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# MONTHLY REPORT, September 2013

Rule of Law Stabilization Program – Informal Component (RLS-I)

Contract Number: AID-306-C-12-00013



Family law workshop by RLS-I subcontractor The Liaison Office, Baghlani Jadid (Baghlan), September 2013

September 2013

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Contract Number: AID-306-C-12-00013

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## INTRODUCTION

Over 30 years of war has left Afghanistan's informal and formal justice institutions weakened, resulting in limited access to equitable justice, particularly from an inadequate formal justice apparatus. Today more than ever traditional dispute resolution (TDR) mechanisms remain the primary vehicle for resolving disputes, with TDR actors (jirgamaran, shura members, other elders, mullahs, ulema, maliks, khans, etc.)<sup>1</sup> resolving most cases either at the direct request of disputants or upon referral from state authorities who often lack the capacity to efficiently process legal disputes and effectively reconcile disputants. State-TDR collaboration in most cases is minimally structured; the jurisdictional boundaries under Afghan law are seldom understood or observed. Heavy reliance on local customary law during TDR – combined with misconceptions about how customs may or may not comply with Shari'ah – can often result in unjust, un-Islamic, illegal, and unsustainable TDR decisions. Finally, although most elders are regarded as honest and unbiased, corruption and discrimination (tribal and socioeconomic) by some community leaders undermine confidence in TDR. All of these factors reduce equitable justice and contribute to the perpetuation of instability in communities. In light of these challenges, USAID's Rule of Law Stabilization Program – Informal Component (RLS-I) aims to enhance access to fair, transparent, and accountable justice for men, women, and children by (1) improving and strengthening the traditional dispute resolution system, (2) bolstering collaboration between the informal and formal justice systems, and (3) supporting cooperation for the resolution of longstanding disputes<sup>2</sup>.

RLS-I aims to instill permanent cultural shifts in support of these objectives through a combination of increased awareness, self-initiated solutions, and mutual support and accountability by and between all stakeholders. To ensure the appropriateness of its programming, RLS-I assesses the strengths and weaknesses of the local justice environment in each new district prior to commencing activities. RLS-I then engages a geographically and tribally representative group of approximately 250 respected male and female elders and other public and religious leaders in legal awareness and solutions-based programming. RLS-I's 12-month district intervention consists of a six-month, 50 activity-day **core program** of coalition-building **network meetings**, legal education **workshops**, solutions-based **discussion sessions**, and formal-informal justice protocol **coordination meetings**. The core program is followed by six months of **maintenance** activity comprised, as needed, of ad hoc offerings of individual core program components. Parallel **women's programming**, including the formation of women dispute resolution groups, or **spinarsy groups**, and women's rights education programs for male and female participants empowers women to exercise their legal rights and encourages greater female participation in dispute resolution processes. Public **outreach** campaigns reinforce RLS-I messaging and create public demand for improved justice practices. A training-of-trainers (ToT) for select community members equips community **legal awareness mentors** to continue disseminating RLS-I lessons independently, demonstrating a clear commitment by local stakeholders to sustain the learning component of RLS-I. The refurbishments of **jirga halls**, complete with **legal libraries**, provide neutral venues for male and female TDR practitioners to make unbiased decisions in resolving

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix F for glossary of jargon and Afghan terminology.

<sup>2</sup> The relationship between the USAID/Afghanistan Assistance Objective (AO) 1 - Improved performance and accountability of governance; Intermediate Result (IR) 1.1 - Increased public confidence in the Rule of Law system; and Sub-IR 1.1.4 - Strengthened traditional dispute resolution in contested areas and RLS-I's program objectives and activities are attached as Annex A: USAID/Afghanistan Results Framework for RLS-I.

disputes. A robust **monitoring and evaluation** component – coordinated with program design and implementation – measures program impact and helps identify areas for further innovation<sup>3</sup>.

## RLS-I ACTIVITIES - SPETEMBER

RLS-I Program Participation				
Events Summary	Events	Male Participants	Female Participants	Total Participants
Network Meetings	7	327	184	511
Workshops	92	2125	2428	4553
Discussion Sessions	38	486	828	1314
Coordination Meetings	12	395	-	395
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>3333</b>	<b>3440</b>	<b>6773</b>

In September, RLS-I continued core programming in 15 existing districts, initiated programming in two new districts, and conducted maintenance events in four districts, as detailed in the regional summaries below. This brings the number of RLS-I active districts to 22 and a total of 48 districts for the life of the project. RLS-I conducted a follow-up regional network meeting on longstanding disputes in Nangarhar, and the second provincial network meeting in Kandahar focused on tackling corruption. RLS-I continued training-of-trainers (ToT) for community legal awareness mentors, and furnished jirga halls to serve as neutral venues for dispute resolution in Kuz Kunar and Nazyan districts (Nangarhar). RLS-I mentored The Liaison Office (TLO) and the Peace Training and Research Organization (PTRO), RLS-I subcontractors implementing RLS-I’s program in the North region, to implement RLS-I core programming in Baghlan, Takhar, and Badakhshan provinces.

The RLS-I outreach team continued production and airing of five radio/TV talk shows on Kandahar National Radio and Television (KNRT). The “Jirga and Justice” programs will be aired monthly through December 2013 with a new topic presented each month. In addition to the “Jirga and Justice” programs, RLS-I continued to broadcast previously produced radio talk shows and animated sketches on various topics, including alternatives to baad, inheritance and family rights and, the role women in TDR. RLS-I also coordinated the production and performance of a theatre play centered on alternatives to baad in the Zhari and Panjwai districts of Kandahar. Senior RLS-I outreach staff supported PTRO and TLO with their respective outreach activities.

