged: Access to education remains unchanged but in many districts girls' schools have been closed. Access to health remains unchanged and complaints about the service quality persist.	Unchanged: Access to justice is unchanged and still very limited. Fear of retaliation, unfair attitude of the judiciary toward women, and traditional conservatism are the key impeding factors.	Unchanged: Violence against women remains unchanged. The reports of women escaping home due to domestic violence persist.	Unchanged: The prolonged uncertainty following the elections has had a demoralizing effect on women's attitude towards politics. Participation in formal peace is limited.
Sorkhrod	Better: Fewer AOG activities due to better policing and collaboration between ANSF and the community. However, more crime is reported. People are generally satisfied with ANP and ANA.	Worse: Fewer job opportunities due to lack of investment, fewer projects, and hiring freeze by the government. Women's access to public life remains unchanged, though there are concerns about increased criminality.	Worse: Access to health and education remains unchanged in the center but has deteriorated in rural areas. There are complaints about poor quality of health services.	Unchanged: Access to justice is unchanged but remains limited. Women usually resort to customary justice.	Unchanged: There are no reports of increase or decrease in violence against women. However, violence against women is not an openly discussed topic.	Unchanged: As with Jalalabad, the prolonged uncertainty following the elections has had a demoralizing effect on women's attitude towards politics. Participation in formal peace is limited.

	Overall Security	Access to Work and Public Life	Access to Services (Health & Education)	Access to Justice	Violence Against Women	Women and Current Affairs
Parwan	Worse: Fewer AOG activities are reported but there is an increase in criminality. People are generally satisfied with ANP and ANA. ANSF has gained respect because of the way they have tackled the AOG.	Worse: The uncertainties relating to the forming of the Cabinet has contributed to a loss of confidence among investors, compounded by the government freeze on hiring. Access to public life remains unchanged.	Unchanged: Access to education and health remains unchanged despite security deterioration in some districts. Quality remains a point of concern.	Unchanged: Access to justice is unchanged but remains limited. There are claims that women are more aware about their rights now. The unfair attitude of the judiciary and allegations of corruption persist.	Worse: There is more violence against women due mainly to higher unemployment, widespread poverty, and drug addiction.	Unchanged: Women do not become involved in politics in unsafe districts. Participation in the peace process remains limited.
Samangan	Unchanged: Security conditions remain unchanged though there is much criminality and widespread weapon ownership. People are generally happy with the attitude of the police towards women.	Unchanged: Fewer employment opportunities for women. Women-centered projects are ending and not being extended. Access to public life remains unchanged.	Unchanged: Access to education unchanged. However, people generally more interested in girls getting an education. Access to health remains unchanged. Complaints about the quality persist.	Better: Awareness training programs have helped women gain more access to justice. There are complaints about corruption within the judiciary.	Better: Less violence against women because women are more aware and some religious leaders are supportive of address women's rights in their sermons.	Unchanged: Extensive participation in elections. Community is generally supportive of women participating in the peace process though women's participation remains low.

Recommendations

The recommendations for this report are based entirely on the key findings from the analysis of the monitoring data and insights from a critical review of the gender strategies and policies of major international donors and their Afghan counterparts.

Overall Security	Relevant Entities
1. Provide earmarked training programs, uniforms, and equipment for ALP as a means to integrate them and make them accountable to ANSF command structure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoI • UNDP/LOTFA • International Donors
2. Continue to provide trainings to the ANSF (ANP and ALP) on gender-sensitivity and engagement with civilians.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSOs • MoI • MoWA • UNDP/LOTFA • International Donors
3. Ensure monitoring and evaluation of provincial and local security forces by central authorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoI
4. Hold senior members of ANSF accountable for respecting gender equality by evaluating them for their ability to address cases of unfair treatment of women in the forces under their command.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSOs • MoI • MoJ • MoWA
5. Continue efforts to recruit more women for ANSF, increase female friendly amenities and facilities in ANP and ANSF more generally, and ensure identical processes for promotion are applied to female and male ANSF officers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoI • MoWA • UNDP/ LOTFA • International Donors
6. Efforts in support to the ANSF for sustained presence in districts following the resolution of armed conflict.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoI • MoD • International Donors
7. Concentrate specific efforts for logistical, strategic and tactical support to the ANSF in Kunduz province.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoI • MoD • International Donors
8. Conduct additional research and contextual/conflict analysis for lessons learned in Laghman to inform security management in other provinces such as Kunduz and Herat.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Donors • Research Organizations • UNAMA
9. Insure enhanced representation of women in leadership and decision-making position within ANSF at national and local level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Donors
10. Provide adequate compensation and support to women whose family members have died suffered severe injuries as a result of conflict-related violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Organizations

