Examples of Collaborative Relations between
Civil Society Organizations and Government Institutions in Afghanistan

Afghan Women’s Educational Center (AWEC)
Kabul, Afghanistan
November 2007

For more information about the AKDN Civil Society Programme, please see http://www.akdn.org/civil_society.asp
Examples of Collaborative Relations between Civil Society Organizations and Government Institutions in Afghanistan

Donor: Aga Khan Development Network
Implementer: Afghan Women’s Educational Center (AWEC)
Writer: Sanjar Sohail
Cover Page Design: By Sayeed Mohsen Hussainnee
Designer: Nasir Hotaki
Print Numbers: 500
First Print: Summer 1386 Khurshidee, Kabul- Afghanistan
Translator:

Copyright
Reserved for Afghan Women’s Educational Center (AWEC)

Disclaimer
Views expressed in this publication are those of the authors and should not be interpreted as reflecting the views of the Aga Khan Development Network who have supported this production as a contribution to the debate about relations between CSOs and Government in Afghanistan
## Contents

**Preface** 1  

**Part 1: Project Overview**  
- Project Overview 2  
- Research Difficulties 3  
- Research Methodology 5  

**Part 2: Civil Society in Afghanistan**  
- Civil Society in Afghanistan 8  
- General Perceptions of Civil Society Organisations in Afghanistan 9  
- Public Satisfaction Level with Civil Society Organisations 10  
- Government Institution’s view of Civil Society Organisations 12  

**Part 3: Positive Cases of Collaboration**  
1. Micro-Finance: the role of MADRAC (Micro-Finance Agency for Development and Rehabilitation of Afghan Communities) and ARMP (Aga Khan Rural Micro-Finance Programme) 16  
2. Transparency in Elections: the role of FEFA (Free and Fair Elections Foundation of Afghanistan) 19  
3. Educational Rehabilitation of Youth: AWEC’s APEP (Afghanistan Primary Education Programme) 23  
5. Peace, Security and Reconciliation: the work of the Tribal Liaison Office (TLO) 27  
6. Saving Ancient Monuments: the work of Telaya Daran Association 31  
7. Information for Elders and Religious Leaders: the Cooperation Centre for Afghanistan (CCA) 33  
9. Shelter for Returned Migrants: the work of Development and Humanitarian Services for Afghanistan (DHSA) 38  
11. Abolishing Violence against Women: the work of the Noor Educational Centre (NEC) 43  
12. Voluntary Peace Committees: the work of the Afghan Women’s Skill Development Center (AWSDC) 47
Part 4: Problems, Solutions and Proposals

Problems, Solutions and proposals  
Training Government Employees  
Training and Capacity Building of Civil Society Organisations  
Coordination with Government Institutions and People in Implementing Projects

Appendices

Appendix 1: Questionnaires  
a. For CSO employees  
b. For Government employees  
c. For Focus group discussions

Appendix 2: Participating CSOs and NGOs

Appendix 3: Participating Government Institutions

Appendix 4: Provinces visited
Preface

To a greater or lesser extent across many countries of the world the relationship between government and the civil society sector is problematic – meaning that there are attitudinal problems which get in the way of a smooth and mutually supportive working relationship. Sometimes this is reflected in laws and regulations which do not produce a supportive environment for the civil society organizations; sometimes it is more a question of attitudes and prejudices that prevent valuable collaboration.

In the opinion of the Aga Khan Development Network all three sectors of society – government, business and civil society – have important roles to play in nation building, and particularly in development efforts to improve the quality of life of the least fortunate. When they are able to work well together they mutually reinforce each others work, and can synergistically do what none of them can do together. Each of them has comparative advantages over the others.

The quality of the relations sometimes change over time – becoming better or worse due to a variety of factors – politics, individuals, development partners’ pressure, perhaps experience of particular development problems. Factors like these have affected government – CSO relations in Afghanistan. This is also one of the topics which was raised and extensively discussed at the recent Enabling Environment Conference in Kabul attended by His Highness the Aga Khan.

It is the opinion of the Aga Khan Development Network that, in spite of the doubts expressed by government and CSOs about each other, there actually exists a rich body of experience of good collaboration between government and CSOs, but that this has not been documented, recognized, built on and absorbed into development policies.

The Aga Khan Development Network is starting a new programme to help build the competence of the civil society sector in Central Asia, and would like to work on the issue of Government-CSO relations in Afghanistan: in particular it would like to work with Afghan CSOs and government to improve the situation.

Over time the programme would like to work with CSOs in Afghanistan to try and identify examples of good and mutually rewarding collaboration between CSOs and government, document these, demonstrate to a national workshop the advantages that come from such collaboration and seek to introduce policy changes in government whereby CSOs are more involved in district, regional and national planning and implementation. The first stage in this process is the book you have before you which illustrates good and mutually rewarding collaboration.

Richard Holloway,  
Civil Society Programme Director (richard.holloway@akdn.org),  
AKDN Geneva
Part One: Project Overview

Project Overview
There are many questions about the relationships between Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Government Institutions in Afghanistan that this report is trying to answer. What is a Civil Society Organization (CSO) and why is it created? What is the difference between non-profit organizations and private businesses that are working for profit? How is the work of government supported by CSOs? What structures has the government created to cooperate with CSOs in certain programmes? How many CSOs have applied for programme support from the government? What are the experiences of CSOs in working with the government institutions and vice versa? Has governmental bureaucracy prevented the CSOs from executing their programs or not? What is the relationship between governmental authorities and CSOs when they meet during work? How focused are the CSOs in executing their projects?

The information compiled in this report is the result of AWEC staffs’ visits to twelve provinces. There are many other questions that were answered during the provincial visits and focus group discussions. This report is not trying to give complete answers to all the questions about the relationships between CSOs and government institutions in Afghanistan because it is not possible to generalize the answers for the whole of Afghanistan or to say that this report has supplied all the answers to all questions about CSOs’ support to the government and vice versa. What this report can shed light on is the general relationships existing between CSOs and government institutions.

Because many participants did not know about the purpose and structure of CSOs or the activities of civil and governmental institutions, the primary difficulty with compiling this report relates to the definition of CSOs in the view of the research participants. This is one of the most common questions that has not yet been answered clearly in Afghanistan.

In Afghanistan it is commonly believed that it is the duty of CSOs to support government in whatever work it does. This is not, however the actual situation. CSOs are independent of the government and this independence should be supported by the government.

The creation of a strong civil society is testament to the presence of a democratic government and it should be supported by the government in the interests of deepening democracy and the values of democracy. For the purposes of this research AWEC defines Civil Society Organizations as “organizations that are independent of the government with a democratic structure and that work for the benefit of the people”.

This research has tried to introduce to the reader some positive cases of governmental and civil society cooperation to clarify the problems of the relationships between CSOs and Government Institutions and to understand the reasons for the problems. This report also tries to find ways of solving the problems through discussions with the people in these different entities.

Every effort has been made to ensure that the findings of this report are unbiased and that the report is written according to the answers and the beliefs of the participants. The report does not reflect the belief of either the Aga Khan Foundation, who funded the
AWEC is thankful to all the Civil Society Organizations and Governmental Institutions who helped us in the provinces, agreed to be interviewed and participated in focus group discussions. AWEC is thankful to co-workers at Afghan Women’s Educational Center, Mr. Qaseem Akhgar and Ms. Horya Mosadiq. They supported AWEC in strengthening the questionnaire with their valuable advice. Also AWEC is thankful to the former Director of Afghan Women’s Educational Center Ms. Najeea Hanifi. She oversaw the project and shared valuable advice for the improvement of the project.

Research Difficulties

One of main difficulties in this research was the lack of proper understanding about Civil Society Organizations by many people who were answering the questionnaire. Many participants thought that Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) are the same thing and thus all their answers were based on this belief. AWEC researchers tried to explain to participants that NGOs were only one part of civil society, but it was difficult for some of the interviewees to believe this1.

Perhaps the reason for this disbelief is the lack of a wide variety of activities by CSOs in Afghanistan. In many regions of Afghanistan there is still no knowledge of the possibility of creating an organization to meet the needs of a group or a grouping that can bring together scattered voices to work for one aim. Also due to the lack of knowledge about CSOs and their activities, participants considered the activities of NGOs as the work of CSOs, and only gave examples of their experience with NGOs’ activities.

Another phenomenon faced by the research team was that local communities kept referring to their local councils (or shura) as “civil society”. These councils or groups have no formal structure or system of governance, but rather the councils have tribal structures that followed the will of a few tribal elders.

For example: in Paktia province people kept referring to their local shura as a CSO. The assembly in Paktia was created to solve local disputes; but the problem with this shura was that the decisions were made according to the beliefs of a few elders of the assembly, and not according to popular opinion or taking into consideration the needs of the various minorities. This problem illustrates that while small local groups may make decisions according to local rules and tradition, it is difficult to call these groups Civil Society Organizations because they do not fit the definition provided earlier. AWEC research, however, shows some common points between these organizations and CSOs.

In addition some people in Afghanistan consider the modern development agencies and the traditional organisations of civil society as the same and argue that because Afghanistan has had civil society organizations before there do not need to be any new models for civil society. Due to this belief and to the prevalence of traditional interests, some people do not want new models of civil society organisations.

1 NGOs are the formal, registered and often foreign funded non-government, non-profit entities working in development. They are part of the larger category of CSOs (Civil Society Organizations) which can also include a wide range of other non-government and non-profit organizations like village organizations, youth groups, womens groups, and various kinds of interest groups.
Another difficulty of this research was that some of the government institutions were not interested to participate in the discussions held by AWEC researchers in the provinces. This was due to their belief that the CSOs are the responsibility of the government institutions because such institutions issue a license to the CSO for their activities. Some of the government institutions’ representatives thought that their participation in the project discussions might decrease the dignity of the government institutions.

In some provinces, governmental employees invited to the discussions said that they were too busy to attend. Others promised to participate, but did not show up at the discussions and did not give a reason for nonparticipation. In some provinces, when AWEC researchers visited the governmental institutions they could find no staff, particularly in the afternoons. Many government officials have two jobs.

In some other provinces, however, due to AWEC’s preparation activities, the governmental institutions participated in the discussions and provided AWEC researchers with assistance. Usually this was because in certain provinces AWEC selected one CSO as the base and then, through that organization, AWEC researchers gained access to government institutions and other organizations. If this base organization was on good terms with the government, the AWEC research team would also be welcomed by the government officials; but, if the base organization was not on good terms, then the AWEC researchers met with some resistance.

Another difficulty AWEC researchers faced was the inexperience of CSOs and government institutions in those areas where government institutions had only recently been formed. For example in Panjshir province we identified two assemblies to answer the questionnaire and participate in the focus group discussions. The government institutions are newly founded in this province and the assemblies do not have extensive knowledge about government institutions.

Also, according to the methods of gathering information for this report AWEC researchers invited two to four people from each CSO to answer the questionnaire. In some cases there were very small numbers of people working in the relevant posts who could participate in the research and we could not get the desired numbers of participants. Thus, we had to invite additional organizations to participate in order to have enough respondents.

In addition to these issues, many government institutions in Panjshir did not have any experience working with CSOs and NGOs. Their understanding of CSOs came from either their experience in other provinces or from what they could gather from their imagination. Neither was based on practical experience in the province.

Another problem AWEC researchers faced was that people did not believe that this research would have an affect on their lives. Due to wars and insecurity, people in Afghanistan want every problem to have quick results and do not seem to understand that participation in research may affect their daily life or might help to find solutions to their problems.

The research team explained that they could not predict the results of this research. In reply, people said that they have seen a lot of this type of work and that it was usually not effective. People said that many times the NGOs, media and government representatives
have asked questions about their problems and have held assemblies and meetings, but, the people have not seen any result from this work. During focus group discussions and individual interviews, the feeling of uselessness was never far from the mind of the respondents. They kept on questioning what good would this whole process hold for them?

**Research Methodology**

Selection Criterion for Civil Society Organizations

A long list of Afghan Civil Society Organizations was generated with the help of Afghanistan Civil Society Association and the I-PACS project of AWEC. Out of this list of 500 CSOs, 50 were selected to be included in this research based on their wide range of activities. In addition to the selection of large organizations, AWEC researchers also selected newly created organizations. The aim of selecting different organizations was also to collect information which could assist in understanding the area of CSOs’ activities, the methods of their activities, and the relationship between them and the government institutions.

Questionnaire Preparation and Focus Group Discussions in the Provinces

In the beginning of the project, AWEC staff determined the aims of this research and designed questionnaires based on achieving these aims. Due to the different types of people that needed to be interviewed, three questionnaires were created. These were to:

- discover the problems, challenges and achievements of CSOs
- record the level of contacts between people, CSOs and government institutions
- determine the level of coordination between people, governmental institutions, and Civil Society Organizations

Two questionnaires were created for individual interviews - one with civil society employees and one with government employees; and the third questionnaire was created to facilitate a focus group discussion.

Individual questionnaires were created to gather statistical information and the third questionnaire was used to gather qualitative information regarding people’s experience with CSOs. AWEC researchers only visited provinces after they had received a positive answer from a CSO to participate in the research. The individual questionnaires were administered to 2-4 employees of the CSO, who were referred to us by the organization itself. Also AWEC selected three organizations in each province and asked each one to send three employees to answer the questionnaire. Selection was done according to the CSO employees’ position and work experience.

After completing the individual questionnaire, AWEC conducted the focus group discussions. Most often AWEC researchers tried to not to ask those who had participated in individual interviews to participate in the focus group discussions in order to gain varied information.

In focus group discussions we invited three employees from each CSO, three government institution employees, two people who were in the target group of the CSO’s projects and two people from the community - like members of the provincial assembly, preachers, school teachers and intellectuals. In some cases, not all categories of people invited to the
focus group discussion actually attended, though AWEC made every effort to encourage participation.

To gather the different views of participants in focus group discussions, AWEC researchers used tape recordings and took written notes. The researchers facilitated the discussions in order to gain good quality information from the participants. In most provinces two focus group discussions were held. However, in some provinces due to the lack of CSOs and security matters only one focus group discussion was held.

Once AWEC researchers identified any positive case of CSO and government institution cooperation then the researchers would collect in-depth information regarding both the CSO and the government institution. Detailed interviews were be held with employees of both entities after which the information was sent to the Kabul AWEC office for further analysis.

Visiting the Provinces
Visits to the different provinces were arranged depending on their geographical proximity to each other. This made it easy for AWEC researchers to visit the provinces in the north as all of them are situated along the same road. For the rest of the provinces AWEC researchers had to make several separate trips as location and logistics did not allow coverage of more than one province per trip.

Collection of Research Materials
After the AWEC research team returned to Kabul, each researcher submitted reports to the project manager. All questionnaires and records of the focus group discussions were added to the AWEC Research Database and filed. Meanwhile, the information collected was analyzed and sorted according to subject so it could be used appropriately while writing the research report.

Project Participants
During this research, a total of 316 people were interviewed including CSOs’ staff, governmental institutions’ staff, community and religious elders, beneficiaries of various projects and leading personalities of the various provincial areas. Of the 316 people, 162 people were interviewed individually. Out of this number 66 were government officials and 96 were CSOs’ staff. Among the 66 government officials interviewed 17 were female and 49 were male. Among the 96 employees of CSOs and Non-governmental Organizations who answered the individual questionnaires, 32 were females and 64 were males. The remaining 154 people belonged to the other categories mentioned above; out of which 37 were female and 117 were males.

Among the total of CSOs employees that were interviewed individually, 67 of them had higher education and 29 had completed high school. Among these people, 44 were people that were at the level of director of their organizations; 11 people were senior staff and 41 people were junior staff. Similarly, among the staff of governmental organizations, 66 employees had individual interviews. 46 had higher education and 20 were high school graduates. Out of these 66 government employees, 29 worked at director level in governmental institutions, and 27 were junior staff.

A total of 154 people participated in focus group discussions in 12 provinces. Of this amount 88 people had higher education, 39 of them were high school graduates. 7 people
had religious education and 20 people were illiterate (these were the project beneficiaries).