In September, RLS-I made a significant effort to monitor activities conducted in the North by subcontractors PTRO and TLO. Both the National M&E Advisor and the Senior M&E Field Officer for the East region repeatedly visited the North and provided extensive hands-on monitoring and training.

Security remained an increasing concern. Direct threats to RLS-I female staff continued to pose challenges to programming, particularly in Spin Ghar district, which resulted in several postponements. At the end of the month, RLS-I continued to work with elders and officials to resolve

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix E: Program Review for a more detailed program description.

the security situation. Other regions were also impacted by postponements in several districts. RLS-I, however, remains on track for completion of programming in early December.

## East Region (Nangarhar, Laghman, Kunar, Maydan Wardak, and Logar Provinces)

RLS-I Program Participation - East Region				
Events Summary	Events	Male Participants	Female Participants	Total Participants
Network Meetings	1	109		109
Workshops	40	1114	933	2047
Discussion Sessions	16	214	388	602
Coordination Meetings	6	200	-	200
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>1637</b>	<b>1321</b>	<b>2958</b>

### Overview

The RLS-I East team continued a robust schedule of legal education, formal-informal justice linkage, and networking core program activities in the districts of Nazyan, Goshta, Khogayani, and Spin Ghar (all in Nangarhar), Alishing (Laghman), and Nirkh and Maydan Shahr (Maydan Wardak) as well as follow-up maintenance work in Acheen (Nangarhar), Chawkay (Kunar), and Mohammad Agha (Logar). RLS-I also conducted a follow-on regional network meeting about longstanding disputes, continued training-of-trainers (ToT) for community legal awareness mentors, and furnished jirga halls in Kuz Kunar and Nazyan districts (Nangarhar) as neutral venues for dispute resolution.

### Highlights

#### *Women graduates work without pay to create sustainability*

Training-of-trainers continued for male and female volunteer community legal awareness mentors with over 50 participants completing focused modules covering the core program. Toward the end of the month, two women graduates voluntarily conducted at their own expense family law trainings for groups of women totaling over 80 participants. RLS-I's gender advisor monitored the events, confirming a clear and accurate presentation of the topics, including consent to marriage, the right of maher, the illegality of bride price, divorce, etc. The gender advisor also provided the volunteer trainers suggestions for further improvement.

Reflecting the Kuz Kunar group's enthusiasm for the training, one participant, Sanga, explained that previously "I engaged many girls [in marriage] from my family at a young age without asking them. But from today I will ask the choice of every single girl in my family." Another woman participant, Nizmina, said, "I have five daughters and I had planned to take bride price for my daughters, but today I reversed my decision..." Nilofar from Jalalabad City explained that, "During marriage [my husband] gave his house as maher to me, which was written in my marriage license ... but when he married the second wife, he removed me from the house. When he returns from Pakistan I will resolve the issue with him because I learned a lot about my rights today." On the harmful practice of bride price, another participant, Wahida, said, "Before I knew that walwar (bride price), exchange marriage/badal, and baad were not good, but I didn't know the reasons these bad norms are prohibited in Islam [and

Afghan law]." Finally, supporting the RLS-I objective of stabilization, Munira concluded that, "...if every person knows their rights and the rights of others, I am sure the level of the disputes will decrease." RLS-I will continue to monitor trainings by the volunteer community mentors and offer feedback and assistance, including offering follow-on training as needed.

### *Elders explore complicated longstanding disputes*

RLS-I sponsored a follow-up meeting for regional volunteers on the topic of longstanding disputes which was also attended by key state actors, religious leaders, and council members from each district and province. Participants reflected on factors that contribute to longstanding disputes and obstacles to resolution, including corruption, manipulation by warlords and high-level officials, disregard for the law, intimidation by insurgents, etc. According to one Shinwar tribal elder, "Warlords, authorities, and land seizers are involved" in exacerbating and prolonging disputes for their own gain. Another Hisarak district elder, after describing a specific case of high-level official manipulation of a longstanding dispute said, "...warlords and high-level state actors are obstacles, their goal is to stay dominant over the people and community." Another religious leader determined that if corruption and the influence of warlords were terminated, people would be liberated from the injustice caused by many disputes.

Participants at the meeting shared best practices in resolving longstanding disputes, including cooperating with influential regional volunteers, collaborating with state actors, collecting accurate information on the disputes, choosing a neutral venue, mediating honestly and impartially, using forgiveness rituals to promote reconciliation, and creating mass witness events to enforce outcomes. As one elder from Laghman province explained, "Injustice, disunity and differences cannot bring success to the communities. The Afghan community is honorable and respectable and we will face intimidation in the absence of cooperation." Another added, "We will be able to liberate this country from warlords and corruption by our unity, brotherhood and good personality."

During breakout discussions on specific disputes, participants described how one land ownership disagreement in the Kandi district was successfully resolved by cooperating with government departments to verify land ownership records. One Laghman elder cited how his newly-acquired knowledge of property rights will help him make better decisions. "Now we understand that in the presence of an irrevocable property deed, the other side is not eligible to receive any portion of the land. Unfortunately, [in the past] we had distance from knowledge. Now we know...not to just divide the land" in the traditional spirit of compromise and reconciliation. Another group described how disputed land in the Gambiri desert had been occupied and/or usurped illegally. The elders reported the issue to government actors, requesting that the illegal occupants be removed.