Access to Work and Public Life	Relevant Entities
11. Sustain development cooperation for income-generating projects for women at the community level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government of Afghanistan • International community
12. Earmark project funds for recruitment of local female staff by national implementing partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Community • INGOs and NGOs
13. Remove the freeze on recruitment in the civil service and ensure recruitment quotas for women are respected in civil service positions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government of Afghanistan
Access to Health and Education	Relevant Entities
14. Develop community monitoring mechanisms to ensure corruptive practices of health workers are reported and prosecuted; cases of ill-treatment of patients in health services need to be documented, prosecuted, and offenders brought to justice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoPH • MoI • MoJ • INGOs and NGOs • International Community
15. Increase staffing of health services at the local level by continuing to train and recruit professional medical staff, from doctors to nurses and midwives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoPH • INGOs and NGOs • International Community
16. Intensify efforts for provision of quality medicine in local health services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoPH • INGOs and NGOs • International Community
17. Continue training and mentoring of health personnel on gender sensitivity at all levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoPH • INGOs and NGOs • International Community
18. Increase the protection of girls' schools, particularly at higher grades.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoI • MoE
Violence Against Women	Relevant Entities
19. Sustain provision of awareness-raising on violence against women and women's rights for women and men; continue integrating awareness raising with vocational and literacy training programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSOs • IDLG • MoJ • MoWA • International community • INGOs and NGOs
20. Sustain training on the Family Law at the community level and include local decision makers, traditional justice providers, and male and female members of communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoJ • MoWA • MoE • International community • INGOs and NGOs

Access to Justice

21. Continue training and mentoring of ANP personnel in dealing fairly and equitably with domestic violence.
22. Continue efforts to increase women's access to formal justice by increasing the availability of courts at the district level; sustain providing women-centered legal awareness programs for women and men; make special provisions in formal justice system to fast track women's legal cases.
23. Ensure that prosecution resulting in conviction in reported cases of violence against women is followed by correctional measures for the offenders.
24. Ensure effective prosecution of cases of violence against women in accordance with national and international legal frameworks, including through the adoption of measures to combat impunity when State actors perpetrate violence against women.

Relevant Entities

- MoI
- MoWA
- UNDP/LOTFA
- International community
- INGOs and NGOs

- MoJ
- MoWA
- International community
- INGOs and NGOs

- MoI
- MoJ
- MoWA

- MoJ
- International community
- INGOs and NGOs
- MoWA
- UNAMA

Women and Current Affairs

25. Strengthen active engagement of women in national and provincial High Peace Councils.
26. Increase involvement of CSOs and women's rights organizations in the peace process, including engagement with the High Peace Council at national and provincial levels.
27. Increase advocacy and dialogue on including women in the peace process.
28. Raise awareness among female and male citizens about the High Peace Council, the peace process, and the rights of the citizens to participate in the peace process.
29. Sustain existing position quotas for women, particularly in senior decision making positions, across all sectors (health, education, judiciary, sub-national governance structures, and Parliament).
30. Strengthen measures for the security and protection of high ranking female government officials

Relevant Entities

- Government of Afghanistan
- HPC
- International Community

- Government of Afghanistan
- International community
- INGOs and NGOs

- Government of Afghanistan
- International community
- NGOs
- Government of Afghanistan
- International community
- INGOs and NGOs

- Government of Afghanistan

- MoI

Further Research

31. **Gender relations and regional diversity:** Establish, through in-depth assessment, why the outcome of the security transition in some provinces has been more positive than other provinces, why some provinces have experienced little or no change after the transition, and whether there are lessons to be learned from these cases for critical provinces such as Kunduz.