Out of the total number of people who participated in the research, 56 people were between 18-25 years of age, 84 of them were 25-32 years of age, 68 people were 32-40 years of age and 104 people were over 40 years of age.
Part Two: Civil Society in Afghanistan

Civil Society in Afghanistan

The current Civil Society in Afghanistan is newly established and is still young. The totalitarianism and despotism in the past thirty years of war, and the frequent coup d’etats destroyed the foundations of civil society in Afghanistan and created a country that had very few civil society initiatives. After the collapse of the Taliban regime, the creation of civil society was started again.

With the intervention of the international community in Afghanistan, work began on the development and strengthening of the government and related organizations. These efforts were made by people and local groups which were usually traditional and conservative in their approach. If they previously had accepted new ideas under pressure, their core beliefs had not been permanently changed. This is in part why no obvious distinctions were created between CSOs and government institutions with similar functions, as well as some beneficiary organizations. In addition, the real meaning of civil society became confused in the political literature of Afghanistan following the events following September 11, 2001.

After the Bonn Agreement, the Government of Afghanistan intended to accept the creation of CSOs to establish civil society under the new government. Under pressure from the international community, the text of the Bonn Agreement agreed to promote the freedom of thought and media, political parties, and other modern ideologies in the country. However, many people who agreed to these ideologies at the time did not understand the meaning of these terms or if they understood the meaning, they did not believe in them.

Meanwhile, due to the lack of basic institutions, there was no guarantee for the development and support of civil society, freedom of speech and media, political parties, and political cooperation. With the lack of knowledge about these issues in the country, the government representatives of Afghanistan have frequently misunderstood these terms. On the other hand, some high Afghan governmental authorities including parliament members understood the issues, but did not agree with the Bonn Agreement or the new Constitution of Afghanistan’s mission to create an independent society and a government based on people’s cooperation.

After the transitional government, with the creation of approximately a hundred political parties, 765 social organizations and more than three thousand NGOs, people had a feeling that Afghanistan was on the path towards a civil and democratic society. The overwhelming and uncontrollable establishment of NGOs and CSOs after September 11, 2001 and the large flow of international funding in Afghanistan created a situation whereby people became confused about the type and purposes of the numerous newly created organizations. The confusion was in part because some of the organizations were indeed against democratic and civil values. Due to the lack of mechanisms to control the establishment of NGOs and CSOs the trust and funding of the international donors was, in some cases, lost. This in turn adversely affected the lives of people truly in need of assistance.
Some NGOs and CSOs used the names of people to collect funds without consulting them and without their presence. Donations were then collected in personal bank accounts and what was given to the designated beneficiaries was less than ten percent of the donations the NGOs and CSOs received from their donors. This is one of the reasons why people are not satisfied with the activities of CSOs. Another reason is that some CSOs do not appear to understand their role as an institution in the civil society.

In the opinion of the AWEC researchers independence, self dependence, cooperation, effectiveness, and being free from religious, regional, linguistic and tribal laws are the specialties of a Civil Society Organizations. However in Afghanistan, not only do some CSOs lack these qualities, but at times even work against them.

**General Perceptions of Civil Society Organizations in Afghanistan**

Many participants, who answered AWEC research questions, had a perception that NGOs were the best examples of CSOs. This perception was common amongst both government institutions as well as NGOs in almost all the regions where AWEC collected information. In fact, NGOs are Civil Society Organizations. However, after the collapse of the Taliban regime, and for a number of reasons, many NGOs have lost their civic nature. Elements which show this are: hunger for unlimited international funding, partnering with corrupt government officials to misuse the funding, a lack of professionalism; and ignorance of the real needs of their beneficiaries.

These issues show the problems that occur when a Civil Society Organization has a profit-making aim, which is not the true aim of CSOs. This does not mean that a CSO can not have economic activities. A CSO can have economic programs so that it can be independent and financially self-reliant. However the economic activity is done for the benefit of the organization and to achieve the goals of the organization; not for the personal benefit of a person or a group who are the administrators of the organization.

By observing the experience of civil society growth in other countries, it is apparent that the creation of a CSO depends on the understanding and education of the people of that society. It depends, also, on the people’s understanding and respect for the country’s law and how “civil” they are. AWEC researchers determined that ‘civil’ means the people’s knowledge of and the people’s observance of the law in their country. This includes how careful they are to apply rules and regulations. Also, the term “civil” can be used to describe how active people are in different social and political situations, and whether they are establishing CSOs to solve social, tribal, cultural, and political problems?

Understanding the nature of civil activity as a willingness and initiative to solve local and tribal problems is one of the important features of “civil” people. This understanding seems to be lacking in Afghanistan. People expect that the CSOs and government institutions should solve their small problems for them even when those problems can be solved by the people by themselves without the help of CSOs and government institutions. Active CSOs need to work on developing the people’s knowledge and encouraging them to help themselves when they can do so.

Some employees of CSOs do not know about the aims of their organization, the laws of Afghanistan and the nature of Civil Society. Often the employees cannot inform people about their organization’s aims or about the definition and meaning of Civil Society Organizations in Afghanistan. Basically the NGOs and CSOs’ employees have not
developed the proper understanding of various concepts of civil society due to the current defective educational system in the country as well as their lack of exposure to civil society work.

For example, in many provinces that AWEC researched, there were organizations which can be considered rudimentary or incomplete Civil Society Organizations. In places where the government of Afghanistan has not been able to get a strong footing, especially in the outlying regions of Afghanistan people have created some local assemblies to solve their problems. The assemblies decide the legal and property cases of people, they identify pastures for people’s cattle, they give poor people money, they communally clean canals and open drains of their regions. These kinds of organizations can be considered Civil Society Organizations, though the creators of these organizations do not know that the nature of their organization would be considered a part of civil society.

Creation of these organizations is undertaken according to community needs and is focused on solving people’s problems. However, the decision making processes within these groups are not democratic and the participants obey much of the traditional and tribal beliefs. For example, the final decisions are made by the eldest man of the assembly or the person who is the tribal leader, and that decision is indisputable. But a Civil Society Organization should not take decisions without the presence and participation of others even though people feel compelled to obey elders and tribal leaders because of traditions. Theoretically and practically, the element of tradition has been a predominant factor in decision making.

**Level of Public Satisfaction with Civil Society Organizations**

It is difficult to tell what is the level of public satisfaction with the work of CSOs in Afghanistan since CSOs and NGOs are active in so many arenas in Afghanistan.

Also, the number of CSOs is over 2,000 according to the statistics of Judicial Affairs Ministry and Economy Ministry. The organizations included in this research, therefore, constitute less than 1% of the CSOs and NGOs active in Afghanistan. In addition, these statistics do not include the wide spectrum of assemblies, gatherings, and committees which are still not registered in any of the related Afghanistan ministries or media organizations which are a remarkable aspect of civil society.

By taking into consideration that this research only was done in 12 provinces of Afghanistan among a few selected CSOs, it only will begin to give a picture of public satisfaction about the work of CSOs in Afghanistan. A survey on the public satisfaction level regarding the work of CSOs should include all the provinces in Afghanistan and review the work of the maximum number of CSOs possible. Despite the limitations of the present research, it can at least represent a general picture of the level of public satisfaction about CSOs’ work, what perception people in the remote areas have of the CSOs’ work, and how effective they think CSOs are in resolving their problems.

It is worth mentioning that the level of public satisfaction about the work of CSOs depends mainly on what projects these organizations have implemented and how much influence such projects have had on people’s lives. Thus by reviewing the positive cases of CSOs’ projects, AWEC can present the successful samples in such a way that these samples can be copied and used by other CSOs. This type of research has also been done
in other countries and samples from these activities can used improve of CSOs in Afghanistan.

The people present in the AWEC community discussions expressed some satisfaction with the work of CSOs; but some people had the perception that CSOs work more for their own interest and that addressing the people’s needs for them is just a means of getting recognition. As an example, people said that some of the employees of CSOs in their areas made remarkable changes to their lives after working for a while with a NGO or a CSO. They said that they knew lots of people who, after working for three to four years with CSOs, now have houses, cars, and private businesses. In their view, workers at CSOs are getting very high salaries and can access a prosperous life in three to four years through corruption and the misuse of project facilities.

The perceptions that corruption reigns in CSOs and that employees misuse project facilities exists almost everywhere. Finding the truth of what percentage of CSOs in Afghanistan are corrupt needs additional research. What is obvious from the people’s comments is that a sharp and clear mechanism for supervising the activities of CSOs does not exist. Even the government of Afghanistan has not regulated the mechanism of accountability for CSOs in a legal framework which could differentiate between corrupt and legitimately functioning CSOs. Also, there is no doubt that by using the absence of legal and clear accountability mechanisms, some CSOs have misused projects and project facilities for their private interests. All of these problems affect people’s perception about the issue of corruption in CSOs in Afghanistan. An additional problem which this issue has created is that most people do not make a difference between CSOs that are not corrupt and those that are corrupt.

Despite all of the issues regarding corruption, the participants in the AWEC community discussions generally showed their satisfaction with the work of Civil Society Organizations. The people gave examples of Civil Society Organizations’ effective activities and discussed the impact of CSOs’ activities on the daily life of their family members, neighbors and friends.

During this research, it became obvious to the AWEC researchers that people usually collaborated with a CSO when they became sure that the implemented project was in their interest and would positively affect their life. Another factor was how people in different areas reacted to the behavior of CSO’s employees towards them. If the employees of a CSO respected the local traditions of the people, included the needs and requirements of the people in their programmes, and did not do anything against the people’s beliefs, then they were more likely to participate with the CSO. Most importantly, when people saw that the project of the CSO was in their interest; they expressed consent to the work of the organization and coordinated with it. However, when the specifications mentioned above were not visible, people were not willing to coordinate with the CSO and generally thought that the organization worked more for their own interest rather than for those of the people.

A large number of CSOs and NGOs have implemented many projects with funding from international donors in Afghanistan during the last five years. People think that CSOs are rich and that they should pay money to people for everything, including participating in surveys and workshops. CSOs have acknowledged that money for workshop participants was intended for transportation and food expenses. While this funding was beneficial to
the workshop participants, the practice of paying for these expenses has left an impression on the public perception of what should be paid for by CSOs. AWEC researchers were told that when a CSO is willing to do an activity with the coordination of people, the first question the people ask is how much money will paid for participation.

One of the undesirable impacts of this issue has been that it has reduced the level of volunteering and willing coordination among people. When CSOs initiate a program in which community participation is important, people are not willing to participate unless money is paid for their participation. The lack of volunteer participation of the people has reduced the number of people in CSO projects.

Lack of participation and the people’s presence in projects due to the reasons stated above is a setback for the activities of CSOs. In addition, the lack of people’s presence in the CSO projects causes the projects to be implemented without the people’s knowledge and understanding of the projects. These issues are why people express their personal views about the project, rather than participating actively in its implementation or supervising the implemented of the project.

Though it is not common for people voluntarily to have active participation in the implementation of CSOs’ and NGOs’ projects, on occasion this does happen. When this happens, the people participating express more realistic views about the influence of the project on their’s and others’ lives.

On the whole the satisfaction level of the public regarding the work of CSOs is related to issues stated above. At the same time due to poverty and lack of facilities the people of Afghanistan are satisfied with any project that CSOs implement in their area. They believe that having an unnecessary thing is better than the lack of it. For example, people in our community discussions often stated the famous expression داشته اید به کار گرجه باشد زهر مار which means even snake poison is useful when it is possessed.

**Governmental Institutions’ View of Civil Society**

One of the main problems between CSOs and NGOs with governmental institutions is that transparent reports about project implementation are not given to the government. According to the majority of government staff, CSOs and NGOs do not think about the quality of their projects - instead they think about having a good report in order to present it to the donors. In addition they do not address the reality of the project in the content of the report. According to governmental staff and other people, donors are satisfied with the reports which are presented to them because of security problems and the lack of a good system of transportation in remote areas of Afghanistan foes not allow them to inspect the results personally. In many areas where projects are implemented, the donors rarely come to view the projects.

According to the opinion of some government institution’s staff, CSOs do not have the necessary coordination with the government institutions related to their project implementation. This results in the lack of government institutions’ coordination and participation in the implemented projects with CSOs. Due to this lack of coordination by CSOs with the government institutions, the government institutions do not like to work with CSOs.
As an example, one Civil Society Organization constructed a school in one district of Paktia province using international support but without prior coordination with the Ministry of Education. The construction of this school is complete, but it was not in the Ministry of Education’s plan to construct a school in this area because they did not have a budget to conduct lessons in this school. For this reason, the school is unusable, though the people protect the building in the hope that in the future the Ministry of Education will recruit teachers, send books for the student and have formal teaching in this school.

A number of government institutions’ staff thought that CSOs fear the supervision of their project and that they are not ready to implement their projects with the coordination of government institutions. The fear of coordination with government is due to the possibility that the government institution will want to supervise the methodology of the CSOs’ performance and the expenditure of money. Government institutions’ staff did not condemn all CSOs and Non-Governmental Organizations for corruption and abuse when working on projects; but, they believed that some CSOs have transparency and some do not.

Among the 66 government institutions’ staff members interviewed the number that have this conception is shown on Chart No.1 below:

According to Chart 1, 15 staff members thought that CSOs do not have essential transparency and 51 staff members believed that CSOs sometimes have transparency. In the AWEC Individual Questionnaire, the option “yes” was not chosen by any employees surveyed in government institutions.

One of the other problems that government staff criticized (especially those in the Ministry of Economy) was that the CSOs and NGOs activities in most cases do not conform with their own by-laws. For example, a CSO or NGO whose by-laws say they are coordinating with the government in the health section may be found building a school without such coordination being in place.

At the same time, according to the Ministry of Economy staffs’ opinion many CSOs and NGOs do not focus on a specific sector in their by-laws which is why they are not experts in any one area.

Staff of government institutions believed that a number of CSOs and NGOs were established only to get the benefit of foreign donor’s funding assistance and not for the established purpose of the assistance. This includes basing their efforts on the quantities
of projects, not on the delivery of quality projects. According to the staffs’ opinion some of the CSOs and NGOs added different sections to their by-laws after registration at the Ministries of Economy and Justice in order to be able to attract donors’ funding for many different projects and activities that may not be part of their original purpose.

On the other hand some government institutions’ staff were satisfied with the behavior of CSOs.

![Chart 2 Relationships of CSOs and Governmental Institutions]

Chart No.2 shows the measure of satisfaction with the behavior of Civil Society Organizations with government institutions. In some cases respondents chose more then one option which makes the total more then the number answering the survey.

AWEC research findings in focus group discussions show that the requirements of both CSOs and government institutions formulate the type of relation they have. When a CSO wants to implement a project with the support and cooperation of government institutions, this can ensure good communication with the government institutions. If projects are organized in such away that CSOs and NGOs implement them independently, then the government institutions are not interested in supervising the implementation and methodology of a project. When government institution staff are interested in the supervision and methodology of project activities with CSOs, in many cases this is due to the privileges they receive in exchange for their interest and cooperation.

41 of the government institutions staff’s which AWEC researchers interviewed during the research had work experience with CSOs and 25 did not have work experience with CSOs.

![Chart 3 Governmental Institution Work Experience with CSOs]
66 of government institutions staff was surveyed individually. 7 thought that CSOs are working transparently, 27 thought that CSOs are working for the benefit of people and 32 thought that CSOs are taking high salaries and wasting resources.

Chart 4
Governmental Institutions Opinion of CSOs Work
Part Three: Positive Cases

1. **Micro-Finance: the role of MADRAC (Micro-Finance Agency for Development and Rehabilitation of Afghan Communities) and ARMP (Aga Khan Rural Micro-Finance)**

**History of Micro-Finance in Afghanistan**

In 2003, Afghanistan’s government decided to support the activity of micro-finance agencies because it thought that it would stimulate the economic sectors and could be effective in poverty eradication. This activity was started through the support of international donors. Banks in the private sector were not established in Afghanistan at that time. The Micro-Finance Investment Support Management of Afghanistan (MISFA) was established in the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development. MISFA received international assistance and according to a proper and stated schedule started loaning money to poor people. In addition, other micro-finance distribution organizations obtained support from MISFA in order to establish independent finance organizations in Afghanistan. Later, MISFA became an organization independent from government called the Micro-Finance Services Provision and Support Projects Company.