During the month, participants in RLS-I programs applied their newfound legal awareness to resolve two longstanding disputes in Chawkay (Kunar) and Nazyan. In Nazyan, RLS-I participants and other



Establishment of spinarsy groups discussion session, Goshta (Nangarhar), 12 September 2013

elders reengaged disputants involved in a 47-year longstanding dispute over forest land. With the assistance of RLS-I elders armed with newly acquired property law knowledge and a commitment to ethical TDR practices, jirga members reached a fair decision that satisfied both parties. The result was also possible because some family members of the disputants recently participated in RLS-I activities. One leading elder, Malik Sayed Alim, explained that, “We have learned about the source of longstanding disputes in RLS-I discussions. We learned [for example] that disputes escalate for years because of warlords and those who influence jirgas for their personal interest. I removed them [from the process] and then we were able to make a good solution for the problem.”



Provincial network meeting, all districts of Kandahar, 12 September 2013

## South Region (Kandahar and Zabul Provinces)

RLS-I Program Participation - South Region				
Events Summary	Events	Male Participants	Female Participants	Total Participants
Network Meetings	6	218	184	402
Workshops	31	645	865	1510
Discussion Sessions	12	146	217	363
Coordination Meetings	3	90	-	90
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>1099</b>	<b>1266</b>	<b>2365</b>

### Overview

During September, the South team held core programming in the Kandahar districts of Arghandab, Maywand, Kandahar City Sub-District 5 (SD-5), Spin Boldak, and Takhta Pul, as well as launching RLS-I activities in Kandahar City Sub-District 8 (Kandahar) and Shinkay (Zabul). Maintenance follow-up work was held in Panjwayi and Zhari. Additionally, the Kandahar team conducted a second provincial network meeting that brought together relevant provincial state actors, district officials, community elders and influential women from all districts of the province. The agenda focused on tackling corruption in the formal and informal justice sectors.

Two training-of-trainers sessions were held for male and female volunteers who graduated from the RLS-I program. The volunteers pledged to continue disseminating RLS-I lessons to community members in their respective neighborhoods.

### Highlights

#### *Elders fight corruption and pursue just decisions at provincial level*

At the provincial network meeting in Kandahar, both the size of the audience and diversity of the participants provided for a robust and constructive discussion about the causes of corruption. Tribal



elders and government officials spoke about efforts to eliminate elements of corruption in the formal justice sector and government institutions. Discussions also addressed ways to prevent corruption in the future. The size of the meeting is evidence that local elders are increasingly concerned about the issue of corruption, and the active participation by government representatives may indicate that the public may soon be able to partner with government actors who are committed to eradicating corruption.

Moulawee Niamatullah, a religious scholar from Arghandab, expressed his gratitude for the USAID RLS-I program, “When I worked as an auditor in the Arghandab education department, I came across receipts for windows that were never placed and books that were sold in the bazaar instead of distributed as intended. I am so happy USAID has provided us with such programs. I stopped the judges from making a false decision as a result of these trainings and materials. Now I can talk to the judge, district governor and police chief and I can show them the right way.”

In Afghan society, the high rate of illiteracy among elders and the isolation of rural populations from urban centers results in many incidences of corruption to either not being identified as such or be perceived by elders as practices that cannot be addressed by informal community leaders like themselves. RLS-I programs have helped elders expand their understanding of the extensiveness and scale of corrupt practices. One RLS-I participant from Kandahar City Sub-District 10 illustrated how elders are becoming more empowered to deal with instances of corruption by providing this example: “I will provide information about the activities of Kandahar district representatives. A letter was received from the President’s Office stating that heirs of martyrs in Kandahar should be sent to Hajj. There were 141 people in the list but none of them were actually members of the martyrs’ families. The original names had been replaced with other peoples’ names in exchange for money so that they could go on the Hajj instead of the martyrs’ family members. We [elders] talked to the governor’s office about it and now they have resent a new list with the correct names to the President’s Office for approval.”

### ***Women ensure better positions within their families and become powerful actors outside the home***

Women who participant in RLS-I legal trainings are learning different approaches to solve family disputes. One such participant, Zarmina, a woman from Kandahar City Sub-District 5, explains that after attending RLS-I’s family law workshop, her views about marriage exchange are different. “In the past I decided to give my 8-year-old daughter in exchange to receive a bride for my 20-year -old son. But today I learned that until a girl is mature we cannot marry her. This is also abominable in Islam. My daughter, who is in class year five, was crying and saying she didn’t want to marry because she wants to complete her studies. As of today I know that this action is against the law. I will not give my daughter in exchange. I don’t want to spoil my daughter’s life.” Najia, another participant from Kandahar City Sub-District 5, added, “That all of these useful workshops are conducted for both men and women by your [RLS-I] office really has had a positive impact on our lives. I will give an example of my own my husband. He is also a participant of your male workshops. In the past my husband was not sharing any issue with me and he did not allow me to go to the home of my relatives. He told me that women are only for the home or for the grave. But after taking part in these RLS-I workshops for tribal elders, he shares all the family related issues with me. He even asks for me for suggestions and accepts as them as well. These workshops have brought a positive change in our lives.”