32. **Benchmarking and baseline information:** Prior to any and all interventions on security and service provision in the transitioned provinces, government and international donor programming must be based on situation analyses and baseline assessments with a central focus on gender relations and how the proposed interventions affect, negatively and positively, pre-existing gender relations in the target communities.

Relevant Entities

- Government of Afghanistan
 - International Community
 - Research Institutes and Organizations
-
- Government of Afghanistan
 - International Community
 - Research Institutes and Organizations

Appendix 1: Interviewee and Focus Group Discussion Timetable

Province	District	FGD	Interviews	Dates of Visit
Badakhshan	Fiazabad	2 Female and 2 Male	14 Female, 6 Male	28/10/2014 to 02/11/2014
Balkh	Balkh City	2 Female, 2 Male	14 Female, 5 Male	30/11/2014 to 04/12/2014
	Dawalatabad	2 Female, 2 Male	11 Female, 5 Male	
Bamyan	Bamyan	2 Female, 2 Male	14 Female, 7 Male	09/10/2014 to 13/10/2014
Helmand	Lashkargah	2 Female, 2 Male	14 Female, 5 Male	29/11/2014 to 09/12/2014
Herat	Herat City and Injil District	2 Female, 2 Male	17 Female, 2 Male	10/10/2014 to 16/10/2014
Kabul	Paghman	2 Female, 2 Male	5 Female, 6 Male	17/12/2014 to 18/12/2014
Kunduz	Kunduz	2 Female, 2 Male	15 Female, 4 Male	22/10/2014 to 28/10/2014
Laghman	Mehtarlam	2 Female, 2 Male	8 Female, 6 Male	19/11/2014 to 20/11/2014
Nangarhar	Jalalabad	2 Female, 2 Male	18 Female, 4 Male	10/11/2014 to 20/11/2014
	Sorkhroud	2 Female, 2 Male	7 Female, 5 Male	
Parwan	Charekar	2 Female and 2 Male	14 Female, 4 Male	22/12/2014 to 24/12/2014
Kandahar	Kandahar	2 Female and 2 Male	15 Female, 4 Male	27/12/2014 to 03/01/2015
Samangan	Aiybak	2 Female and 2 Male	12 Female, 5 Male	04/12/2014 to 09/12/2014
12 Provinces	14 Districts	28 Female, 28 Male	178 Female, 68 Male	

Appendix 2: Key Informant and Focus Group Codes

Badakhshan

No	Code	Affiliation
1	KI-F-NGO-Bad-1	NGO Member
2	KI-M-NGO-Bad-2	Women's Rights NGO Member
3	KI-F-GHS-Bad-1	High School Principal
4	KI-F-GHS-Bad-2	High School Principal
5	KI-F-GHS-Bad-3	High School Principal
6	KI-F-BW-Bad-1	Businesswoman
7	KI-F-BW-Bad-2	Businesswoman
8	KI-F-VTC-Bad-1	VTC Teacher
9	KI-F-VTC-Bad-2	VTC Teacher
10	KI-F-VTC-Bad-3	VTC Teacher
11	KI-F-PW-Bad-1	Provincial Council Member
12	KI-F-PW-Bad-2	Prominent Woman
13	FGD-WW-Bad	Working Women
14	FGD-LIT-Bad	Literacy Program Students
15	FGD-HW-Bad	Housewives
16	FGD-CE-Bad	Community Elders and Religious Leaders
17	KI-F-Gov-Bad-1	Government Employee
18	KI-F-Gov-Bad-2	Government Employee
19	KI-F-Gov-Bad-3	Government Employee
20	KI-M-ANP-Bad	ANP Employee
21	KI-M-FRU-Bad	Family Response Unit
22	KI-M-MED-Bad-1	Health Clinic Employee
23	KI-M-MED-Bad-2	Health Clinic Employee
24	KI-M-MED-Bad-3	Health Clinic Employee