According to current figures, there are presently 15 agencies that provide micro-finance in 21 provinces of Afghanistan. These 15 agencies provide their services through 231 local branches. MISFA anticipated that all these agencies will be independent and self-reliant soon and provide micro-finance services according to the laws of Afghanistan.

The numbers of active clients of these agencies in March 2007 was 350,746 persons and 69% of this number were women. The average size of a loan for each client in the year was US$277. There is a 95% repayment of loans from clients. Up to now, US$120 million has been invested in the micro-finance area funded by international donors.

**MADRAC (Micro-Finance Foundation for Reconstruction and Extension of Afghan Associations)**

In June 2005, MADRAC was founded with the help of the Danish Committee for Afghan Return (DACAR) and through the financial support of MISFA. DACAR wanted to develop MADRAC as a self-reliant organization. MADRAC started its activities independently on 1 May 2007 and now has an executive committee and a separate managerial structure. The goal of MADRAC is increasing clients’ income resources by providing access to financial loan services.

MADRAC applies a communal loan approach to offer micro-finance services. Borrower groups have ten to twenty male and female members. MADRAC offers loan and saving financial services. Now MADRAC is examining and testing the use of the Islamic bank system which does not have an interest for the bank.

As of 27 March 2007, MADRAC had 11,152 active clients. Of these, 46% were women. MADRAC has a central office in Kabul and provides micro-finance services through 9 local branches in 10 districts of 5 provinces of Afghanistan. The total amount of distributed loans from this Foundation is $2,315,000.00. The average loan for each client was US $145.00. The repayment rate of clients is currently 99%.
Micro Case Studies 1: Micro-finance in Herat

Safoora is a widow who lives in Keshk village which is in one of the districts in Herat province. Many years before, her husband died. She and her son subsisted on the proceeds from a small general store which was inherited from her husband. Many years passed. Her son was a young man when they had the opportunity to work with the MADRAC micro-finance program in their village which made them very happy.

After participation in several meetings, when Ms. Safoora understood the rules and steps of receiving micro-finance, she got her first loan. At first, she purchased goods and invested all the loan money in her store. After the goods were added to the store stock, the sales increased and her income also increased. In addition, Safoora paid her monthly installment back to MADRAC with the increased revenue from her store. She was also able to save some money that she used to purchase a battery charger.

The reason for purchasing the battery charger was that the people of her village were going to the sub-provincial town which is very far from their village to charge their batteries. Safoora solved this problem by purchasing the battery charger. After the payment of the first loan installment, Safoora also received a second loan. With the profits she earned from her store due to the loans, Safoora and her son purchased a wheat milling machine.

By delivering good services to her clients, Safoora became famous in her village and the surrounding area. Due to the good quality of the wheat milling machine and Safoora’s effort to do good work, the people of village and the other villages nearby brought their wheat to her mill. Safoora and her son made positive changes in their lives by hard work and indefatigable activities. After 17 months of working with “MADRAC”, Safoora and her son bought a piece of land for agriculture and sheep with their savings in order to improve their lives.

Safoora is very happy and says, “I am grateful to the all mighty Allah, that by self-esteem and self-reliance with cooperation of MADRAC, I can bring change to my life. Now my son is also busy and has information about business, purchasing and selling. Now that I am weak and my son has the capability to work, we can spent our lives calmly.”

Aga Khan Rural Micro-Finance Program (ARMP)

The rural micro-finance program established by Aga Khan Development Network started its activity on September 2002. This foundation helps poor people through various financial services in both urban and rural regions so that they can increase their incomes, improve the quality of their lives, and be self-reliant.

At the present time, this foundation is one of most effective micro-finance organizations in Afghanistan. Aga Khan Rural Micro Finance Program (ARMP) provides loans for business people and farmers in remote provinces. ARMP provides special loans for the farmers in the areas which cultivate poppies to help farmers find alternatives to poppy cultivation. With the loans farmers cultivate other crops, purchase livestock and other activities not related to poppies.

As of March, 2007, ARMP had 31,499 active clients and the distributed loans total US $49,590,636. This foundation covered 49 regions in 12 provinces of Afghanistan. The average of loans clients was $635 with some clients receiving more than one loan. Approximately 83% of clients have repaid their loans.
Shaima is a house-wife who spends most of her time caring for her children. During the war between the Taliban and Ahmad Shah-Mashood’s forces in Takhar, she and her family had to leave her residence. They went to Badakhshan where her husband worked in a shop for a living while she took a course in tailoring.

After the Taliban were defeated, Shaima and her family returned to Takhar province and she continued tailoring work. She had four students who helped her and, at the same time, they learned from her. By tailoring she did not earn enough money so she went to ARMP to get a loan of US $500. With the loan Shaima and her students started cooperative work. After one year, with the use of their tailoring income all of Shaima’s students were able to work independently in their homes.

Now, Shaima is the leader of a group of 20 women that she trains to tailor. They prepare local clothes by sewing beads and flowers on cloth which takes many hours. The clothes prepared by Shaima’s group are selling in the local bazaar. The clothes merchants also ship them to Kabul for sale.

Shaima also got a second loan from ARMP to use to make more products. Before the second loan, Shaima and her team made four or five Afghani clothes every month. After the second loan, Shaima and her team could make 15 Afghani clothes every month.

Now Shaima has 10 sewing machines and good working relations with the local shopkeepers who buy her clothes. She is satisfied with the ARMP services because the loan helped her to grow her business. Also, due to her income from tailoring she helps her husband pay for the household expenditures.

In 2003, Shaima earned a prize for being a woman with a successful small business woman in Afghanistan.

Micro-Finance Impact on Poverty Eradication

The Afghanistan Agriculture and Irrigation Ministry considered small and micro-finance loans as one of the most effective approaches of delivering the opportunity for improvement to farmers. After getting loans, farmers can buy fertilizer, improved seeds, preventative medicines for plant and animal diseases, modern agriculture equipment and better irrigation systems. As people’s economic welfare improves, more opportunities are created to participate in social and political processes of their country and to send their children to school – even to the university.

Micro-finance development in Afghanistan has used the successful experiences of Pakistan, India and Bangladesh as models. The models provided good methods to fight poverty in Afghanistan. The rate of repayment of micro-finance loans indicates the success of this program in Afghanistan.

One of the most important affects of micro-finance in Afghanistan is that 69% of clients are women. Some of these women now perform the activities which used to be done only by men. The high rate of women borrowers explains their increased participation in the social and economical activities of Afghanistan. The increase occurred when Afghanistan’s government approved new rules and regulations to encourage the presence and participation of women in social economical and political affairs.
However, the percentage of literate women compared to men is still small; therefore the rate of participation and the presence of active women in social and political arenas is still not as visible as that of men. According to micro-finance experts’ opinion, a significant cause of the limited amount of women’s activity in business is their entire dependency on men for their livelihood. As an indicator, the rapid growth of female clients in micro-finance indicates that women are seeking to be self-reliant and that they want to play an effective role in society through micro-finance.

By supporting the role of women in Afghanistan through micro-finance, women can reach economic self-reliance and become less dependent on men for support. This helps the Afghanistan government meet the requirements of the Constitution and international commitments to improve women’s condition and to eradicate poverty. Since 2002, micro-finance has contributed to assisting women with economic endeavors and to poverty reduction.

2. **Transparency in Elections: the role of FEFA (Free and Fair Elections Foundation of Afghanistan)**

**History of FEFA**

The Free and Fair Elections Foundation of Afghanistan (“FEFA”) was established by a number of Civil Society Organization directors in Afghanistan with the support of international donors in 2004. This foundation has 15 founding members that are the directors of the other CSOs and NGOs. The main purpose of establishing FEFA was to have supervision of democratic elections in Afghanistan.

FEFA also works for the improvement of electoral rules and regulations, awareness about the election process for voters, electoral supervision, political parties and social organizations. Supervision in the elections is the basic guarantee for legitimate elections and FEFA wants to this to be done transparently and justly in Afghanistan according to existing law.

The aims of FEFA are as follows:

1) Identify election deficiencies and present them to the legislative assembly of Afghanistan, international foundations and the media for improvement

2) Enhance the level of participation in the presidential, parliament, provincial council and municipality elections processes

3) Increase the level of awareness about elections and their related issues

The Afghanistan Free and Fair Elections Foundation is registered as a social organization in the Ministry of Justice of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. FEFA has also held awareness programs about elections for people, civil societies and political parties.

By attracting 2,300 volunteers during presidential elections FEFA covered 100 election centers of 100 districts of Afghanistan and the neighboring country of Pakistan. At that time there were 34 provinces, and these 100 districts were selected as centers for elections according to their geographical location and language. Some of the election centers were in Pakistan to include the large number of Afghan immigrants in the election process. In
addition to FEFA there were international supervisors who supervised the election process.

There were some differences between FEFA’s supervision of elections and the supervision by foreigners. The internationals generally supervised the election centers on the move and FEFA’s people supervised the process in one place using the knowledge gained from election training.

FEFA’s Innovation in Election Areas

After the presidential elections, FEFA offered its services and advice to the Elections Office which consisted of Afghan and international members. FEFA emphasized monitoring elections in an independent manner. FEFA considered complaints and objections, prepared lists of permanent voters, enhanced the awareness level of elections staff and created a new system of identity cards in which election information could also provide accurate statistics about the population.

Police were reserved for security at voting places. FEFA also paid attention to the quality and quantity of sensitive election materials like the color used to mark voter’s fingers, ballots and ballot boxes. This was to ensure that the elections commission paid attention to these issues - to show that the people voted, to the supervision of elections and to prevent the problems that could damage elections process in future.

FEFA also played a role in solving conflicts that arose between presidential election candidates during the elections because at that time there was no election commission to hear complaints. On Election Day, the candidates opposing the future President Hamid Karzai decided to boycott the elections which could have negatively effected the first democratic elections in Afghanistan. These candidates claimed that the election process was dishonest, so they wanted to boycott the elections and this could have made people doubt the results of the elections.

To assist with this issue the United Nation Assistance Mission Office for Afghanistan (UNAMA) appointed three boards to listen to candidates complaints and solve their cases. These appointed boards from UNAMA took the initiative during elections to solve voting problems, but the boards did not have any documents to use to solve the complaints.

This resulted in their decision to use FEFA because they were the only Afghan foundation supervising elections. The appointed boards reviewed FEFA reports and presented their opinions about the elections. The boards concluded from the FEFA reports and the results submitted by the international supervisors that the election tallies were legitimate and that the rate of dishonesty in the elections was not high enough to damage the legitimacy of the elections. The United Nation Assistance Mission Office for Afghanistan, the Afghanistan Human Rights Independent Commission, International Crisis Group, international media and the Communal Organized Elections Office supported the reports of FEFA for accepting and legitimacy of election.

Government Approach toward FEFA before and after the Election

It is common for new foundations starting out to face difficulties, or to be perceived as being ineffective. FEFA too experienced this phenomenon. According to the employees of FEFA, the government and the election committee did not support FEFA before the
FEFA’s work was cited in many of the election committee’s reports. Due to the support of governmental foundations, Civil Society Organizations and international foundations, FEFA was able to get other funding to work on the parliamentary election. FEFA increased their employees from 2,500 to 7,500 prior to the elections to observe the parliamentary election. While FEFA only worked in 100 districts in the presidential election, they were able to cover 217 districts in the parliamentary election. In total, FEFA covered 4045 voting poll centers in Afghanistan including outlying areas, and each voting poll had two observers; one male for male voting polls and one female for female voting polls. Some of the voting poll centers covered more than one voting station.

What has FEFA learned from Observing Elections?

FEFA’s findings have made a deep impact on the experience of FEFA and its collaborators. They found that providing oversight of an election makes the procedure clearer and improves its legitimacy. According to FEFA employees political parties, election committee workers and Afghanistan’s independent election committee, civil organizations and other governmental foundations all regard FEFA’s reports as unbiased and non-partisan. According to FEFA’s employees the following tasks were carried out during the oversight of the presidential and parliamentary elections:

1) Finding committed democratic partners
2) Recruiting many volunteers and trained employees
3) Professional training of election observers
4) Formulating recommendations to make the election procedure clearer
5) Gathering information about the shortcomings in election procedure
6) Making efforts for the improvement of election rules through consultation with Independent Committee of Election and other legislative foundations
7) Supporting the democratic procedure through observation in the elections
8) Supporting the attitude of honesty
9) Creating cooperation between respective CSOs in Civil Society Organization activities
10) Supporting the legitimate election procedure
11) Creating effective relations between governmental institutions, security forces, local assemblies, political parties and candidates for election

Role of FEFA in Providing Political and Civil Rights

After thirty years of war, following the Bonn agreement and with international help, Afghanistan held presidential and parliamentary elections. Both elections were held while warlords and other armed people were still active in Afghanistan. As a terrorist group, the Taliban was threatening candidates, voters, election employees and security forces. In such conditions, the holding elections seemed impractical because election employees, candidates, and international and national observers were in danger.

Meanwhile the written election law was not effective in Afghanistan and election employees did not have experience with elections. In addition, the political parties,
independent candidates and observers did not have experience with the democratic process.

FEFA was created as the first foundation for observing elections. They observed both of the elections (presidential and parliamentary) which were desperately needed at that time. This new foundation sent its employees to the Philippines and Indonesia to gain experience which proved useful during the elections. As the Government of Afghanistan, was under severe pressure from presidential and parliamentary candidates who accused all the election committees of supporting the government, the election results needed to be confirmed by independent foundations and international observers. This was to prove that the results were independent of government influence.

The presence of outside observers was not only to confirm the election committee’s activities, but was also able to identify the shortcomings of election law and to identify violations by election employees, candidates, political parties, security forces and voters. As the only observer in the elections, FEFA helped the government and other people working in the elections. Advising the international observers in the election, reporting daily election violations, efforts to clarify Civil Society Organization, informing people of the advantages of elections and using their voting rights, were all services that FEFA provided.

Enrolling 10,000 faithful and literate employees in total to supervise the presidential and parliamentary elections of Afghanistan, is another accomplishment of FEFA. FEFA hired men and women without regard to gender, but they also paid respect to the culture and beliefs of the Afghan people in setting up female voting places all over Afghanistan.

Guaranteeing the right to vote, providing clarity in election procedures and creating equal chances for citizens are responsibilities of the government. While these tasks could be fulfilled with the approval of law, in some cases people such as warlords, terrorists and others objected to the election process. This made it necessary for groups like FEFA to provide services during the election procedure to observe, and to notify the government about mistakes and shortcomings that occurred.

Moreover, overseeing political and civil rights can prevent offenses by warlords, terrorists and government employees. Just and impartial observation provides the fear of public exposure and local interrogation. FEFA has provided these services during the first presidential and parliamentary elections in Afghanistan.

3. **Educational Rehabilitation of Youth: AWEC’s APEP (Afghanistan Primary Education Programme)**

**History**

AWEC is an NGO which was established in 1991 in Islamabad, Pakistan. The aim of this organization was to provide services to Afghan women and children in Pakistan. In order to make Afghan women self-confident, this organization provided health services, educational and other services which have helped thousands of families in different provinces.

The overall aims of AWEC are the following:
1) Supporting women to create and manage assemblies
2) Supporting women to cooperate in local assemblies, provincial assemblies and parliament
3) Supervising child rights through media, advice and provision of justice
4) Arranging communication networks of women and youths to fight for their human rights
5) Arranging official and nonofficial educational centers in different provinces of Afghanistan
6) Providing information about sexual violence
7) Providing informative programs about civilized society, human rights, gender, peace, political cooperation and identification of social problems of women and children

In 2002, AWEC moved its central office from Islamabad to Kabul. Currently, this center has on-going projects including, support for Civil Society Organizations’ capacity building, teaching women prisoners in Kabul and Faryab, teaching illiterate women in Paktia, helping and teaching street children, and also holding workshops about justice for women in several provinces. AWEC also has a program of teaching the fundamentals of learning to Kabul and Paktia school girls.