Women's access to justice discussion session, Arghandab (Kandahar), 16 September 2013

Gulbabo, a female community leader from Kandahar City Sub-District 5, observed a change that goes beyond the home and suggests spinsary groups trained by RLS-I are becoming a staple in local conflict resolution. “Previously, when there would be a dispute in our village, there would be no one to take responsibility or even show any interest in that dispute, and as a result no one knew how to solve such disputes. After the women of our village participated in your workshops and received information, we now call the spinsary group if any dispute arises and they will assist in the solution of the dispute.”

Bibi, a woman community leader from Panjwayi, is motivated by the changes that the RLS-I program has brought about, especially the increase in freedom of movement for women who are on ‘official business’. She shared this information with RLS-I: “Our neighbor’s son hit a man with his car and injured him. After the man recovered, the government detained our neighbor’s son. His mother’s name is Zarghona and she attended your workshop on criminal law. Because she understood the law regarding incarceration, first she appealed to the district office and then she came to the city center and engaged a lawyer for her son. He was released from prison within a month. This we all learned from RLS-I workshops and we resolve our disputes in accordance with what we have learned.”

## North Region (Badakhshan, Baghlan, and Takhar Provinces)

RLS-I Program Participation - North Region				
Events Summary	Events	Male Participants	Female Participants	Total Participants
Network Meetings				0
Workshops	21	366	630	996
Discussion Sessions	10	126	223	349
Coordination Meetings	3	105	-	105
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>597</b>	<b>853</b>	<b>1450</b>

### Overview

During the reporting period, RLS-I mentored two subcontractors, The Liaison Office (TLO) and the Peace Training and Research Organization (PTRO), with implementation of RLS-I core programming in the North region - Baghlan, Takhar, and Badakhshan provinces.

### TLO

TLO conducted 11 events in Baghlani Jadid (Baghlan), including two-day workshops on family and inheritance law and several discussion sessions.



Coordination meeting, Baghlani Jadid (Baghlan), 3  
September 2013

### ***PTRO***

PTRO conducted a total of 24 events in the two program districts of Farkhar (Takhar) and Fayzabad (Badakhshan).

### **Highlights**

#### ***Presence of religious leaders amongst participants creates legitimacy***

During September, RLS-I subcontractors TLO and PTRO conducted family law, inheritance law and constitutional law workshops in

Baghlani Jadid (Baghlan), Farkhar (Takhar) and Fayzabad (Badakhshan). Participants reflected on their increased knowledge and how they will use the new information. For example, as a result of the family law workshops conducted in Baghlani Jadid, elders acknowledged women's and children's rights under Shari'ah and Afghan law and vowed to act accordingly, despite the often heated debates that would precede such acceptance. A crucial factor in convincing the elders of the legitimacy of the information RLS-I provides are the ulema participants – religious scholars considered to be more knowledgeable about Shari'ah than most mullahs – who frequently and publically support the RLS-I trainers in areas where customary practice deviates from Shari'ah. One elder mentioned, “We did not give women their maher in the past, but now we understand that it is a sin not to give a girl the rights she is due. And therefore we will give girls rights from now on.” Even further, elders also promised they would promote rights for individuals in their community overall. One elder emphasized that, “We can teach our people what we learned here in the workshop today.” Ulema participating in the RLS-I program reported that they have spoken about [RLS-I] trainings during sermons in the past and will continue to do so that “even women hearing our voice from the loudspeakers of mosques will benefit from it and gain some information.”

During the workshops conducted in Fayzabad, participants also expressed intent to use legal knowledge for the benefit women in their communities, for example, by ensuring that daughters are married at the legal age. Mawlawi Qiam-u-din Kashaf mentioned, “During a meeting at the women's affairs department about gender issues, I explained that the most useful program for women awareness is being carried out by USAID through PTRO these days.” Similarly, a tribal elder, in response to the information obtained about inheritance law through RLS-I workshops, explained that although there is no custom of sharing inheritance to daughters and sisters in the Pashtun society “we will try to give them their righteous shares of inheritance in the future.”

### **Better coordination and cooperation through self-awareness**

While overall coordination exists between the informal and the formal justice actors, the coordination and discussion sessions highlighted the need for more exchanges of ideas and greater awareness of the sectors' respective roles. One TDR elder, a member of a discussion session on ethics and best practices, said that, “We did not make any just decisions in accordance to Shari'ah and state law in the past, but now that we have been trained regarding such important issues we have learned how to make just decisions.” Said Mohammad Nasim, a tribal elder participant, echoed this sentiment when he

vowed, “We will prioritize state law and Islamic Shari’ah while making decisions,” Feedback from the first constitutional law workshops conducted in Farkhar and Fayzabad suggestions that elders are more willing to cooperate with the state to improve their communities. A participant noted, for example, that “Before this workshop we thought that all resources of the country belonged to warlords and those people who have strong positions in the government. After this workshop we know that Afghanistan’s resources and rights apply to all Afghans. And now that we know our rights we are able to protect our rights in property ownership, the right to elections and other rights.”

## Outreach

### Overview

In line with public demand, RLS-I further expanded its outreach efforts and collaboration with Kandahar provincial officials in the South region during September. As summarized in August’s monthly report, the district governor has become increasingly appreciative of RLS-I programs, specifically the public legal awareness activities involving local state radio and TV stations. Significantly, it was the district governor who explicitly requested RLS-I to inform the public about traditional dispute resolution mechanisms via radio and TV programs in Kandahar. RLS-I’s efforts in this sphere also support capacity building of Kandahar’s state radio and television stations, another top priority for the district governor.