Balkh City

No	Code	Affiliation
1	KI-F-NGO-Maz-1	NGO Member
2	KI-F-NGO-Maz-2	Women's Rights NGO Member
3	KI-F-NGO-Maz-3	NGO Member
4	KI-F-PW-Maz-1	Prominent Woman
5	KI-F-Gov-Maz-1	Government Employee
6	KI-F-VTC-Maz-1	VTC Manager
7	KI-F-VTC-Maz-2	VTC Manager
8	KI-F-BW-Maz-1	Businesswoman
9	KI-F-PW-Bal-2	Prominent Woman
10	KI-F-PW-Bal-3	Prominent Woman
11	KI-M-GHS-Bal-1	High School Principal
12	KI-F-GHS-Bal-2	High School Principal
13	KI-F-GHS-Bal-3	High School Principal
14	KI-M-ANP-Bal	ANP Employee
15	KI-M-FRU-Bal	Family Response Unit
16	KI-M-MED-Bal-1	Health Clinic Employee
17	KI-F-Gov-Bal-2	Government Employee
18	KI-F-Gov-Bal-3	Government Employee
19	KI-M-MED-Bal-2	Health Clinic Employee
20	FGD-CE-Bal	Community Elders and Religious Leaders
21	FGD-WW-Bal	Working Women
22	FGD-HW-Bal	Housewives
23	FGD-LIT-Bal	Literacy Program Students

Bamyan

No	Code	Affiliation
1	KI-F-NGO-Bam-1	Women's Rights NGO Member
2	KI-F-NGO-Bam-2	NGO Member
3	KI-F-NGO-Bam-3	NGO Member
4	KI-F-Gov-Bam-1	Department of Education Employee
5	KI-F-Gov-Bam-2	Department of Women's Affairs Employee
6	KI-F-Gov-Bam-3	Department of Education Employee
7	KI-F-ANP-Bam	ANP Employee
8	KI-F-FRU-Bam	Family Response Unit
9	KI-M-GHS-Bam-1	High School Principal
10	KI-M-GHS-Bam-2	High School Principal
11	KI-F-GHS-Bam-3	High School Principal
12	KI-F-BW-Bam-1	Businesswoman
13	KI-F-BW-Bam-2	Businesswoman
14	KI-F-PW-Bam-1	Prominent Woman
15	KI-F-PW-Bam-2	Prominent Woman
16	KI-M-MED-Bam-1	Health Clinic Employee
17	KI-M-MED-Bam-2	Health Clinic Employee
18	KI-M-MED-Bam-3	Health Clinic Employee
19	KI-F-VTC-Bam-1	VTC Teacher
20	KI-F-VTC-Bam-2	VTC Teacher
21	KI-M-VTC-Bam-3	VTC Teacher
22	FGD-CE-Bam	Community Elders and Religious Leaders
23	FGD-HW-Bam	Housewives
24	FGD-WW-Bam	Working Woman
25	FGD-LIT-Bam	Literacy Program Student

Dawlatabad

No	Code	Affiliation
1	KI-F-NGO-Maz-1	Women's Rights NGO Member
2	KI-F-NGO-Maz-2	Women's Rights NGO Member
3	KI-F-NGO-Maz-3	Women's Rights NGO Member
4	KI-F-PW-Maz-1	Prominent Woman
5	KI-F-PW-Maz-2	Provincial Council Member
6	KI-F-Gov-Maz-1	Government Employee
7	KI-F-Gov-Maz-2	Government Employee
8	KI-F-Gov-Maz-3	Government Employee
9	KI-F-BW-Maz-1	Businesswoman
10	KI-F-BW-Maz-2	Businesswoman
11	KI-M-GHS-Daw-1	High School Principal
12	KI-F-PW-Daw-3	Prominent Woman
13	KI-M-FRU-Maz	Family Response Unit
14	KI-M-ANP-Daw	ANP Officer
15	KI-M-MED-Daw-1	Health Clinic Employee
16	KI-M-GHS-Daw-2	High School Principal
17	FGD-CE-Daw	Community Elders and Religious Leaders
18	FGD-HW-Daw	Housewives
19	FGD-WW-Daw	Working Women
20	FGD-LIT-Daw	Literacy Program Students