**Quick Learning Program (APEP)**

From 2004 through 2007, AWEC has administered a quick learning program with the support of USAID in Kabul and Paktia provinces. The Quick Learning Program was in accordance with the Afghan curriculum and was approved by the Ministry of Education. This project with funds from USAID helped several CSOs in more than 17 provinces. The aim of the project is to provide quick learning programs to more than 20,000 girls and boys who were not allowed to go to school under the Taliban government. This program served children between 9 and 18 years old. At the end of the project a total of 20,000 children in Kabul and Paktia completed the 6 years of school in two and a half years. With the certificate of 6th year completion, the children started their studies in the 7th class of governmental schools.

The Quick Learning Programs in Paktia province were held in Zarmat, Gardiz, Ahmad Abad, Sayed Karam, Mirzka, Ahmad Khail, Haji Aryub, Lajah Mangal, Chan Kany and Pathan. According to the project protocol 10,000 children were supposed to learn the six years of lessons in two and a half years. In Paktia province this program was continued with 400 classes, each class having 25 to 30 students.

---

**Micro Studies 3: Feroza and Basira are Literate**

Ferza and Basira who are sisters joined the Quick Learning Program after returning to Afghanistan from Pakistan following the fall of the Taliban. As refugees in Pakistan, Feroza and Basira’s family was not able to pay their tuition so they did not go to school. Their mother, Gul Bebe said; “In 2002 when we came back to Afghanistan, my girls were young, but illiterate. I consulted with their father to get them to school, but they were not able to go to governmental schools due to their ages. So we went to the quick learning program course and without any problem they were accepted. AWEC gave school bags, pens, notebooks and books to my daughters.”
Gul Bebe recounted that while both of her daughters were studying, their two illiterate uncles came back from UAE. They were so sexist that when they saw that the girls were holding bags and going to school, they threatened to do “the worst thing you have ever imagined with you. We and your mothers did not study, so where have you come from to study?”

After hearing their uncles’ threats, Feroza and Basera came home crying and hid their school bags. When Gul Bebe asked them that what was the matter? They replied what they had been threatened by their uncles.

Because her daughters liked their studies so much, they continued their lessons, but they alternated days so that one went on one day and the other went the next day. Gul Bebe shared this information with their teacher. For four months they went to school on alternate days, and helped each other with their lessons that they have missed. After four years their uncles went back to UAE, and after that the girls continued their lessons without fear.

According to Gul Bebe, the reason that their uncles were interfering in her daughters’ lives was that they were sending money from UAE to help her husband support the family. This meant that whatever they were saying, her husband accepted it, even though he agreed that his daughters should go to school.

Feroza said, “It was a very difficult day and I did not expected to continue going to school, and I was afraid that my uncles would kill me”.

Feroza and her sister are now in the seventh class of public school. They said; “We still have memories of our studies in the quick learning program. Our teachers were very kind to us. They gave us homework, but now in public schools, there is no homework. Our teachers are absent, we don’t have homework, and even sometimes we lack books. According to Feroza, after going to public school, they have learnt not much, because the lessons are not as fast as they were in the quick learning program.

The Effect of Quick Learning Program and Outcomes of this Project

AWEC learned that intensive study could be applied through an effective curriculum with experienced teachers. The desire of families to send their children to this program, and the successful results show the effectiveness of this program in Kabul and Paktia.

Throughout the Quick Learning Program, the Ministry of Education helped AWEC. The Ministry of Education promised that after the end of these courses, that the graduates would be accepted in public schools. If a student wanted to go to public school, his or her transcripts were prepared by AWEC. According to the transcripts, any Afghan school would accept the students. The promise of Education Ministry was fulfilled and after finishing the Quick Learning Program, the students went to the seventh class.

In Paktia due to ethnic and religious customs, generally women and girls cannot go to school. The Quick Learning Program has created an opportunity for 8,000 girls to go to schools and study till the sixth class. However, when they completed the program these girls could not continue their lessons. Still, the knowledge they gained during the two and a half years, made them able to read and write.

Due to the amount of work involved in building the education system in Afghanistan, it was impossible for the Ministry of Education to administer the Quick Learning Program. Through the efforts of organizations like AWEC who applied this program in the
provinces, the Ministry of Education has been able to accept children and youth for studies in higher classes. After the Bonn Agreement and the creation of the transitional government, the efforts of the Ministry of education have included educating more girls, building more girls’ school, and rehabilitating schools that were destroyed schools during war.

4. **Government Transparency: “Good Morning Afghanistan”**

**History**

After the collapse of Taliban regime and the creation of the transitional government, freedom of expression and freedom of media which had been at a standstill for several decades, once again resumed. “Good Morning Afghanistan” (GMA) was established in February, 2002 with the help of the European Commission, and started its radio programs about matters of daily life. GMA became very popular among the Afghan people. The aim of GMA was to improve the national media so that it would carry out civil and social work for the Afghan people. BMA planned to make a television network too, but this aim has not yet been fulfilled. GMA is an active and non-partisan media organization which uses journalism principles, and has a very large audience.

During the time when government authorities were unable to answer the questions of the people, the GMA had an idea that the people should talk directly to the president. GMA proposed the weekly program of asking questions of the president and his official staff. Finally on 30 January, 2003 the program “You and the President” was created and still continues.

**The Making of “You and the President”**

The program of “You and the President” was broadcast every week on Friday morning and evening. GMA opened a telephone line and peoples’ questions were recorded from 10 am to 12 am except on holidays. On the weekend, GMA sent those questions to the President’s office and the President’s answers to those questions was broadcast.

The program of “You and the President” was so popular that it was broadcast by other radio stations via the Tannin Network and a Danish Radio station which was managed by an American NGO named Equal Access, and to villages of Afghanistan. After the creation of GMA’s website, it was also available on the web.

**Questions asked by People in this Program**

Since the beginning of “You and the President”, more than 60 programs were broadcast and during these programs the President has answered more than 200 questions.

Questioners included different ethnic groups as well as women and men, government employees, NGO employees, smiths, farmers, students, preachers, youths, disabled people, immigrants and others. They asked questions on a variety of subjects such as politics, social issues, cultural issues, and also asked about the President’s personal life. The most common questions raised by people were about government corruption, the method of spending of international funds, not fulfilling government promises, lack of security, the creation of parliament and relations with neighboring countries.
Vision, Outcomes and Conclusion

“You and the President” was considered a landmark program and appreciated by the people. In addition, newspapers also used the contents of this program in their coverage. National and international newspapers and media often cited “You and the President”. Examples of this are the Pakistan English daily newspaper “The News”, Sahar Daily of Pakistan, Islah Daily, Eqtidar-e-Mille Weekly, Kabul Weekly and Civil Society Journal. Also, the BBC monitoring section wrote about the program and used its contents. Eradah daily sometimes published the entire program. In other cases, the contents were broadcast weekly by radio stations in their weekly summary of programs. When Altai Consulting agency last year made a survey about Afghanistan media in the in 2004, 2005 and 2006 they reported that “You and the President” had one of the largest audiences in Afghanistan.

The most important achievement of the program is maintaining a democratic relationship between the top level of government and the people. The program has increased the level of government accountability to people and thus its credibility. Also it has opened a door for the people to easily engage in talks with their President and shows the people that the President works for them. Sometimes the questions asked resulted in the President meeting the participants directly. On other occasions the President has referred people to his Chief of Staff and Presidential Office staff to solve their problems. The other major achievement is that through direct talks with the President, people have informed him of important incidents, especially security incidents.

Thus the President has made promises directly to the people and fulfilled some of them. In a country where governments have rarely been accountable to the people due to their ideological beliefs “You and the President” has helped the newly established government of Afghanistan create an image of accountability. Also, the presence of top government officials in the program has sent the message to the lower officials, including the ministers, to include accountability to the people in their work agenda.

Without fear of persecution, people ask the President questions in order to have the government to attend to their problems. This program has helped the President to maintain his approval by directly responding to people and by bringing the people closer to direct contact with the government. Although in a post-war country like Afghanistan, without a survey it is difficult to express all of the peoples’ problems, “You and the President” has managed to provide a glimpse of the peoples’ needs. By listening to the people, the political policy makers can make their strategies with regard to the problems mentioned in the program and promises made by the president.

Finally, it can be asserted that “You and the President” has been the sole stage of direct talks between people and the president. In comparison to interviews, reports and press conferences aimed at creating closer and deeper relationship between people and government, this program has been more efficient and has attracted more public interest. “You and the President” is a realization of the permanent aim of the media to create a relationship between the government and the people.
5. **Peace, Security and Reconciliation: the work of the Tribal Liaison Office (TLO)**

**History**

In 2003 the Swiss Peace Office, with the help of Mangal and Ahmad Zai elders from Paktia province, wanted to find ways for tribes to cooperate in the process of rehabilitation and peace in Afghanistan. With the help of the Heinrich Boll Foundation, a trial project was started in which local tribes could present what they thought was the best method of sovereignty. This project was successful, and resulted in the creation of the Tribes Liaison Office (TLO) in December, 2003.

TLO has its head office in Kabul and has created provincial offices in Paktia, Khost and Paktika in 2004. The funding for creating this program was given by the Heinrich Boll Foundation and the Foreign Ministry of France.

Since 2005, TLO has worked on tribal matters in the provinces of Logar, Kabul, Kandahar, Helmand and Orzgan provinces. The results of their work have been accepted by the government of Afghanistan and international foundations.

In the regional offices of TLO, groups of tribal elders present their tribal needs and after planning with TLO, their requests are submitted to international financers. TLO has also worked on aspects of justice, research, capacity building of small CSOs, and distributing funds via local assemblies to poor and injured people.

**Peace Jirga for Security and Reconciliation**

Continuing the TLO strategy, and the process of tribal talks with government, a Jirga\(^2\) with participation of elders of Paktia, Logar, Khost, Ghazni, Wardak was held on the 6th and 7th of February, 2007.

Aims of the Jirga included:

1) Speeding up the dialogue between local tribes, religious leaders and the government of Afghanistan

2) Supporting and increasing cooperation between local leaders working on security matters in six southeast provinces

3) Explaining the needs of the people to create consistency with the help of tribal assemblies with governmental structures

4) Using identifying and stabilizing mechanisms to include rebels in the process of rehabilitation and security of Afghanistan, and also recruiting some rebel groups to cooperate with the government

5) Identifying potential threats of rebellious groups of employees in the government and the international community

The reason for these jirga was that in 2006 security problems continued in the border regions, especially the southeast regions. For example in 2003, Paktia was one of the most insecure provinces, and rebellious incidents in South Waziristan gradually influenced the increase of rebellion in Khost, Paktia, south of Ghazni and Logar province which created insecurities in these provinces.

---
\(^2\) Jirga is a traditional method of Afghans which in different historical eras has been used for solving national, local and tribal problems.
TLO said that by using tribal and religious beliefs, rebels have made the regions less safe, and have made the religious, tribal and regional disparities greater. This situation has made the government’s development and rehabilitation programs more difficult. Meanwhile international financers were decreasing their funding. Insecurity, lack of development and peoples’ unwillingness to participate in the process of rehabilitation was exacerbating the problems.

The original plan was to have members of the Jirgas be elders and tribal leaders of “Loya Paktia”, but governmental officials proposed including elders of Ghazni, Logar and Wardak province due to their strategic position.

The idea of the “Peace Jirga for Security and Reconciliation” was created when debates with tribal elders showed fear of increased hypocrisy and disputes between people. They showed their interest in fighting against rebels and insurgents. However these provinces represent only a part of the insecure and rebellious Pashtun regions in southeast Afghanistan. Holding a Jirga between tribal elders and clerics of these provinces can be a good example and starting point to reach higher aims in subsequent steps of this dialogue process. They can spread the dialogue to other insecure regions of South Afghanistan.

**Structure and Topics of “Peace Jirga for Security and Reconciliation”**

Members of the Jirga consisted of 140 people including tribal elders, clerics and southeastern Afghanistan governmental authorities. The Jirga started as a workshop, because in traditional Jirgas, everyone has the right to express their opinions. The topics discussed in these two days included:

1) Tribal elders and clerics were willing to contribute in the process of peace, compromise and stability, and they were asking for the creation of relations between the international community, Afghan government, local units and rebels for discussions and mutual understanding.

2) They condemned the tribal and religious violence and fights and they promised to discourage it.

3) Tribal elders showed their support for Regional Security Jirga and presented some suggestions.

4) They believe that the continuation of conflict has severe effects on those tribes who reside near the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. They believe that with the help of the government and international community, they can decrease the violence.

5) They complained about the corrupt officials and insisted that if this situation continues, people will continue to lose their confidence.

6) They insisted on long term programs, and said that the program of long term development of education, economical and agriculture infrastructure can establish relation between the people and the government, and can decrease violence.

7) They asked that for short term projects, the areas should be pre-selected and then consulted with tribal elders. During the implementation, local people should be present as observers.

---

3 Loya Paktia includes Paktia, Khost and Paktika provinces which are present in south-west of Afghanistan and share a common border with Pakistan.
Important and Basic Opinions of Jirga

Basic key opinions resulted from this Jirga and all members of this Jirga accepted them. At the end of Jirga the message was delivered to the President when tribal elders met him. This was in order that the central government in Kabul and the local authorities of the government would consider the result of this Jirga in their future plans.

Government and Development

1) Confidence inside government can grow when there is clarity, accountability and acceptance of responsibility. This effort should start from upper levels of government.

2) The international community should continue to support Afghanistan and to harmonize its activities with the government in such a way that will build the capacity of the government.

3) In a democratic regime everyone has the freedom of speech and religion; including what clothes to wear. The international community especially its soldiers in Afghanistan should not call anyone who wears a beard and long clothes a terrorist. The religion, faith and culture of Afghanistan should be respected.

4) Development and rehabilitation should continue all over Afghanistan.

Security

1) Religious teaching should be improved by increasing the number of Madrasas (religious schools), so that youths can study in Afghanistan and not go abroad, where they can be used by fringe groups.

2) The idea of the Regional Security Jirga\(^4\) is sensible. To be more beneficial, the participants should have Jirga experience and candidate selection should be done by people who are influential in their communities.

3) Discussions with the Taliban and other rebels who have demands, should start in earnest. The government of Afghanistan and the international community should give specific and clear authority to delegations so that during talks they talk with open hands. If the demands of rebels are according to the constitution of Afghanistan, there should be no problem accepting them.

4) As mentioned above, if the demands are acceptable for international community and Afghanistan government, tribal and religious elders are ready to use their influence to promote peace among people.

Conclusion

During the two day “Peace Jirga for Security and Reconciliation” meetings, tribal elders showed obvious intentions to participate in the peace and rehabilitation process. They emphasized cooperation, idea exchanges, dialogues, and participating in debates to find ways of reaching peace and security. It shows that the tribal Jirga is not only effective in the southeast, but may be effective all over Afghanistan. The members of this Jirga believe that these kinds of assemblies are the beginning of peace and security, and they asked to hold these kinds of assemblies all over Afghanistan. Meanwhile religious and tribal elders traditionally have a remarkable influence in their regions and their encouragement of people to support peace and rehabilitation is very effective.

\(^4\) Regional security Jirga is Afghanistan and Pakistan creation for ending the border region crisis, and is to be held in August, 2007
Previous governments, due to their ideology and party political goals, were never able to gain popular support, especially with the tribal elders. This is one of the reasons that the tribal elders supported rebels against the government in the past.

Holding the “Peace Jirga for Security and Reconciliation”, shows the potential of a CSO to create constancy, peace, security and rehabilitation in Afghanistan. It also shows the peoples’ interest in creating peace and security in country. The Government of Afghanistan did not reach out to insecure places along the border with Pakistan, but the work was done there by CSOs.

The invitation and participation of 140 religious and tribal elders for talks in Kabul, determines the confidence of these people in these CSOs and their ability to effect activities in insecure regions of Afghanistan. Political media experts believe that force is not the only way to solve the terrorism problem. They believe that creating mutual understanding, rehabilitation, building schools and universities, and also gaining the interest of tribal elders for preventing terrorism, can control terrorism. The control of terrorism through talks with tribal elders, noticing their demands and needs, and gaining their support in rehabilitation program are some of the suggestions that the members of “Peace Jirga for Security and Reconciliation” have suggested to the government.