In September RLS-I produced and aired its second (out of five) installment of the “Jirga and Justice” talk show under an agreement with Kandahar National Radio and Television (KNRT). The “Jirga and Justice” programs address a new topic each month and will air monthly through December 2013. This month’s segment centered on inheritance rights under Shari’ah and Afghan law, with a special focus on women’s inheritance rights in TDR practices.



TV and radio talk show on inheritance rights, Kandahar City, 12 September 2013

During the 45-minute talk show, which aired in prime time, the moderator presented RLS-I program objectives and outreach goals in the province. Each of the four panelists answered various questions posed by the moderator and the in-studio audience made up of approximately forty men, women and young adults. One of the panelists, a well-respected woman jirga elder and community leader, discussed women’s inheritance rights with the moderator:

Moderator: *“I agree that women’s inheritance rights are a reality, but how sure are you that women can actually obtain their inheritance rights?”*

Spinsary Hajani Bibi (Babo): *“In the past, inheritance was not given to women and no one accepted that women have the right to inherit. Now we are thankful to Allah that this has changed and everyone knows the rights of each other. When we do not receive our inheritance we can request our local maliks, direct descendants of the Prophet (PBUH), or mullahs to help us, and if they do not solve our problem then we can refer our case to the district government.”*

Moderator: *“What do you think about those who do not give the inheritance due to women?”*

Spinsary Hajani Bibi (Babo): *“Those who do not give women their rights are unreasonable and imperfect in the eyes of Allah, as it is He and his holy Prophet (PBUH) that have bestowed those rights. Therefore, the people have to give inheritance to their female relatives and fulfill their responsibility.”*

The show was so well received that the station re-aired the program two additional times on television and four additional times at no extra cost. RLS-I owns the show’s content and is also rebroadcasting the programs on other radio and TV stations in Kandahar and Nangarhar.

In addition to “Jirga and Justice”, RLS-I continued to broadcast the project’s previously produced radio talk shows and animated sketches that address alternatives to baad, female participation in the dispute resolution process, and the relationship between the country’s formal and informal justice systems. These radio talk shows and animations were produced during Phase 1 of RLS-I, and sustained public interest in these issues provided the impetuses for rebroadcasts in Phase III.

RLS-I’s outreach efforts are not limited to radio and television. In September RLS-I continued implementation of community theater activities by facilitating the production and performance of a theater play about alternatives to baad. The community theatre piece, performed in both Zhari and Panjwayi districts (Kandahar), encouraged audiences to consider the negative repercussions of baad in the community, and explored less contentious options like money, land, and other property as a means of settling debts and avoiding human rights violations. RLS-I has agreed with Kandahar Film and Theatre to produce and present five local theatre pieces (performed twice) on traditional dispute resolution topics in remote areas such as Panjwayi and Zhari. Traveling theater productions reach deep into districts and rural villages to inform citizens of their basic legal rights. The theatre shows in Panjwayi and Zhari engaged local children as well as adults, many of whom also took pictures and videos with their personal mobile phones and cameras to share with family members in the home.

Senior RLS-I outreach staff met with PTRO and TLO to coordinate outreach activities in the North such as promoting legal awareness and justice through religious community leaders, airing radio programs, and distributing printed materials on TDR topics.



Community theatre on alternatives to baad, Zhari (Kandahar), 25 September 2013

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

### Event monitoring

During the reporting period, significant effort was invested in monitoring activities in the North. Both the National M&E Advisor and the Senior M&E Field Officer for East region made lengthy visits to the North and provided extensive hands-on monitoring and training.

### Spinsary group creation and dispute mediation

During the reporting period, RLS-I created three spinsary groups in the districts of Takhta Pul (Kandahar), sub-district 5 in Kandahar city, and Goshta (Nangarhar). RLS-I documented a total of 29 decisions that spinsary group members helped resolve, 20 of which came from Kandahar and nine from East region. East team members report that the lower number of disputes resolved is a tangible reflection of the decreasing number of disputes in local communities.

Case type	Case Sub-type	Count
Civil	In-law relation	5
Civil	Inheritance	5
Civil	Children	6
Civil	Marital relations	5
Civil	Marriage of widow	3
Civil	Exchanged marriage	1
Civil	Forced marriage	1
Civil	Land	1
Civil	Property	1
Civil	Water (irrigation)	1
<b>TOTAL:</b>		<b>29</b>

### RLS-I linkage assessments and decision book tracking

During the reporting period, RLS-I reviewed the usage of decision books in Panjwayi district (Kandahar province). Of a total sample of 17 elders, the overall documentation rate was 24% and the overall registration rate was 50%. The documentation rate is slightly below the RLS-I performance target while the registration rate exceeds the performance target.

Province	District	Elders sampled	Percent of elders who documented decision	Disputes documented	Percent of elders who also registered decision	Disputes registered
Kandahar	Panjwayi	17	24%	10	50%	7

Justice linkage assessments took place in Surkh Rod (Nangarhar) and sub-district 8 of Kandahar city. The Surkh Rod district officials reported satisfaction with RLS-I and confirmed that elders who had participated in RLS-I continued their improved practices even though Surkh Rod is graduated district and there were few RLS-I activities to reinforce the training. For example, according to the district head of Huqooq department for Surkh Rod: “I see a big difference between elders who received RLS-I workshops and elders who did not. The elders who are RLS-I participants make decisions based on law and Shari’ah.”