Helmand

No	Code	Affiliation
1	KI-F-NGO-Hel-1	Women's Rights NGO Member
2	KI-F-GH-Hel-1	High School Principal
3	KI-F-GH-Hel-2	High School Principal
4	KI-F-GH-Hel-3	High School Principal
5	KI-F-PW-Hel-1	Prominent Woman
6	KI-F-PW-Hel-2	Provincial Council Member
7	KI-F-Gov-Hel-1	Government Employee
8	KI-F-Gov-Hel-2	Department of Women's Affairs Employee
9	KI-F-Gov-Hel-3	Department of Women's Affairs Employee
10	KI-M-MED-Hel-1	Health Clinic Employee
11	KI-M-MED-Hel-2	Health Clinic Employee
12	KI-M-MED-Hel-3	Health Clinic Employee
13	KI-M-FRU-Hel	Family Response Unit
14	KI-M-ANP-Hel	ANP Employee
15	KI-F-VTC-Hel-1	VTC Teacher
16	KI-F-VTC-Hel-2	VTC Teacher
17	KI-F-VTC-Hel-3	VTC Teacher
18	KI-F-BW-Hel-1	Businesswoman
19	KI-F-BW-Hel-2	Businesswoman
20	FGD-CE-Hel	Community Elders and Religious Leaders
21	FGD-WW-Hel	Working Women
22	FGD-HW-Hel	Housewives
23	FGD-LIT-Hel	Literacy Program Student

Herat

No	Code	Affiliation
1	KI-F-FRU-Her	Family Response Unit
2	KI-M-ANP-Her	ANP Employee
3	KI-F-PW-Her-1	Provincial Council Member
4	KI-F-PW-Her-2	Prominent Women
5	KI-F-PW-Her-3	Prominent Women
6	KI-F-Gov-Her-1	Department of Women's Affairs Employee
7	KI-F-Gov-Her-2	Department of Women's Affairs Employee
8	KI-F-BW-Her-1	Businesswoman
9	KI-F-BW-Her-2	Businesswoman
10	KI-F-NGO-Her-1	NGO Member
11	KI-F-NGO-Her-2	NGO Member
12	KI-F-NGO-Her-3	Women's Rights NGO Member
13	KI-F-MED-Her-1	Health Clinic Employee
14	KI-M-MED-Her-2	Health Clinic Employee
15	KI-F-GHS-Her-1	High School Principal
16	KI-F-GHS-Her-2	High School Principal
17	KI-F-GHS-Her-3	High School Principal
18	KI-F-VTC-Her-1	VTC Teacher
19	KI-F-VTC-Her-2	VTC Teacher
20	FGD-CE-Her	Community Elders and Religious Leaders
21	FGD-HW-Her	Housewives
22	FGD-WW-Her	Working Women
23	FGD-LIT-Her	Literacy Program Student

Jalalabad

No	Code	Affiliation
1	KI-F-PW-Jal-1	Provincial Council Member
2	KI-F-PW-Jal-2	Provincial Council Member
3	KI-F-PW-Jal-3	Provincial Council Member
4	KI-F-PW-Jal-4	Provincial Council Member
5	KI-F-BW-Jal-1	Businesswoman
6	KI-F-NGO-Jal-1	NGO Member
7	KI-F-NGO-Jal-2	NGO Member
8	KI-F-NGO-Jal-3	NGO Member
9	KI-F-NGO-Jal-4	Women's Rights NGO Member
10	KI-F-NGO-Jal-5	NGO Member
11	KI-F-VTC-Jal-1	VTC Teacher
12	KI-F-VTC-Jal-2	VTC Teacher
13	KI-F-Gov-Jal-1	Department of Women's Affairs Employee
14	KI-F-Gov-Jal-2	Department of Women's Affairs Employee
15	KI-F-Gov-Jal-3	Department of Women's Affairs Employee
16	KI-M-FRU-Jal	Family Response Unit
17	KI-M-ANP-Jal	ANP Employee
18	KI-M-MED-Jal-1	Health Clinic Employee
19	KI-M-MED-Jal-2	Health Clinic Employee
20	KI-F-GHS-Jal-1	High School Principal
21	KI-F-GHS-Jal-2	High School Principal
22	KI-F-GHS-Jal-3	High School Principal
23	FGD-WW-Jal	Working Women
24	FGD-HW-Jal	Housewives
25	FGD-CE-Jal	Community Elders and Religious Leaders
26	FGD-LIT-Jal	Literacy Program Student