Because the government of Afghanistan is busy in other matters, it finds it difficult to identify the needs of all people in the current situation, especially in the southeast regions. By holding the “Peace Jirga for Security and Reconciliation” TLO created the opportunity for the government to recognize the exact needs and demands of people and by taking noticing of those needs the government can create its political plan.

6. Saving Ancient Monuments: the work of Telaya Daran Association

History
The social and cultural association of Telaya Daran was established in Baghlan in June, 2004. This association was the continuation of a publication named “Telaya” which was established in 2002 with the aims of developing the culture and art of Afghanistan. After its creation at the end of 2004, Telaya Daran sent a proposal under the name of “Support of Ancient Monuments Program” to the cultural and social foundations in Kabul. This proposal was inspired by the desperate need to inform people about the importance of ancient monuments and the methods to protect and maintain them.

Background of “Support of Ancient Monuments Program”
Baghlan province is one of the historical places of Afghanistan where artifact smugglers have been digging illegally. The Telaya Daran Association informed the governmental authorities about the protection of ancient monuments and informed people about protecting their heritage and ancient monuments.

During past years of war and insecurity, many ancient places in Afghanistan have been damaged because of looting ancient monuments. Many ancient Afghan artifacts have been sold as commercial items in the world market. The business of smuggling ancient artifacts has reached such a level that many places which were historical sites now have become places without ancient monuments or artifacts. Even smugglers have damaged immovable ancient monuments and have sold their parts outside the country.
The government has tried to control and prevent illegal looting of ancient monuments. In the southeast regions of Afghanistan, due to poor insecurity and increased violence these efforts have not worked well. The primary market of Afghanistan’s ancient monuments is Pakistan and smugglers carry ancient monuments via Pakistan to international markets.

Ancient monuments and artifacts are considered as an important heritage of a country. Protecting them is in fact protecting the identity of a country. Telaya Daran knows the sensitiveness of the “Support of Ancient Monuments Program”. They have an information program about protection of historical heritage and suggest that a book about present ancient monuments, destruction and smuggling regarding the ancient monuments and artifacts of Baghlan should be published.

Structure and Method of Work of “Support of Ancient Monuments Program” in Baghlan Province

After receiving the funds at the end of 2004, this program was started by Telaya Daran in Baghlan. In the beginning the Ministry of Information and Culture wrote a letter to the Office of Information and Culture in Baghlan, asking them to help Telaya Daran. Telaya Daran held their first informative assembly in association with the Chief of the Information and Culture office in Baghlan. Then according to schedule, “Support of Ancient Monuments Program” continued in the other 12 district of Baghlan by holding informative seminars about the protection and maintenance of ancient monuments. In these seminars, people responsible for, including the police commissioner of Baghlan and tribal elders from all districts participated. A total of 650 people including government authorities, CSOs and tribal elders participated in these seminars.

In addition to teaching about methods of protecting and maintaining the ancient monuments, Telaya Daran presented their suggestions for protection and prevention of smuggling. Also they promised the government that they would help the government protect ancient monuments, and prevent the illegal looting of historic places. Meanwhile, the Head Office of the Information and Culture Ministry in Baghlan Province telecast these assemblies for free on national television. It was estimated that about 50,000 people watched these broadcasts.

Outcomes of “Support of Ancient Monuments Program”

Government authorities were aware of the importance of ancient monuments, but due to the 12 informative seminars with peoples’ participation, the awareness of governmental responsibility increased. Many people learned through television or from the tribal elders who had participated in these seminars and understood the importance of protecting ancient monuments.

They felt that protecting ancient monuments is their responsibility. According to some surveys by the Head Office of Information and Culture Ministry in Baghlan, people have informed authorities about several cases of smuggling ancient monuments and have prevented the illegal looting. Also, the Head Office of the Information and Culture Ministry in Baghlan reported that there were three instances when people found ancient monuments and artifacts exposed by floods or during construction which were then delivered to Kabul.
According to the Ministry of Information and Culture responsible for Baghlan, people from the “Kok Chenar” region have found a few stones and a pillar; from the Frang district they found a rock from a mosque over which there were some lines and marks. From the Qarghan region district of Dahana Ghori they found several coins, which they delivered to the Head Office of the Information and Culture Ministry in Baghlan. As reported to the Baghlau province Office of Information and Culture, in the past people found ancient artifacts; but they did not deliver them to the government. They thought what they found was gifted wealth, and they sold it to smugglers. After attending the seminars, people deliver the artifacts and ancient monuments to the government as a benefit for Afghanistan. Also, people are more likely to protect the historical places and to inform the government and if they see any illegal activity they inform the government.

Conclusion
Smuggling of historical artifacts and ancient monuments has been profitable in recent years. Due to poverty and ignorance, people have helped smugglers dig up ancient artifacts. After the Bonn agreement the Afghan government began protecting and maintaining historical artifacts and ancient monuments. However, there are still reports of artifact and ancient monument theft and smuggling.

It is necessary for the CSOs and the government to inform people about the value of ancient monuments and artifacts in addition to teaching them that these items represent the historical identity of the nation. The “Support of Ancient Monuments Program”, which was run by Telaya Daran in Baghlan province, is a small effort to save, to protect and to prevent the smuggling of ancient monuments and artifacts.

7. Information for Elders and Religious Leaders: the Cooperation Centre for Afghanistan (CCA)

History
In 1990 a group of Afghan intellectuals and volunteers in Peshawar, Pakistan established the Cooperation Center of Afghanistan (CCA), in order to support human rights, borders and the historical values of Afghanistan. This organization is one of the few CSOs which worked during the Taliban government. Through its offices in Kabul, Mazar-e-Sharif and Bamyan CCA provided many services to people. During the Taliban regime, CCA reported many shocking cases of human rights violation by the Taliban and Northern Alliance forces.

The overall the aim of CCA is to build the capacity of CSOs, human rights organizations and social service organizations by holding workshops, campaigning for justice, teaching refugees and correcting human rights situations. CCA is trying to develop Afghan society and promote the Afghan people through active citizen participation, democratic values, sovereignty of law and the participation of women. In 2002, CCA shifted its central office from Peshawar to Kabul. They also opened offices in Balkh, Bamyan, Kundoz and Wardak provinces.

Background
International financers provided funds for CSOs and NGOs in order to inform people about the election, disarm and demobilize militias, develop the peoples’ awareness of rights, encourage women’s participation in politics, social and economical affairs. An
effective method of informing people in a traditional country like Afghanistan is to rely on preachers and tribal elders. These people are generally respected by the population, and they can easily carry their message to tribal assemblies and mosques. In addition, the preachers and tribe elders are intimately familiar with the social and traditional relations of their society. People follow their ideas in their life. Knowing this, CCA started its first project in Kundoz Province in 2004 with support from USAID/IOM.

This project was carried out in Kundoz centre and the districts of Ali Abad, Qala Zal, Dasht Archi, Khan Abad, Imam Sahib and Chardeh. The project involved teaching human rights, disarmament and demobilization, election and the constitution. It was helped by preachers and tribal elders, authorities from the Hajj and Islamic Affairs Ministry. Some other government employees also participated.

In preparing the teaching materials for this program, the needs of the government in the peace process and the demands of local people and traditional values were considered. The first workshop of this project was held with 60 people participating, including preachers, tribal elders and governments authorities in the conference hall of Kundoz battalion camp. Because part of this project was about disarming and demobilization, the battalion of Kundoz allowed the use of their conference hall. During this project, a total of 360 government employees, tribe elders and preachers were trained.

**Aims of the Project**

1) Creating opportunities for preachers and tribe elders to learn about disarmament and demobilization and their importance in elections.

2) Encouraging and persuading people to participate in elections, by informing preachers and tribal elders.

3) Developing the knowledge of preachers and tribal elders so that they can teach people about the constitution, elections, disarmament and demobilization in mosques and local assemblies.


5) Creating opportunity for debate about women’s rights and their role in social and political partnership.

**Problems of Project**

The main problem of this project was that many preachers and elders lived in scattered regions and it took time to reach them. However, many of the participants in workshops became interested because they found that the information was new to them. Due to traditional beliefs, some participants did not agreed with some of the ideas of the human rights convention, so that they debated about it for a long time until their disagreements were resolved.

**Reaction of Participation in the Workshop**

Some preachers showed their sensitivity about Article six in the human rights convention. They did not agree about wedding of a Muslim girl without any limitation according to law, and they did not accept the freedoms that were being taught. Meanwhile in the presence of the Police Commissioner of the province, workshop participants, officials of the Ministry of Hajj and Islamic Affairs and other government authorities promised that they would share what they learned from this project to the people. They promised that they would help the government and CSOs to encourage and persuade people to
participate in elections, disarmament and demobilization and to decrease the human rights violations.

Support from People for Holding of Workshops
People in the six districts that held workshops, helped the training team, invited them to their houses and helped them invite members to attend these workshops.

Government Support
The Head Office of the Hajj and Islamic Affairs Ministry in Kundoz Province helped the training team invite workshop participants. The Chief of the Hajj and Islamic Affairs Ministry sent a letter to all its administrations in other districts to participate in these workshops, invited other preachers and tribe elders, and attended all workshops which were held in Kundoz center. Also the Battalion No.6 commander gave the battalion hall for training team for their first workshop. Governmental staff helped in security for these workshops and also informed the training team about the security situation.

Conclusion
Changing the processes of a society needs time and holding six workshops can not be very effective in changing the ideas and vision of many people in a province, but it is a start. Due to past despotic regimes, the Afghan people have less interest in participating in political affairs and helping the government. Since Afghanistan is experiencing democracy for the first time, if people understand that the government belongs to them and takes action according to their needs; people will become more interested in participating. This understanding can have a big effect in the role of government and the people in developing government programs. Also, the participation of preachers and tribal elders in this workshop showed their interest. They asked CCA to expand these workshops so that more people could learn about these matters.

Interest in governmental institutions in Kundoz province showed that the government is willing to expand its sovereignty to outlying regions and that believes that this job is possible through teaching and encouraging people. The support of the Ministry of Hajj and Islamic Affairs in Kundoz, Battalion No.6 and municipality of Kundoz province in these workshops illustrates this point. Also it is promising that the governmental institutions believe in and will work with CSOs to use traditional and local methods that are effective to encourage people to participate in political affairs. Also, if the CSOs were not helping the government, it would not be possible is to complete projects like disarmament and demobilization, elections, and collecting ideas about the Constitution.

By training 360 people among the tribal elders and preachers, these districts are some of the most secure districts in Afghanistan. Using methods similar to CCA, other CSOs also have worked in disarmament and demobilization. After the success of the first process, the government has started the second process of disarmament (DIAG).

CSOs are credited with informing people and encouraging the participation of the majority of Afghans to vote in the presidential and parliament elections. The efforts of these organizations have been effective. They have supported the government’s sovereignty to expand and have helped the government to encourage people to support and to participate in elections.
After three years of holding these workshops, a 60 years old participant in Kundoz province said: “After we understood that the government belongs to us and to support the government is in our interest, we tried to reach out to local commanders and armed people who were living in our district. Now there are no armed men in our district, and we solve all our problems through police work and the district law court.”


History
The Independent Association of Living Environment Protection of Baghlan officially started its work in 2003. The main activity of this foundation was to protect and maintain the green areas in the region. Many green areas were captured by warlords and others who built their own houses and gardens. With the help of government some of these areas have been taken back from the people who took them.

ISLEP has rescued areas like: Farhat Hill, Sixty Cottage Garden, Qahwa Khana Garden, municipal parks and the green areas of Maadan girls’ school. These illegal settlements were then changed back to green areas.

The main aims of this organization are:
1. Saving living environment by creating green areas with the help of the government and CSOs.
2. Persuading people to plant trees to improve the climate and beauty of the city.
3. Preventing warlords and others from taking green areas with the help of government authorities.
4. Promoting the peoples’ knowledge, government employees’ knowledge and CSOs’ knowledge of and methods of using the living environment.
5. Saving natural green areas, preventing the cutting of forests and preventing residential construction without a permit that follows the governmental master plan.
6. Creating civil canals and providing clean drinking water with the support of the government.
7. Creating an effective system to dispose of sewage.
8. Preventing illegal hunting of wild animals and birds.

In 2005 with the help of civil and cultural organizations, ISLEP carried out a general survey of natural resources and living environment of Baghlan province. The results of the survey were:
1. The prevention of cutting pistachio trees and other trees is important for the prosperity of the region.
2. The prevention of hunting endangered animals in this province like gazelle, partridge, pig, eagle, fox and fish is needed.
3. Grazing regions have been usurped by people near agricultural areas.

According to claims of ISLEP and confirmed by government employees, since 2005 after the survey there have been no more cases of people trying to usurp the grazing land.
Background
Usurping public lands by warlords has turned into a social problem in Afghanistan. The beginning of taking public land started after the collapse of Dawood Khan’s government in 1979. After the communist coup d’état, legal authority became weak in outlying regions and armed local commanders started to steal public lands. Later the land usurping was not limited to the warlords because ordinary people also took government land.

In part this was because there was not a governmental mechanism to distribute any residential plots to the people. After the people took the land, they started to build houses without permission on the land. In these illegal settlements, there were no services like electricity, water and roads. Because there was no government master plan, sewage and waste disposal was out of control. One of the activities done by ISLEP was the prevention of illegal house construction on governmental land in Poli khumry, a city in Baghlan province.

Prevention of Usurpation from Governmental Lands
At the beginning of 2005, a big part of the Karkar Desert of Poli khumry city was grabbed by a local commander named Mustafa who was on the government staff. Mustafa and his armed collaborators took the land, which Mustafa then distributed among them. He also sold part of this land to other people without documentation.

After buying the land, people purchased materials like stone and other materials to build their houses. Also, Mustafa and the individuals who usurped the lands wanted to build their houses in violation of the master plan. Due to the fact that this area was owned by the government and was not designated as residential land there were no utilities and services such as water, electricity, roads etc.

The staff of ISLEP went with a camera and a video camera to interview Mustafa. They were surrounded by armed people and the commander Mustafa who asked, “Who are you? Who gives you this authority to ask question?”

The ISLEP staff introduced themselves and explained to Mustafa that the area was owned by the government and that usurpation of the land by anyone was a crime. It was not in the government’s plan to build any houses on the land. Also, people who construct houses in this area will face problems because the houses should be built in the city according to the governmental master plan. If not, there will be no facilities and services from the government.

Commander Mustafa consulted with his individuals for a long time. In the beginning they took the cameras and continued their illegal work. Later, they were intimidated by ISLEP which has a very strong reputation and credibility in Baghlan Province. People trust their authority. Mustafa decided to avoid confrontation and made a commitment not to construct houses on this land. As a result, the area was saved as a green area. Also, this land was not usurped by any other people who want to take government lands. Presumably, people realized that if Mustafa avoided building houses, that there was a reason including pressure for him not to use the green area.

ISLEP conducted a communal meeting with the municipality, Karkar Mine Department, Bahglan Gendarmerie Commanding and ordered them not to build houses in Karkar
desert. If they wanted this land to be distributed according to the master plan and map, the green areas, water supply, electricity and roads must be considered. The government staff of Baghlan province, especially the city staff accepted and appreciated the decisions and initiative taken by ISLEP. The role of this organization in preventing the usurpation of public lands and property in Karkar Desert, Puli Khumry city in Baghlan province has been effective.

**Conclusion**

Although the action and initiative of ISLEP as a measure was small and covered a small area of governmental lands, it was a good lesson for other Civil Society Organizations, governmental institutions and people to see how to they could protect public properties and governmental lands.

Today usurpation of governmental, public and even personal properties is a great problem. According to government records, if the usurpation of governmental and public properties is not prevented, this issue will be a great challenge to the government.