### Volunteer elder network TOT

RLS-I is currently piloting a series of training-of-trainers (TOT) workshops for elders of graduated districts who have volunteered to disseminate RLS-I information through trainings in their respective districts. The TOTs are divided into two sections. The first covers the topics of family, inheritance, and property law, while the second covers the topics of constitutional, criminal, and property deeds law. RLS-I conducted the following TOTs in September:

RLS-I Phase 3 TOTs					
Region	Activity start date	Activity end date	Topic	Gender	Participants
East	31-Aug-2013	5-Sep-2013	Constitutional, criminal, deeds	Male	16
East	7-Sep-2013	9-Sep-2013	Family, inheritance, property	Female	15
East	10-Sep-2013	12-Sep-2013	Constitutional, criminal, deeds	Female	15
East	21-Sep-03	26-Sep-13	Family, inheritance, property	Male	13
East	5-Oct-2013	10-Oct-2013	Constitutional, criminal, deeds	Male	14
South	14-Sep-2013	19-Sep-2013	Family, inheritance, property	Male	18
South	21-Sep-2013	26-Sep-2013	Family, inheritance, property	Female	19
South	21-Sep-2013	26-Sep-2013	Constitutional, criminal, deeds	Female	19

## CHALLENGES

Direct threats to RLS-I female staff continued to pose challenges to programming, particularly in Spin Ghar district, which resulted in several postponements. At the end of the month, RLS-I continued to work with elders and officials to resolve the situation.

RLS-I promptly terminated a 2-day inheritance law training in Maydan Shahr (Maydan Wardak) on September 8<sup>th</sup> when insurgents bombed the local headquarters of the National Directorate of Security (NDS). The incident underscores the persistent threat RLS-I staff and participants face regularly.

In another incident, two employees of the caterer used by RLS-I to provide lunch were kidnapped by insurgents while delivering food to a training event in Shinkay district. They were later released but their car was not returned to them. Consequently, RLS-I moved its Zabul activities to Qalat City as a precautionary measure.

In the North, both PTRO and TLO reported that while the attendance at all-female trainings is consistently high, events held for male participants often do not manage to attract the same level of participation. An informal survey among male members of the RLS-I cohorts revealed that the male elders are often key community members who are expected to attend funerals of other key elders, mediate ad-hoc requests and perform other tasks related to their stature in the community. TLO and PTRO have undertaken intensified efforts to provide elders as much advance notice as possible of events in order to improve attendance levels of male participants.