Sorkhrod

No	Code	Affiliation
1	KI-F-PW-Sur-1	Prominent Women
2	KI-F-BW-Sur-2	Businesswoman
3	KI-F-VTC-Sur-1	VTC Teacher
4	KI-F-VTC-Sur-2	VTC Teacher
5	KI-F-BW-Sur-1	Businesswoman
6	KI-F-GHS-Sur-1	High School Principal
7	KI-M-GHS-Sur-2	High School Principal
8	KI-F-GHS-Sur-3	High School Principal
9	KI-M-ANP-Sur	ANP Employee
10	KI-M-FRU-Sur	Family Response Unit
11	KI-M-MED-Sur-1	Health Clinic Employee
12	KI-M-MED-Sur-2	Health Clinic Employee
13	FGD-LIT-Sur	Literacy Program Student
14	FGD-WW-Sur	Working Women
15	FGD-HW-Sur	Housewives
16	FGD-CE-Sur	Community Elders and Religious Leaders

Kandahar

No	Code	Affiliation
1	KI-F-NGO-Kan-1	NGO Member
2	KI-F-NGO-Kan-2	NGO Member
3	KI-F-NGO-Kan-3	NGO Member
4	KI-F-PW-Kan-1	Prominent Women
5	KI-F-PW-Kan-2	Prominent Women
6	KI-F-BW-Kan-1	Businesswoman
7	KI-F-BW-Kan-2	Businesswoman
8	KI-F-VTC-Kan-1	VTC Teacher
9	KI-F-VTC-Kan-2	VTC Teacher
10	KI-M-VTC-Kan-3	VTC Teacher
11	KI-M-MED-Kan-1	Health Clinic Employee
12	KI-M-MED-Kan-2	Health Clinic Employee
13	KI-F-MED-Kan-3	Health Clinic Employee
14	KI-F-Gov-Kan-1	Department of Women's Affairs Employee
15	KI-F-Gov-Kan-2	Teacher
16	KI-M-ANP-Kan	ANP Employee
17	KI-F-FRU-Kan	Family Response Unit
18	KI-F-GHS-Kan-1	High School Principal
19	KI-F-GHS-Kan-2	High School Principal
20	KI-LIT-Kan	Literacy Program Student
21	FGD-WW-Kan	Housewives
22	FGD-HW-Kan	Housewives
23	FGD-CE-Kan	Community Elders and Religious Leaders

Kunduz

No	Code	Affiliation
1	KI-M-ANP-Kun	ANP Employee
2	KI-M-FRU-Kun	Family Response Unit
3	KI-F-PW-Kun-1	Prominent Women
4	KI-F-PW-Kun-2	Provincial Council Member
5	KI-F-PW-Kun-3	Provincial Council Member
6	KI-F-Gov-Kun-1	Department of Women's Affairs Employee
7	KI-F-Gov-Kun-2	Department of Women's Affairs Employee
8	KI-F-Gov-Kun-3	Department of Women's Affairs Employee
9	KI-F-BW-Kun-1	Businesswoman
10	KI-F-BW-Kun-2	Businesswoman
11	KI-F-NGO-Kun-1	NGO Member
12	KI-F-NGO-Kun-2	NGO Member
13	KI-M-MED-Kun-1	Health Clinic Employee
14	KI-M-MED-Kun-2	Health Clinic Employee
15	KI-F-GHS-Kun-1	High School Principal
16	KI-F-GHS-Kun-2	High School Principal
17	KI-F-GHS-Kun-3	High School Principal
18	KI-F-VTC-Kun-1	VTC Teacher
19	KI-F-VTC-Kun-2	VTC Teacher
20	FGD-WW-Kun	Working Women
21	FGD-HW-Kun	Housewives
22	FGD-CE-Kun	Community Elders and Religious Leaders
23	FGD-LIT-Kun	Literacy Program Student