The government is paying less attention to the environment in Afghanistan because there are fewer Civil Society Organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations working on this issue. For this reason small actions and initiatives can be very effective. The work of ISLEP is a good example of what CSOs can do in the areas where the Afghanistan government is less active.

9. **Shelter for Returned Migrants: the work of Development and Humanitarian Services for Afghanistan (DHSA)**

**History**

Development Humanitarian Services Organization for Afghanistan (DHSA) was established in 1992 by a group of foreign Afghans from different nations for the purpose of motivating and stimulating immigrants to return to rural areas. Their encouragement was through reconstructing local infrastructure, increasing economic self-reliance, improving the conditions of people’s health, enhancing educational opportunities and increasing local capacities to identify problems and find ways to solve problems. DHSA has taken emergency action and assisted people; but its main purpose and focus is long term development.

The central office of DHSA was established in Kabul and its agency office was established in Peshawar in order to communicate with donor agencies for coordination with other NGOs. The regional office of this organization works in provinces like Bamyan and Mazar-e-Sharif and seven other locations. This CSO is committed to working with all groups of people to increase their social capacities. The policy of DHSA is to recruit local people as much as possible and to encourage participation from the community in designing and implementing all projects and programs. Their programs are monitored in the areas which are covered to ensure that the aims of DHSA are explained and that there is participation in the programs by local representatives and a variety of people.

This CSO has the resources and staff to perform its activities and works with the commitment, cooperation and coordination of other CSOs and NGOs. The first activity area was north of Mazar-e-Sharif province and its activities expanded from there south
from Paktia province, to Nangarhar province on the east and to Herat on the west. Activities also included remote areas and districts, rural areas of Kabul and remote areas in central of Afghanistan.

**Target Groups, Challenges and Opportunities**

Most of Afghanistan is uncultivated and mountainous. The growing seasons are short and the winter is cold. It has been more than a century since continuous migrations took place from different parts of Afghanistan and the people continuously sought better socio-economic status. With the Russian invasion, migrations increased because of the war and the conflict which affected all aspects of life in all parts of Afghanistan. The migrations started in three areas: during the Soviet occupation, some people migrated to Kabul: some migrated to Iran and the others migrated to the north part of Afghanistan.

When the Soviets were defeated in 1989, the partisan wars started in Kabul. The situation became critically dangerous and life became hard. Some people who were in Kabul returned to their residences in other provinces. In addition, a number of migrants returned from Pakistan and Iran to their homeland. The physical and economic recourses of rural areas of Afghanistan became more limited.

The migrants who returned to Afghanistan are very important resources because they may have had new experiences and access to education. Although there are many challenges there are opportunities to use the migrant’s knowledge and skills for reconstruction and development. Some of them have adequate potential and capacities; but they need to be enabled to use their potential to grow and develop - so they can be self-reliant and also motivate other people to return to Afghanistan.

During the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, most of the rural infrastructure was damaged and destroyed. Irrigation and water supply canals were completely destroyed and not maintained. Schools, buildings, and mosques were destroyed completely. Gardens were damaged or were not productive and the animals died. The wells became dirty or damaged. Despite all the problems, there was relative peace and constancy in rural areas in spite of the lack of resources.

**Introduction of Project and Shelter Construction**

At the beginning of 2006, DHSA, with the cooperation of the United Nation High Commission for Refugees, undertook a 5-month project constructing shelters for 400 returning families in Balkh province. This project was implemented in Charbolack, Chamtaal and Naher-e-Shahai districts of Balkh from March 1 to July 31, 2006.

The main purpose of this project was to aid the needy returning families by reconstructing their houses and providing shelter for them in Balkh Province. This project helped the returnees who did not have the ability to construct a house or shelter by themselves. DHSA provided all construction materials, such as windows, doors, wood for covering, shovels, picks, pails, steel, plastic, nails and other materials. In addition, they gave $130.00 to the families for constructing the walls and covering their shelters.

**Performance of Project**

Activities performed so far:

1) At the beginning of the project, experienced expert supervisors and employees were recruited to implement the project in selected areas.
2) Before starting the project, consultative meetings were held with governmental institutions and local senior persons for better performance and implementation of the project in Balkh, Chemtaal, Charbolack and Naher-e-Shahai. The description of the project attracted their cooperation to assist with picking beneficiaries and for implementation of the project.

3) After selecting the target group of beneficiaries, the shelter design started and the construction plans were distributed to the beneficiaries in order to build their houses. These drawings were made by the DHSA office to ensure that the size of windows, doors and roofs would conform to the construction materials that were prepared by DHSA.

4) After distribution of the shelter plans, the construction activity was started by the people and the process was supervised by DHSA employees. With cooperation of UNHCR and DORR, the field office of DHSA in Balkh successfully completed the shelter projects. The project in the areas they covered did not create problems for people, governmental organs and local consultants, rather they accelerated their cooperation.

Result/ Achievements:
1) One hundred nineteen returned families, including the most vulnerable families, owned shelters in Naher-e-Shahai district.
2) Eighty-one families have been provided shelter in Balkh district.
3) The 100 most vulnerable families now have a dining room.
4) 100 of families in Charbolack district own their own shelter.

Micro Studies 4: Shaista Gul is the Owner of a House Now

Shaista Gul is the head of an 11-member family living in Chemtaal district. He previously lived as a migrant in Karachi, Pakistan. He sold fruit on one of the streets of Karachi. He said that he was not satisfied with his life in Pakistan because of his extreme poverty and his lack of an adequate shelter for his family in a strange country. One day his youngest daughter became sick. He went to many hospitals in Karachi to get treatment for his daughter but she was not admitted. He lost his work because he spent all of his money on his daughter’s treatment and had none left to buy more fruit to sell. During this time a terrorist event happened in Karachi and the police started investigating immigrants. Shaista Gul was taken to jail by the Karachi police and he spent about 6 months in prison. He finally proved that he was innocent and he was released from jail. When he returned home, he found out that his youngest daughter had died. Shaista Gul worked hard for one month and after earning enough money, he returned with his family to Afghanistan.

During the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, Shaista Gul lost his house and when he returned he did not have work or any place to live in his homeland. Finally the DHSA shelter construction project started in Chemtaal district. The first local person to be introduced to the consultants was Shaista Gul. With the help of DHSA, he built his house where he is currently living with his family. With the $130 he received from DHSA, Shaista Gul was able to establish a small shop in residence.

When one of micro-finance foundations came to Chemtaal district, Shaista Gul was the first person to take a business loan from this foundation. Now he earns his family’s livelihood and he is very happy and says, “If I was still in Pakistan, I am not sure what would happen to me! When I was there, I could not cure my daughter because I did not have money and my daughter died.” He tells that although his economic condition is not as good as it could be, he is living in his
country and he has a home. His children are going to school and he is working. Shaista Gul still hopes to improve his life.

Conclusion
Shasta Gul is one example among hundreds of people that own their own house after returning from abroad. Thousands immigrant families have returned to their country from Pakistan and Iran and do not have shelter yet. The problem of having shelter is not only one experienced by returned immigrants but it is also a huge problem for Afghan citizens already living here.

After the Bonn Agreement, the Afghan government promised to grant land to all returned immigrants; but the problem of shelter was not solved. Shelter construction requires expenditures for returned immigrants who do not always have money. The construction of 400 shelters from DHSA with the cooperation of UNHCR to improve the livelihood of returned immigrants is an example of DHSA’s cooperation with people. These organizations build shelters when the Afghan government is not able to build shelters. Also, the work of these organizations creates employment opportunities for a large number of people.


History
The Afghanistan Social Justice and Law foundation is a legal institution licensed by the Ministry of Justice, established in 2003. This organization works for the expansion of legal, constancy of democracy and cultural promotion, maintaining and respecting human right through legal training programs for governmental staff, especially for the staff of Justice and Law.

Training Government Staff through Conducting Workshops
From the beginning of its establishment, the Afghan Social Justice and Law Foundation has affected all aspects of Afghan society. The governmental institutions which undertook the responsibility to ensure justice in society has a low understanding of these issues which has affected their capacity to do this work. This lack of knowledge was the cause of incorrect implementation of rules and the violation of human rights by Justice and Law institutions.

The Afghan government has undertaken the acceptance of some of the most important points in the Geneva Convention including the political and civil rights conventions, human rights international declaration, the removal of all discrimination against woman, the forbidding torture and more. The new Constitution includes the rights covered in the Geneva Convention; but, many of the government staff especially those who work in the implementation of the law do not completely understand what the Constitution means.

After three decades of war, they are not familiar with these concepts. Realizing this fact, Afghanistan Social Justice and Legal Foundation conducts training programs for the staff of the Justice and Law administration. The activities provide assistance to the government by teaching governance rules, culture and respect for human rights.
Implemented Training Programs

1) A three day workshop for 40 employees about Rule Implementation and Human Rights for males and females who work at prisons, Children’s Improvement and Department, and the Legislation and Case Department of the Ministry of Justice.

2) A two day workshop about Human Rights Maintenance in jails for 35 professional staff of the Prison Department.

3) A two day workshop about the Maintenance of Human Rights investigation process for 35 professional employees of the Investigation Department, Department of Rules Implementation and Authorization of High Court Rules Department.

4) A two day training workshop about Human Rights International Standard for Rules Implementation for 40 employees of the Criminal Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

5) A training course about the Human Rights Maintenance in Courts for 30 staff of Court Judges of Kabul districts.

The Aims of Training Programs

1) To increase the awareness levels of the Justice Administration staff about human rights, their responsibilities in maintaining and implementing the Constitution and the Afghanistan and Human Rights International Declaration.

2) To identify the problems, factors and reasons for weaknesses of Justice and judicial action and to ensure the rules and laws are based on human rights values.

3) To create a climate of cooperation and to ensure cooperation among CSOs and NGOs in following governmental rules and to ensure justice is based on acceptable values of human rights in society.

Understanding Transitional Justice and Awareness Related to the Government Act Program for Justice Peace and Consolidation

The Afghanistan Social Justice and Legal Foundation implemented an awareness program with discussions about Transitional Justice and the Afghan Government Act Program for Justice, Peace and Consolidation. This was done with the financial support of the Independent Human Rights Commission of Afghanistan in the six provinces of Parwan, Kapisa, Panjshir, Logar, Wardak and Ghazni.

The Afghan Government Act Program was announced by the government on December 10, 2006 for Justice, Peace and Consolidation. This program documented war crimes against humanity in the last 30 years. Also, the program tries to find the reality related to war crimes and crimes against humanity in Afghanistan. Understanding transformational justice is new in Afghanistan and requires considerable effort. Some of the AWEC researchers are working on transitional justice issues especially with the Government Act Program for Justice, Peace and Consolidation and try to find documents about crimes against humanity during the wars to achieve consolidation and forgiveness mechanisms for conciliation now that the wars are over.

Beneficiary groups

The beneficiaries of the Transitional Justice Understanding Program were the prison staff including the administration for Parwan, Kapisa, Panjshir, Logar, Wardak and Ghazni provinces. The employees of the Women’s Affairs Ministry, members of provincial and district assemblies, employees of the Justice and Judiciary Ministry, judges and
Prosecutors also attended this program. In each province, 25 people participated with a total of 150 in the 6 provinces.

**Supporting Method and Interest of Government Authorities in the Provinces**

The Governors of these six provinces praised this project by sending official letters to government officials. The Governor of Parwan province asked the Social Rights and Justice Foundation to expand these programs and said that many employees of the government should know about applying transitional justice and how to promote the values of human rights.

During these discussions, some of the government officials had negative opinions about transitional justice, human rights and civil society. They considered that values like transitional justice, human rights and civil society are western concepts that were trying to spoil the culture of Afghanistan. One of participants of these workshops said that if these concepts did not exist, we would not be obliged to send our daughters to schools and to work which limits our enthusiasm for this work. By the end of these workshops, this person believed that by using the principals of human rights and justice a civil society can be developed.

According to the point ov view of the Afghanistan Social Rights and Justice Foundation, the participants learned that the level of knowledge of people, particularly government employees, about the concept of transitional justice, human rights and civil society were very low - which is why they were not supporting civil society aims. After attending these workshops, employees of the government seemed satisfied, and apologized to the Social Rights and Justice Foundation for their previous misunderstanding about some matters related to transitional justice, human rights and civil society.

**Conclusion**

The Government of Afghanistan has agreed with the Geneva Convention regarding human rights; but, many of the points in the convention are not understood or explained to their employees. There are reports about the bad attitudes of government employees, especially those who are working in justice and law institutions. In group debates which were held in provinces, most of people asked the CSO to teach employees about human rights convention, constitution and other law.

The programs related to understanding transitional justice were a small part of the efforts made by the Afghanistan Social Rights and Justice Foundation to impart knowledge that the people and the government need. However, this small effort can have a large effect on the employee’s attitude in the six provinces where the programme was held and the program can be a proper example for the employees of other provinces. It is a common saying that small changes can result in big changes. Teaching employees about human rights and transition justice can result big changes, and can encourage people to help and support the government.
History
NEC is an NGO established in Peshawar, Pakistan in 2001 with the help of volunteer women in order to support children and women. This group found that there was a large demand among Afghan women and youth to be taught and trained. Teaching Afghan women and building their capacity is a priority in Afghan society. NEC was established due to this reason, and believes that “instead of hating the darkness, it is better to light a candle”.

In the beginning NEC started a class for training tailoring skills, in order to create income for some widows and orphans. Later, this CSO started educational and informative programs based on gender, human rights, English classes, literacy courses, holy Quran, professional training, health educations and language for the deaf. NEC also created a library under the name of Nazoanna. After moving from Pakistan to Kabul in 2002, NEC continued to concentrate on its educational programs, and has implemented projects in teaching gender, human rights, psychological and social matters, and peace and abolition of violence against women.

Aims of NEC
1) Spreading information and knowledge about the abolition of differences in society and the rehabilitation of native land, among Afghan people.
2) Supporting women and children of Afghanistan (including widows, orphans and disabled) to be independent and self sufficient through professional teaching and capacity building.
3) Encouragement of skilled people for guidance, support and teaching their skills to other people.
4) Applying and arranging technical trainings for society and employees (personal and governmental sector) and gathering human resources by applying training, capacity building, workshops and justice activities.

The Youth Committee Project for Violence Abolition against Women
The Youth Committee was founded by NEC in 2006 in Ghazni province, in a place where violence against women is a common matter. NEC with the help of USAID helped the Youth Committee project to solve violence against women in Ghazni so that with training they can be leaders in the future. NEC was in contact with some youth before this project, but without financial support, necessary cooperation and educational programs, it was impossible to start the project.

During one year, NEC trained 255 youths, which included 155 boys and 100 girls. In the first stage, NEC put 24 youth in two groups of boys and girls and created workshops on matters of leadership, management skills, community mobilization and methods of working in a society. After the training, every youth trained another five youths. The youth who were trained by trainers and teachers of NEC, were responsible for activities like justice, networking with media, arranging debates in schools, propaganda awareness sessions in mosques, and arranging meetings with government employees and authorities.
Results of Creating Youth Committee to Abolish Violence against Women

After receiving the training, different teams of boys and girls were created that went to residential areas for 13 days to talk about abolishing violence against women as follows:

1) Eight schools (Hakim Sanye, Khwaja Ali girls school, Jaan Malika, Plan Shahi, Khak Ghariban, Khwaja Ali boys school, Moqor and Hamza)
2) Two cultural centres (Omid Jawan (hope of youths) and Hakim Sanaye)
3) Three wedding ceremonies in Khak Ghariban, Plan Shahi and Deh Haji.
4) Five mosques in villages of Ghazni province.
5) This team contained 20 members of girls and boys, two facilitators (on women and one man). Because these youths were school students, their activities were divided for one session in the morning and in the afternoon; their plan was to debate on violence and its bad effects on society.

Effect of Campaign

Effects of the campaign were very successful. Youth in this campaign presented their theories very well and even elders were interested in these debates. These activities continued from 25th May till 8th June, 2006.