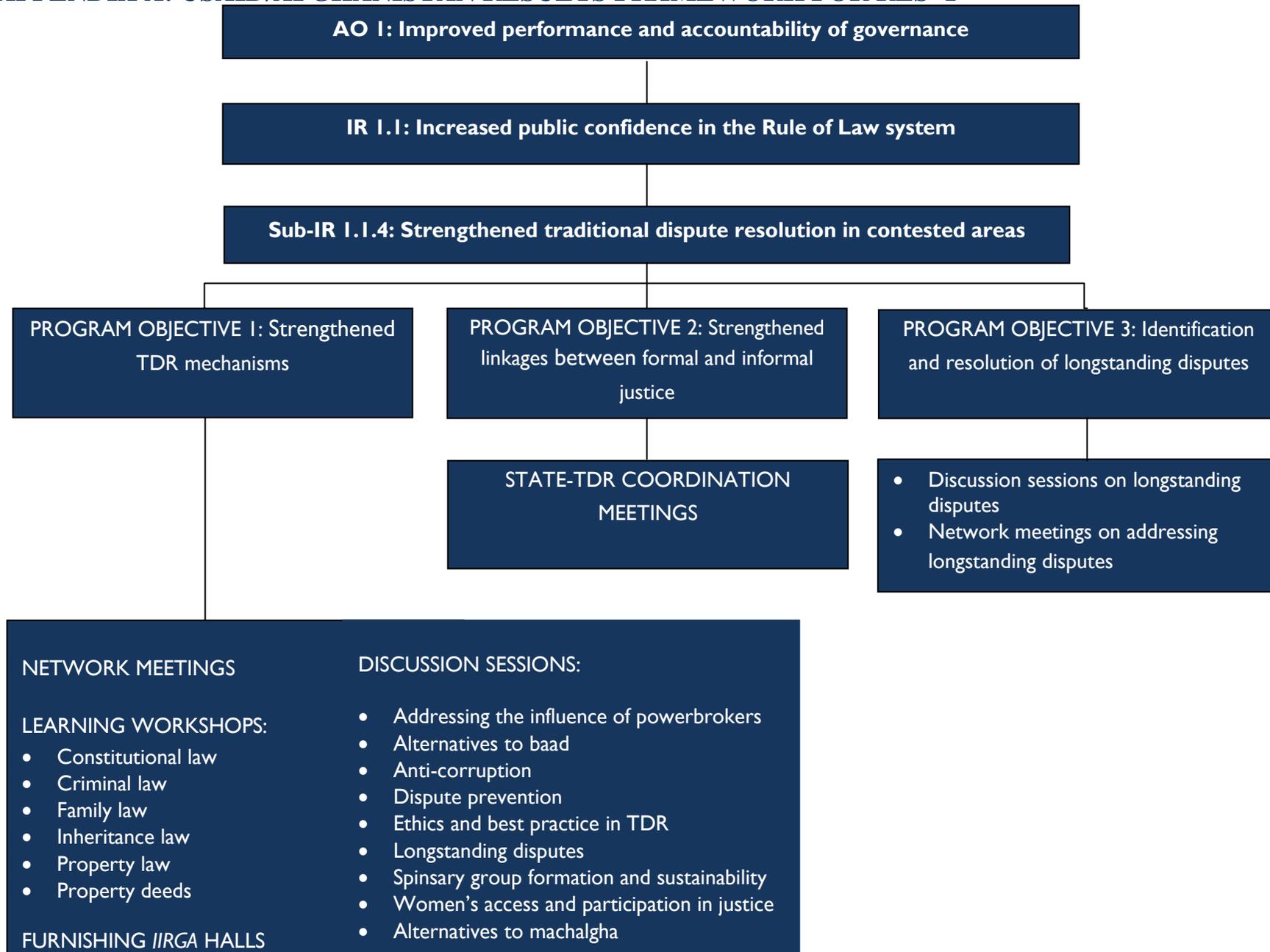


## LOOKING AHEAD

RLS-I anticipates conducting some **151** core programming and maintenance activities in the East, South, and North during the month of October. Having initiated activity in all new districts, RLS-I in October will continue its rigorous schedule of education and action-oriented activities to stay on track for completing all programming activities by early December. RLS-I will also conduct another follow-up issue-based provincial network meeting on corruption for volunteers and other prominent elders and officials of Nangarhar province. RLS-I's Afghan partners will continue RLS-I core programming in the three districts in the North; TLO in Baghlani Jadid (Baghlan province), and PTRO in Farkhar (Takhar) and Fayzabad (Badakhshan). RLS-I senior project staff will meet with various governmental and education officials to identify collaborative partners and suitable strategies for ensuring project sustainability.

Regarding outreach efforts, RLS-I will work with KNRT to produce and broadcast its third "Jirga and Justice" talk show. Kandahar Film and Theatre will produce and perform a community theatre piece about encouraging women to take their disputes to jirgas. Previously produced RLS-I radio and TV talk shows and animated shows will be re-aired in Nangarhar and Kandahar. RLS-I will conduct the legal research training to staff of the MoJ's *Huqooq* Department. Lastly, staff will carry out its fourth distribution campaign, delivering instructive materials in 100 villages of five districts in Kandahar, Nangarhar and Baghlan provinces.

**APPENDIX A: USAID/AFGHANISTAN RESULTS FRAMEWORK FOR RLS- I**





## APPENDIX C: MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORT AGAINST TARGETS

SO:	Improved performance and accountability of governance							
IR I:	Increased public confidence in the Rule of Law system	July - September 2013						Life of Project
Sub-IR:	I.1.4 Strengthened traditional dispute resolution and justice in contested areas	Jul	Progress	Aug	Progress	Sep	Progress	Target
Goal-level indicators								
1	# of districts graduating from RLS-I	-	N/A	-	N/A	-	N/A	20
2	Incidence of harmful practices ( <i>baad</i> , forced marriage) reported by spinsary	-	N/A	-	N/A	-	N/A	50%
3	# of elders pledging to cease harmful TDR practices	-	N/A	-	N/A	-	N/A	4235
Program Objective 1: Strengthened TDR Systems								
1.1	# of district/regional assessments completed	0	Below target	0	Below target	0	Below target	17
1.2	# elders graduating from RLS-I core program	-	N/A	-	N/A	-	N/A	1570
1.3	% elders responding change in community adjudication	-	N/A	-	N/A	-	N/A	25%
1.4	% of elders reporting successful application of any element of RLS-I training	-	N/A	-	N/A	-	N/A	15%
1.5	Change in disputant assessment (Procedural justice, subversion, equity)	-	N/A	-	N/A	-	N/A	5%
1.6	% knowledge gain in learning workshop content	-	N/A	13%	On track	9%	On track	20%
1.7	# of public advocacy campaigns on human rights supported by USG	-	N/A	-	N/A	-	N/A	6
1.8	% knowledge gain among recipients of outreach material	-	N/A	-	N/A	-	N/A	10%
1.9	# Women's Dispute Resolution Groups ( <i>Spinsary</i> ) established	6	On track	3	On track	3	On track	49
1.1	# disputes resolved by <i>Spinsary</i> Groups	14	On track	29	Below target	29	Below target	505
Program Objective 2: Strengthened linkages between Formal and Informal Sectors								
2.1	% elders using RLS-I decision book after one month	25%	On track	44%	Above target	24%	Below target	30%
2.2	# of dispute resolutions recorded by elders	16	N/A	30	N/A	10	N/A	-
2.3	% elders registering decisions with government	29%	Below target	64%	Above target	50%	Above target	40%
2.4	# of resolutions registered with district institution	2	N/A	9	N/A	7	N/A	-
2.5	# of TDR decisions recorded with Huqooq	-	N/A	-	N/A	-	N/A	-
2.6	# of linkages assessments completed	2	On track	1	On track	2	On track	17
Program Objective 3: Develop approaches that successfully resolve long-term intractable disputes								
3.1	# of long standing and intractable disputes identified	2	Below target	4	On track	6	On track	64
3.2	# of long standing and intractable disputes resolved in intervention districts	0	On track	0	Below target	2	On track	24