Laghman

No	Code	Affiliation
1	KI-F-PW-Lag-1	Prominent Women
2	KI-M-NGO-Lag-1	NGO Member
3	KI-F-VTC-Lag-1	VTC Teacher
4	KI-F-VTC-Lag-2	VTC Teacher
5	KI-F-Gov-Lag-1	Department of Education Employee
6	KI-F-Gov-Lag-2	Department of Education Employee
7	KI-F-Gov-Lag-3	Department of Education Employee
8	KI-M-MED-Lag-1	Health Clinic Employee
9	KI-M-MED-Lag-2	Health Clinic Employee
10	KI-M-FRU-Lag	Family Response Unit Employee
11	KI-M-ANP-Lag	ANP Employee
12	KI-M-GHS-Lag-1	High School Principal
13	KI-F-GHS-Lag-2	High School Principal
14	KI-F-GHS-Lag-3	High School Principal
15	FGD-WW-Lag	Working Women
16	FGD-HW-Lag	Housewives
17	FGD-CE-Lag	Community Elders and Religious Leaders
18	FGD-LIT-Lag	Literacy Program Student

Paghman

No	Code	Affiliation
1	KI-M-ANP-Pag	ANP Employee
2	KI-M-FRU-Pag	Family Response Unit Employee
3	KI-M-MED-Pag-1	Health Clinic Employee
4	KI-M-MED-Pag-2	Health Clinic Director
5	KI-F-NGO-Pag-1	Women's Rights NGO Member
6	KI-F-BW-Pag-1	Businesswoman
7	KI-F-BW-Pag-2	Businesswoman
8	KI-M-GHS-Pag-1	High School Principal
9	KI-F-GHS-Pag-2	High School Principal
10	KI-M-GHS-Pag-3	High School Principal
11	KI-F-PW-Pag-1	Prominent Women
12	FGD-CE-Pag	Community Elders and Religious Leaders
13	FGD-HW-Pag	Housewives
14	FGD-WW-Pag	Working Women
15	FGD-LIT-Pag	Literacy Program Students

Parwan

No	Code	Affiliation
1	KI-F-Gov-Par-1	Government Employee
2	KI-M-ANP-Par	ANP Employee
3	KI-M-NGO-Par-1	NGO member
4	KI-F-NGO-Par-2	Legal employee of AWN office
5	KI-F-Gov-Par-2	Department of Women's Affairs Employee
6	KI-F-MED-Par-1	Doctor
7	KI-M-MED-Par-2	Health Clinic Director
8	KI-M-MED-Par-3	Health Clinic Director
9	KI-F-Gov-Par-3	Department of Labor and Social Affairs Employee
10	KI-F-VTC-Par-1	VTC Teacher
11	KI-F-VTC-Par-2	VTC Teacher
12	KI-F-VTC-Par-3	VTC Teacher
13	KI-F-GHS-Par-1	High School Principal
14	KI-F-GHS-Par-2	High School Principal
15	KI-F-GHS-Par-3	High School Principal
16	KI-F-PW-Par-1	Member of Provincial Council
17	KI-F-PW-Par-2	Member of Provincial Council
18	KI-F-PW-Par-3	Member of Provincial Council
10	FGD-WW-Par	Working Women
20	FGD-HW-Par	Housewives
21	FGD-CE-Par	Community Elders and Religious Leaders
22	FGD-LIT-Par	Literacy Course Students

Samangan

No	Code	Affiliation
1	KI-F-PW-Sam-1	Prominent Woman
2	KI-F-PW-Sam-2	Prominent Woman
3	KI-F-NGO-Sam-1	NGO member
4	KI-F-NGO-Sam-2	NGO member
5	KI-F-VTC-Sam-1	VTC Principal
6	KI-M-VTC-Sam-1	VTCTeacher
7	KI-F-GHS-Sam-1	High School Principle
8	KI-F-GHS-Sam-2	High School Principle
9	KI-F-GHS-Sam-3	High School Principle
10	KI-F-BW-Sam-1	Businesswoman
11	KI-F-Gov-Sam-1	Department of EducationEmployee
12	KI-F-Gov-Sam-2	Department of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock Employee
13	KI-F-Gov-Sam-3	Education Department Employee
14	KI-M-MED-Sam-1	Health Clinic Employee
15	KI-M-MED-Sam-2	Health Clinic Director
16	KI-M-FRU-Sam	Family Response Unit
17	KI-M-ANP-Sam	Member of ANSF
18	FGD-CE-Sam	Community Elders and Religious Leaders
19	FGD-HW-Sam	Housewives
20	FGD-WW-Sam	Working Women
21	FGD-LIT-Sam	Literacy Program Students