Youth Committee Program Work for Violence Abolition against Women

1) Consecutive meetings with people, women, elders and preachers.
2) Weekly meetings of committee. Some intellectuals of Ghazni province participated in these meetings which were for revising the week activities and solving its deficiencies.
3) Holding three workshops for the improvement of the psychological and social situation of society, society mobilization, gender and development from NEC.
4) Preparing trips for youth to go to Kabul and arranging meetings for youth with Afghanistan Human Rights Independent Commission officials and some other human rights foundations and women rights organizations.
5) In order to promote and build the capacity of youth, they were taught computer literacy and English language. Boys got admission in Maiwand English Language Center and provided teachers and facilities in NEC for girls in Ghazni province. Also, by having internet connection the youth have better chances to share their information.
6) Holding assemblies for the teachers and parents of the youths who were trained in this committee provided the opportunity to know about the effects of this committee among family members.

Micro Study 5: Hameed Has Launched Radio Omid Jawan (Hope of Youths) To Abolish Violence against Women

After being trained and participating in assemblies of this committee, Hameed found that abolitions of violence against women can be decreased through the media. He launched the Radio Omid Jawan (Hope of Youth) in Ghazni province with the help of NEC, other youth of the committee and the support of international donors. In the proposal for Radio Omid Jawan sent to financiers, Hameed stated that many people in Ghazni province are poor and cannot afford to use video or printed media; but, the people of Ghazni listen to the radio as a tradition.

This is why Hameed thought that it was better to carry messages of about the abolition of violence against women on the radio. According to Hameed’s point of view, there were other radio programs about the abolition of violence against women, but their programs were based on other matters in Afghanistan not specific to Ghazni. When the information did not apply to the people of Ghazi they did not listen to the radio programs with interest. Hameed proposed that a radio
Micro Study 6: Instead of Suicide Fatima Is Now Working for Abolition of Violence against Women

14 years old Fatima who was studying in seventh class of school in Ghazni province, was sad for some days and she was not speaking with her classmates. Sharifa who was her classmate and a member of the Youth Committee noticed Fatima’s sadness.

One day Fatima told to Sharifa, that she needed some medicine for her mother. They went together to buy medicine. Fatima bought a lot of medicine without any prescription. Sharifa asked, “Why are you buying so much medicine without a physician’s prescription?” At first Fatima lied; but, finally she told Sharifa that her father was arranging her marriage with an old man in return for 400,000 Afg. She said that her father was not accepting anyone’s opinion about this matter and that before getting married with an old man, she wanted to commit suicide and end the problem.

Sharifa took the medicines from Fatima and shared this matter with NEC, members of the committee and her teachers to find a way to stop Fatima from having to get married or committing suicide. Employees of NEC arranged a group of elders with two preachers, including trainers of NEC and consulted several time with Fatima’s father. After long debates with Fatima’s father over the marriage of Fatima and the laws of Sharia (religious law of Islam) about marriage, they finally they succeeded in convincing Fatima’s father not to force Fatima to marry. Now Fatima is studying and working for violence abolition against women, including forced marriages in one of Youth Committee and trying to explain and teach human rights to women and girls to inform them about the advantages of an independent life.

Support of Government Authorities and People

During the workshops people participated with interest. Meanwhile, the Ghazni Head Office of the Education Ministry helped the schools where the members of the Youth Committees were studying. When the youth were in the workshops they were not counted as absent from school. This support from the Education Ministry and the schools helped NEC to hold their workshops properly and helped the students complete their project successfully.

Conclusion

One of the most important social challenges in Afghanistan has been efforts for the abolition of violence against women. The Afghanistan government, international donors, and women rights organizations have made lots of efforts for the realization of Afghan women rights, to the extent that at present a Ministry of Women’s Affairs Ministry exists in the Afghanistan cabinet. Many of the activities of this ministry are concerned with policy making for the abolition of violence against women and the creation of legal equity for women.
The efforts of the Ministry of Women’s Affairs have persuaded international donors to give priority to specific aspects and activities for the benefit of women. Efforts for the abolition of violence against women and the creation of legal equality on the whole are the goals which this ministry follows in its policies.

The activity of Committees for the abolition of violence against women in Ghazni province supported by NEC are appreciable since this center has chosen youth to campaign for the abolition of violence against women and has trained them. Since the youth have managed to become campaigners for the abolition of violence against women due to their age, they can easily convey important subjects about the abolition of violence against women to people at home, school or society. As the future of the society they are teaching gender equality values among men and women.

After learning at the NEC education center workshops and teaching other youth, the youth are committed to gender equality. Youth participants agreed that when they have married and had children, the men will not use violence against their wives, and they will try to convey their information to their children. They also agreed that their children will be brought up in a family environment free of violence that is committed to the values of gender equality and respect to women’s rights. One of the most important problems to solve in Afghanistan has been that children and teenagers learn violence against women from their fathers and then use violence in their marital life.

The constitution of Afghanistan has obliged the government to support families, the abolition of violence against women and to create equal opportunities for women in social, economic, political arenas. For the newly established government of Afghanistan, it is difficult to create all these conditions all over the country in a short time to fulfill the commitment to the Constitution. The support of the governmental institutions for the establishment of CSOs such as NEC has pioneered the ground for fulfilling governmental responsibilities toward citizens through these organizations. Although the activities of NEC have been small proportionally to the country and only worked with small groups of Afghan youths, these activities have been significant for the people who participated in them. These activities were in the interest of improving the welfare of the welfare of Afghanistan people and have paved the way for some citizens to understand their rights and responsibilities by using rational, scientific and legitimate methods of behavior towards women and family members.

12. Voluntary Peace Committees: the work of the Afghan Women’s Skill Development Center (AWSDC)

History
Afghan Women’s Skill Development Center (AWSDC) was created in 1999 with the help of Afghan women in Pakistan with the mission of serving Afghan women. The first step of this organization was to serve the women and girls who were being tortured and treated violently by having workshops, educational and informative courses for creating social peace. In 2001, AWSDC moved to Afghanistan and started its activities.

AWSDC created a general program to inform women of their rights in an Islamic society, to make Afghan women economically capable, and to promote their capacity. This
organization was determined to find ways for women to cooperate in economical, political and social affairs.

**Aims and Goals of AWSDC**

1) Promoting and developing the capacity and skills of poor Afghan women and children.
2) Having peace in all of Afghanistan.
3) Supporting women and girls to learn skills according to their capability by preparing facilities for them.
4) Informing people about women’s rights in society according to Islamic principles and the laws of Afghanistan.
5) Informing people about the rights of children in a society according to Islamic principles and community life in Afghan society.
6) Participating in national or international assemblies, to represent women and carrying their messages and needs to national or international assemblies.

**Building Social Peace Project**

The Building Social Peace Project was granted by an Irish organization (TROCARA) to AWSDC in 2005. After which, AWSDC applied the project in Parwan province in the districts of Jabul Seraj. In this project five committees and one general assembly were created to solve family matters and conflicts.

**Structure and Aims of Peace Committee**

The aim of creating these committees and the general assembly in Jabul Seraj was to abolish the violence, especially violence against women and create a culture of peace. These committees worked on family matters with the advice of people in related regions. Each committee consisted of 30 people including government employees, influential people, preachers, teachers and Jihad commanders.

Jabul Seraj district is divided into five regions, which includes Monara, Hesara, upper Gulbahar, lower Gulbahar and the center of the district - and one committee was started in each region. In each committee there are an equal number of women and men that have the responsibility for the region. People meet with these committees when they have problems in order to find a way to solve them. These committees try to solve problems through national assemblies and through understanding the issues. If the problems can not be solved by the committee, the committee refers it to the government authorities.

**Methods of Creating the Committees**

During the creation of the committees, AWSDC holds workshops about human rights, societal development, and gender. After the workshops AWSDC gives small loans of $2,000 to the committee members to work on their economic situation. The loans are paid back to AWSDC at a later date.

**Government Relations with Peace Committees**

Government authorities in the district of Jabul Seraj know about these committees and their work. The government authorities want matters that they do not want referred to Parwan province to be solved by these committees. Also the government authorities in Jabul Seraj believe that the people’s problem should be solved in the committees when possible through the cooperation of the people.
The People’s Role in this Project

These committees have been created with the help of the people in the regions. Through the people’s voluntary participation, there has been a change in people’s minds about the responsibility of local and regional matters. Also, the people participate more in local programs. Before the creation of these committees, people were referring all their problems to the governmental institutions. This required a lot of governmental staff time. Also, sometimes the people paid bribes to get their problems solved. The work of the committees has lessened the amount of little problems that are taken to the government for solutions. Now, the problems that are taken to the government are the ones that the committee can not solve.

Outcomes of this Project

1) Abolishing irresponsible attitudes and creation of a attitudes of cooperation and unity.
2) Encouraging self confidence and self reliance in all life affairs.
3) Solving family matters by committees without referring them to the government.
4) Solving violence against women in the presence of women along with men.

Micro Study 7: The Woman Who Wants the Help of the Peace Committee for her Inheritance

A family with one sister and two brothers lived in Jabul Seraj district. Their mother died during the wars and the father died a few years ago due to heart disease. After the death of their father, the two brothers were using violence against their sister and were not giving her the share of her inheritance that belonged to her. One day the sister complained to the local and district authorities to get her share of the inheritance. One of her brothers was wealthy and wanted to give her the inheritance, but the other brother who was poor did not want to give her anything.

The neighbors informed the Peace Committee about this problem, and the committee summoned them for a meeting to solve their problem. Again, one of her brothers agreed to give her the inheritance; but, the other brother did not. The committee calculated the correct inheritance for the woman and gave the brother’s eight months time to pay their share to their sister.

After receiving her inheritance from her one brother, she moved in with him on the advice of the Peace Committee because she did not have the means to live alone. Eventually the woman received her inheritance from her second brother. She used this money to buy a business.

Conclusion

Family violence especially against women is one the main causes of women not receiving their inheritance. However, Islam and the government of Afghanistan have guaranteed the rights of inheritance to women. In the case of the women who received her inheritance with the help of the Peace Committee, perhaps it is one case out of ten cases that was not solved immediately.

People in Afghanistan are willing to solve their problems through government, due to a lack of local organizations that can solve their problem. Meanwhile the creation of Peace Committees is an effort to create a volunteer work attitude among people. Referring problems to the government is difficult due to bureaucracy and bribery among governmental institutions, especially judges. This means that people can not access their rights, or they access their rights later than expected. Since the members of the Peace

48
Committees know the local people well, solving many local problems can be done effectively and quickly.

Also, solving problems locally can help to decrease local and tribal problems and causes a decrease in governmental involvement in local problems. That way the government can concentrated better on securing peace, security, and interfere in other special cases, not the small local and tribal cases, which can be solved by a local committee. In addition, the creation of a volunteer attitude through people’s participation results in more responsible citizens.
Part Four: Problems, Solutions and Proposals

Problems, Solutions and Proposals
Whatever the CSOs or NGOs are doing directly or indirectly benefits the government. For example, if a Civil Society Organization wants to establish an educational program, if a NGO wants to build a school, or if a CSOs tries to train government officials all these activities converge and give some benefit to the interests and responsibilities of the government.

However, due to a distorted understanding of CSOs and NGOs activities many officials and people think that these organizations are working against or are rivals of the government. People think that CSOs and NGOs undermine the position of government. This notion, as shown in the examples shown in Part 3 of this research, is not right. Many CSOs want to support governmental institutions and want to make the foundations of the governmental institutions effective and skilled in supervising, teaching and advocacy. Also, the CSOs want to support government institutions by providing educational, legal and social services to encourage people’s participation and make people more active citizens. By doing this, they augment not only the people’s participation in the national processes but also help the people to perceive their rights and responsibilities as a civil person.

The suggestions below come from this research and from the views of CSOs workers, employees of NGOs, government officials, intellectuals, clerks and trainers who are concerned about improving the relations between CSOs and government institutions. These views are derived from the opinions of the focus groups during our discussions in the provinces: these tended to find a mechanism for describing the relations between CSOs and government institutions and rectify people and others’ perception of the CSOs’ activities. The following propositions are also meant to help CSOs forming and organizing their relations with the government.

Training Government Employees
During our focus group discussions in the provinces, many government and CSO employees argued that the lack of knowledge of laws is the base of misperceptions about the CSOs’ activities. Thus they wanted to train government employees about what were legal activities so that the government employees would treat CSOs in agreement with the law.

According to CSOs and NGOs’ employees, a large number of government employees think that when CSOs or NGOs take official permission from government institutions for their activities, this means that they should also be obedient to the government and this can substantially limit the value of a CSO’s work. While government institutions have a facilitating role for Civil Society Organizations they should not control the CSOs’ general operations. The government institutions should instead provide the legal framework for the conditions of work that is done by CSOs.

Also, if CSOs have a formal status as part of the government and are not independent from the government, they are no longer civil society which defined as non-governmental and no-commercial. As mentioned before, the government, by its nature, tends to centralization and domination, whereas CSOs are formed on the basis of the people’s civil
and democratic participation. In general they tend to decentralize and be independent of
the governmental institutions. Since many Afghan governmental institutions are loath to
decentralize, many governmental institutions want Civil Society Organizations to submit
unconditionally to its orders.

According to the people, a part of this problem comes from the incompatibility of some of
the Afghan governmental institutions with democratic practices. Because civil activities
and the creation of CSOs are an unfamiliar phenomenon in many cases, government
institutions do not know how to behave toward a CSO.

For instance, in one of the provinces of the research, a number of government officials
did not participate in our focus group discussion, presuming that their participation in
such a focus group discussion would be show a preference for the CSO that held the
event. They told us that their participation would create a false assumption that they have
a special relation with a specific CSO and consequently they would be accused of paying
more attention to that specific CSO.

Their fear of being accused of supporting a specific CSO is understandable. This fear
comes from their past experience of working with CSOs. It is also possible that CSOs
might have created such a vision about their participation with government institutions.

In another province of the research, the officials of the Economic Department including
the directors were not ready to answer our questions. AWEC researchers tried to
convince them that according to the Constitution, every Afghan citizen has the right to
have information about government activities. AWEC researchers explained that
governmental institutions need to provide information about their activities regardless of
what organization is asking questions. The Economic Department wanted the AWEC
researchers to get an official order signed by the governor prior to answering any
questions.

At other governmental institutions, AWEC researchers did not have problems getting
information. AWEC researchers thought that the reluctance of the Economic
Department to answer questions was because of the reasons mentioned above including
that since CSOs need for official government registration, therefore CSOs need to be
under government control.

The lack of constitutional knowledge and the formal procedures for getting official
permission for CSOs are the basis of some government officials incompatibility with the
work of CSOs. Nevertheless, AWEC findings, based on the individual questionnaires,
show that in many cases, government officials feel responsible to cooperate with CSOs
due to the law.

Chart No.1 shows of the number of answers from the 66 government officials regarding
the question whether they feel responsible by law to cooperate with CSOs.
While the results of the survey of government officials shows that the majority believe they should help CSOs by law, the experience of CSOs reported shows that many CSOs are not satisfied with the help of the government.

Government officials generally provide better assistance to CSOs’ employees if they have good relationship with them. If government officials do not have a good relationship with CSOs, they engage them in administrative and bureaucratic matters that sometimes cause CSOs to abandon their projects or results in the project not being done on time. In many cases, bureaucratic issues cause projects to be slower than planned and decrease the quality of the projects. CSOs’ employees say that in some cases much of the time...
allocated for the project is spent on in administrative matters which effects on the quality of project.

The CSOs expressed a desire to manage projects properly to maintain good relations with their donors; recognizing that bad management of projects generally has bad effects on the potential for future donations. When projects are managed poorly, the donors ask why the project was not completed properly. When AWEC researchers mentioned this problem in focus group discussions, many of participants asked for training workshops for government officials to teach them more about the laws of Afghanistan and to understand the laws related to their relationships with CSOs.

Training and Capacity Building of Civil Society Organizations
CSOs involved in this research were applying for projects about the information of rights, gender, the Constitution, solving conflicts and the abolition of violence. These types of projects generally are effective in outlying regions and even cities of Afghanistan. However, due to illiteracy and the lack of facilities to connect to provincial capitals many people in outlying regions do not know about their duties and rights regarding the government, their family and other members of society. Holding workshops about rights, gender, the Constitution, solving conflicts, and the abolition of violence are therefore an effective strategy for increasing the level of knowledge of rural people.

One of the matters of interest to AWEC researchers was that CSOs who participated in workshops for rights training, gender, the Constitution, solving conflicts, and the abolition of violence often have a low literacy level, and had difficulties with having trainers that could not explain their main points to participants of the workshops. It was noted that some trainers were not professional trainers, but just people who had been participants of this type of workshop and even when they had been trained they had difficulty teaching the main topic.

As topics of the workshops are generally scientific or related to other social sciences, when a trainer had a question from participants outside of the main topic, but related to the workshop, the trainer often could not answer the question properly. This problem causes difficulties about the impact of the Civil Society Organizations’ workshops. In addition, participants can be confused because they can not understand the topics properly.

When AWEC researchers mentioned this problem in focus group discussions, some participants believed that the experience of CSOs and NGOs are new in Afghanistan and that employees should be trained further in order to teach beneficiaries properly. Some believed that training civil society organizations’ employees can be useful in efficacy of the projects, because the information of CSOs’ employees can have a significant effect on the beneficiaries of projects. This is because CSOs’ employees are closely in contact with people, and can carry the meaning and aims of CSOs to the people. This is particularly true in workshops where people learn about civil society.

Another point AWEC researchers noticed during this research was that many CSOs’ employees did not seek employment in CSOs for the purpose of doing civil society work. Instead, their main aim was to have a better salary and more benefits from CSOs. This is in part due to excessive poverty in Afghanistan and the lack of balance between CSOs and government institutions. The possibility of having a good salary is one of the main
reasons that many experts sought employment with CSOs after 2001. CSOs funded with international donations tend to have higher salaries than any other social sector.

This issue shows that being an employee in a CSO does not mean that the employee necessarily believes in civil values or that they consider their work in terms of the aims of a civil society. In many cases, employees of CSOs obey the traditional beliefs and local customs, and when given a choice between selecting a civil society initiative or a traditional value, they select the second.

Coordination with Governmental Institutions and People in Implementing Projects

During this research AWEC researchers discovered that sometimes CSOs and NGOs unknowingly implement projects in some areas where people do not need them. Some of government employees and local people believed that NGOs and CSOs do not survey peoples’ requirements in advance and accordingly implement projects. They thought that CSOs and NGOs implement projects according to their own wishes and implement them in areas without knowing that whether the people need them or not.

For example the residents of a village in Paktia province complained that a NGO has built a school in their village, but the school is closed since it has been built, because the number of kids in the village is not sufficient enough to start a school there. They said that they had to collectively pay the salary of a guard so that he could protect the school building; otherwise they feared that in case of not using the school, the building might be destroyed. Therefore it was necessary to employ a guard to protect the building of the school.

In Parwan province, the local people complained that the CSOs have not done enough work for the awareness of women from their rights. The only active institution in this field in the province was Afghan Girls and Women Skills Learning Center, whose programs mainly concentrated on creating small peace committees in local areas.

Some of the participants in the community discussions said that, being close to the capital city and knowing about the local rites and traditions that hinder women’s participation in social and economic fields, the people of Parwan wanted women widely and actively to participate in social and economic fields, but women were not willing to participate due to a lack of literacy and awareness of women about their rights. They said that therefore the CSOs and NGOs should provide workshops for women in learning their rights and responsibilities. They said that the majority of men in the province have no problems about the participation of women in social, political, and economic fields, but it is the women themselves who are not willing to participate in the proceedings due to illiteracy and having been for long kept away from political and social affairs.

In most of the provinces in which the research was carried out people said that CSOs plan and implement their projects not according to peoples’ needs, but according to the requirements of the donors. They said that CSOs often refer to donor organizations in Kabul to find out which projects they are funding, then for those projects the Afghan CSOs apply and implement them in remote areas. In most of the occasions the implementation of those projects does not solve people’s problems and sometimes the projects increase the people’s burden due to their responsibility for maintaining the projects.
Some of the participants explained that CSOs and NGOs work in this fashion in order to afford their administrative expenses and to gain profit for other activities. Participants recommended that CSOs and NGOs should go to areas where they want to implement projects and find out what the people there need and what projects should be contemplated before they start implementing projects. Participants said that many surveys of people’s needs and requirements shows the need for funds which no international donor organization is willing to pay. In addition, Afghan CSOs are not ready to assess the need of project implementation with people before every project.

Some CSOs and NGOs accepted this opinion as a common problem. CSOs whose provincial representatives were active in provinces, said that in most cases they do not have a role in planning projects. Rather, it is their main office in Kabul that takes projects and sends them to the provinces for implementation according to opportunities and programs funding from donor organizations.

At the same time CSOs whose main offices were in the provinces said that they are dependent on the donor organizations to offer them projects to implement. Also, the authorities of many of these organizations stated that in most cases they plan a project according to the announcements of donor organizations. According to them it has rarely happened that a plan by them has been accepted by donor organizations without their previous announcement. According to them, donor organizations regulate their projects on the basis of their own policies and the sector in which they are interested, then they supply funds for CSOs and NGOs to implement them.

Dependence of CSOs and NGOs of Afghanistan upon international donors in planning and implementation of projects shows that their operations rather follow the conditions and requirements of donors than the needs of people, political and economic conditions of Afghanistan. This means that often limitation from above prevents the people priorities from being considered, and that institutions plan and implement projects in which policies of donors are more important that the requirements of people.

Our participants in community debates suggested that a coordinative committee in each province should be created to coordinate the implementation of CSOs projects. In view of community debates amongst participants of this research, this committee should include delegates from authoritative CSOs and NGOs of that province who are elected by elections among the CSOs member of the committee, and on the other hand, some local elders, president and vice-president of provincial assembly, economic affairs president and some other governmental employees.

The working method of the committee should be such that it shall meet once in a month, in which CSOs and NGOs present their project plans to the committee and ask the committee views. The plans may include those proposed by donor organizations and also projects which are proposed by CSOs and NGOs to donor organizations.

This committee should classify the needs of people in different fields and specify which needs have priority, according to which CSOs and NGOs may regulate their projects. On the other hand provincial assemblies which make developmental plans of each province should specify fields in which CSOs and NGOs may work.
As well it will be the responsibility of provincial committees to observe the problems of CSOs and government institutions associated with them in their monthly meetings and find solutions. The coordinative committee among government and CSOs in some cases can supervise the projects of CSOs and report its progress to donor organizations and the beneficiaries.
Appendix 1

Questionnaires developed for the research

In this research three kinds of questionnaire were used, one for CSO employees, one for governmental institution employees, and one for focus group discussions. All of the questionnaires started with:

Hello, I am an employee of Afghan Women’s Education Center. With the help of Aga Khan Development Network, AWEC is doing research about Afghanistan’s civil society. The aims of this research are to:

- To discover the problems, challenges and achievements of CSOs
- To record contact level with people, CSOs and government institutions
- To determine the coordination level of people and governmental institutions with Civil Society Organizations.

During this research the maximum effort will be made to gather the statistics and facts impartially. Respectively, AWEC will make a report according to the findings of the research, in which the collected data will be analyzed, and suggestions will be made according to the findings for improvements to the coordination level between CSOs with government institutions, and vice versa, and the importance of coordination, communication and networking among these groups.
Questionnaire for Civil Society Organizations Employees

Name of Surveyor:  Date:  Province:  City/Village:
Type of interview:  a. Individual  b. Group

Demographic information about the person being interviewed:
Sex:  Male / Female
Age:  a. 18-25 years  b. 25 to 32 year  c. 32 to 40 years  d. above 40 years
Educational level  a. Baccalaureate  b. Higher education

Questionnaire:
1. How long has your CSO been working in this region?
   a. 1-2 years
   b. 3-4 years
   c. 5-7 years
   d. 8-10 years
2. Has your organization been funded by the government for a program?
   a. Yes
   b. No
3. If yes, in which of these governmental programs has your office been involved with?
   a. National Solidarity
   b. Election process
   c. Constitution process
   d. Reconstruction program
   e. Other
4. How is the behavior of the staff of the governmental institutions with you while you were working together?
   a. Great
   b. Good
   c. Not good
   d. Depends on the institution
5. If the behavior of governmental institution depends on the institution, what is the reason for this?
   a. Your personal relationship
   b. Benefit of the institution from your project
   c. Benefit of the institution head from your project
   d. Benefit of people from your project
   e. Other reasons
6. How is the coordination level of government institutions with you?
   a. Very good coordination
   b. Good coordination
   c. Occasional coordination
   d. The governmental institution expects some benefit for coordination
   e. The governmental institution does not coordinate well
7. Are governmental institutions fast while implementing joint projects or do you have to follow all bureaucratic and formal steps?
   a. Yes often it is so
   b. Sometimes it is so
c. If it is in their benefit, work is done quickly
   d. We have to follow bureaucratic and formal steps

8. Does the bureaucracy in the governmental institutions, hinder your project implementation?
   a. Yes, always
   b. No
   c. Sometimes

9. Has the lack of security caused incomplete implementation of your project?
   a. Yes, completely
   b. Yes, sometimes
   c. No

10. If you face problems in implementing your programs, to which source do you refer first?
    a. Central Government in Kabul
    b. Governmental Bureaus in Provinces
    c. Security Organizations
    d. Local Assembly
    e. Mullah Imam (Preachers)
    f. Local Commander
    g. Local Elders

11. Do governmental employees know that according to the law they should assist you with having a better work environment for the project or activity?
    a. Yes, only provincial governor or district head
    b. Yes, some of them
    c. Yes, all of them
    d. No, we always have to explain

12. Have government employees accused you of having a high salary or more facilities than they have?
    a. Yes
    b. Yes, some of them have that perception
    c. Yes, sometimes that has happened
    d. No, not at all

13. Has a governmental employee ever misbehaved with you or any of your employees in this province?
    a. Yes, only once
    b. Yes, sometimes
    c. Always
    d. No

14. Do government employees ask money from you in return for coordination?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. A few times
    d. Sometimes we are obliged to pay money

15. Since the start of your activities, have you encountered a problem in implementing your programs in this province?
    a. Yes
    b. No

16. If yes, what kind of problem was it, or what was the reason for it?
    a. Security problem
    b. Problem with provincial authority
c. Problem with other government institutions
d. Problem with people
e. Problem in perception that the program is in the benefit of the government
f. Problem in perception that the program is in the benefit of people

17. If no, why?
   a. Because our relations with the provincial authorities are good
   b. Because our relations with the security organizations are good
   c. Because our relation with people are good
   d. Because governmental institutions have respect for us
   e. Because people are coordinative with us

If you have an opinion about how to make improvements in the relationships between CSOs and government authorities please write your suggestions in the three lines provided.
Questionnaire for Governmental Institution Employees

1. Have you implemented a project with CSOs?
   a. Yes
   b. No

2. If yes, how is your experience working with CSOs?
   a. Great
   b. Good
   c. Not good
   d. Do not want to comment on this

3. What is your perception of CSOs’ work in this region?
   a. They do a good job
   b. Mostly they work for their own benefit
   c. Their work is effective
   d. They work intermittently

4. How is the behavior of the CSOs that you have coordinated with or referred?
   a. Great
   b. Good
   c. Not good
   d. Depends on the CSO

5. Have you supervised a project implemented by CSOs?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. We wanted to supervise a project; but, the CSO did not allow us
   d. According to the law we do not have the jurisdiction

6. Do CSOs have transparency in their project implementation?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Some have, some have not

7. According to the law do you obligate yourself as a government employee to coordinate with CSOs?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Not obligated to coordinate
   d. This is our social responsibility

8. How is your perception of CSOs work in this region?
   a. Work accountably
   b. Work in favor of people
   c. a. and b. are correct
   d. Spoil resources and have high salaries

9. What ways exist to improve the coordination level between CSOs with government? Please write your ideas in three lines:
Questionnaire for Focus Group Discussion

Name of Surveyor: ___________________________ Date: ____________ Province: _______________ City/Village: _______________

Type of Interview: a. Individual b. Group

1. How is the cooperation level between Civil Society Organizations and Governmental Institutions, and vice versa?
2. Do ethnic and district or village relations with provincial and security authorities have any role in the implementation of your program?
3. How is your experience with people related to your work from a Civil Society Organization’s point of view?
4. If you face difficulties with any governmental institutions, do people support you?
5. Some people think that CSOs give their staff many benefits and pay them high salaries. What do you think about this issue?
6. When you go to governmental institutions does any one want a bribe from you?
7. What kind of problems do you have with governmental institutions with the implementation of your program?
8. What kind of problems do you have with senior local people, Community Development Committees, religious people, organizations and ethnic groups?
9. Are governmental organizations satisfied with your work or do they think they are wasting time, money and other resources?
10. What kinds of programs are implemented by Civil Society Organization in this area?
11. Do the people of this area know the meaning of “Civil Society Organization”?
12. Are the people aware of the methodology of your activities?
13. What are your suggestions for having better relationships between CSOs and governmental institutions?
14. According to your opinion, how can a Civil Society Organization be of assistance to the government?
15. Specifically, what kind of projects or activities do you remember that CSOs have implemented for the benefit of governmental institutions?
16. According to your opinion how can a Civil Society Organization be of assistance to governmental institutions and how can the government be of assistance to CSOs opposite?
Appendix 2:

List of Participant Civil Society Organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations

1. 8 AM Daily Newspaper
2. Afghan Women’s and Children Cooperation (AWCP)
3. Afghan Women’s Educational Center (AWEC)
4. Afghanistan Democratic Institution
5. Afghanistan People Foundation
6. Afghanistan Sebh Bakhair
7. Aga Khan Rural Micro-Finance Program (ARMP)
8. Agriculture Development Organization
9. Art and Literature House
10. Association Center for Welfare (ACW)
11. Central Parts of Afghanistan Council
12. Cooperation Center of Afghanistan (CCA)
13. Council of Qala-e- Miran Sha-e- Panjshir
14. Development Council of Bazarak-e-Panjshir
15. Educational and Training Center of Women and Poor Children (ECW)
16. Free and Fair Election Foundation of Afghanistan (FEFA)
17. Ghaznawyran Radio
18. Guild Association of Herat province
19. Herat Radio Keleed
20. Independent Protection Association for Living Environment
21. Micro-Finance Development and Rehabilitation Foundation for Afghan Associations (MADRAC)
22. National Solidarity Council of Panjshir
23. Noor Education Center (NEC)
24. Paktia Young Women Association
25. Peace Radio
26. Rabihia-e-Balkhee Radio
27. Rabihia-e-Balkhee Skill Support Administration (RASA)
28. Sinai Development Organization (SDO)
29. Takharestan Radio
30. Telayadaran Association
31. Tribal Liaison Office (TLO)
32. Women’s and Children’s Law Research Foundation of Afghanistan (WCLRF)
33. Women’s Association Social Services of Afghanistan (WASSA)
34. Women’s Capacity Building Center of Afghanistan
35. Youth and Children Development Program (YCDP)
Appendix 3

Government Institutions

1. Department of Economics of 10 provinces for Kunduz, Takhar, Balkh, Sharif, Parwan, Ghazni, Panjsher, Paktia, Herat, Bamyan and Nangarhar and the Department of Ministry of Economics in Kabul.
2. Department of Culture and Information for Panjshir, Paktia, Bamyan and Balkh provinces.
3. Department of Women’s Affairs for Kunduz, Ghazni, Parwan and Takhar provinces.
4. Rehabilitation and Rural Development Department for Takhar and Bamyan provinces.
5. Department of Labor and Social Affairs for Ghazni and Balkh provinces.
6. Education Department for Herat and Paktia provinces.
7. Agriculture and Livestock Department for Nangarhar province.
8. National Solidarity Department Center of the Ministry of Rehabilitation and Rural Development in Kabul.
Appendix 4: List of Provinces Visited

1. Baghlan
2. Balkh
3. Bamyan
4. Ghazni
5. Herat
6. Kabul
7. Kunduz
8. Nangarhar
9. Paktia
10. Parwan
11. Panjshir
12. Takhar