## APPENDIX D: PLANNED ACTIVITIES: OCTOBER

As RLS-I operates in high risk and exceedingly vulnerable areas, GPS coordinates are not included.		Network meeting	Constitutional law	Criminal law	Family law	Inheritance law	Property law	Property deeds	Addressing influence of powerbrokers	Alternatives to <i>baad</i>	Addressing corruption	Dispute prevention	Ethics & best practice in TDR	Long-standing disputes	Spurious group	Women's access to justice	Coordination meeting	Promoting legal awareness & justice>religious leaders	TOTAL											
men's events (white) <input type="checkbox"/>																			151											
women's events (shaded) <input type="checkbox"/>																														
		Legal Education Workshops								Discussion Sessions																				
Province	District	Phase 3 - Tranche 2 districts																												
Maydan	Maydan Shahr			2	1	2	2											1	1	2			1			6	6			
Wardak	Nirakh			2		2	2													1							5	5		
Laghman	Alishing									2	2									1							5	1		
Nangarhar	Goshta					1		1			2	2								1			1				5	4		
	Khogayani	1								3	3									1			1				8	1		
	Nazyan									2	2									1			1				5	1		
	Spin Ghar									2	2											1		1			6			
Kandahar	Arghandab																										1	1		
	Kandahar City SD 5										2		1	1												1	1	4	2	
	Kandahar City SD 8			1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1														1			6	6	
	Maywand										3														1		1	4	1	
	Spin Boldak			1					1					1	2									1		1		3	4	
	Takhta Pul									1		1	1	1									1	1			3	3		
Zabul	Shinkay			1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1											1					7	6		
Baghlan	Baghlani Jadid (TLO)			2	2	2	2																		1	2		7	6	
Badakhshan	Fayzabad (PTRO)			2	1	2	2																			1	1	6	5	
Takhar	Farkhar (PTRO)				2	2	2																			1	1	3	6	
<b>TOTAL</b>		1		11	9	13	14	3	3	3	5	14	14			3	2	3		8	1	4	12	6	5	7	83	58		
Province	District	Phase 3 - Tranche 1 maintenance districts																												
Nangarhar	Acheen					1																						1		
Kunar	Chawkay					1																					1	1		
Logar	Mohammad Agha					1																					1	1		
Kandahar	Panjwayi												1															1	1	
	Zhari																										2	1		
<b>TOTAL</b>						3																					2	1	6	4

## **APPENDIX E: PROGRAM REVIEW**

### **Program Structure and Scope**

RLS-I's core program, which runs about six months, teaches participants a variety of legal topics relevant to dispute prevention and resolution via six courses (35-40 hours of training in all). The core program reaches approximately 125 male participants per district, with a target of at least 75 attending all six courses. The core program also provides four legal education workshops for approximately 125 women<sup>4</sup>; eight discussion sessions on pressing issues<sup>5</sup>; three state-TDR protocol coordination meetings<sup>6</sup>; three spinary group meetings<sup>7</sup>; and four network meetings<sup>8</sup>. In total, these events amount to approximately 50 days of activities.

The core program is followed by a maintenance period that provides an average of 15 needs-based activities<sup>9</sup> over a six month period to fill workshop attendance gaps and address other lingering needs that exist following the core programming. RLS-I's district intervention culminates with a handover network meeting, allowing participants to chart and commit to specific plans for carrying forward RLS-I objectives independently. Prominent elders and district and provincial officials are encouraged to attend provincial and regional network meetings focused on issues and longstanding dispute resolution.

### **Network Meetings**

District network meetings serve as the structured plenary forum for district groups of approximately 120 men and 120 women. Inaugural meetings familiarize participants and allow them collectively to assess the district's justice needs and determine project priorities. Capstone meetings culminate the core program with a structured reflection on lessons learned, commitments made, and further needs during maintenance. Participants have the opportunity to: 1) sign pledges affirming their commitment to specific measures aimed at promoting quality justice, 2) volunteer to be trained to become community legal awareness mentors, and 3) identify and volunteer to address longstanding disputes. Final handover district network meetings upon completion of maintenance allow participants to chart a path forward, including, for example, specific plans for ongoing state-TDR collaboration, independent of RLS-I assistance. Provincial network meetings provide a framework for key elders and officials from each district and the provincial government to assess and determine future action on challenges to justice at the province or district level. Volunteer mutual-accountability coalitions form to tackle, for example, specific instances of corruption. Regional network meetings provide a forum for structured dialogue among influential elders, officials, and other community leaders to identify, assess, and volunteer to take action on, longstanding disputes. Network meetings contribute to the achievement of USAID/Afghanistan's Democracy and Governance Assistance Objective (AO) I (Improved Performance and Accountability of Governance), Intermediate Result (IR) 1.1 (Increased Public Confidence in the

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<sup>4</sup> Given severe restrictions on women's movement in some districts, the RLS-I project has not set a firm target for women's attendance. Yet, on average women participation rates of over 40%.

<sup>5</sup> Four for men, four for women. Discussion session topics are determined through district assessments and by participants in each district during network meetings and workshops.

<sup>6</sup> For tribal elders.

<sup>7</sup> For influential women.

<sup>8</sup> Two for men, two for women.

<sup>9</sup> Legal education workshops, discussion sessions, or coordination meetings.

Rule of Law System), Sub-IR 1.1.4 (Strengthened TDR in Disputed Areas), and, primarily, to the achievement of RLS-I Program Objectives 1 and 3.<sup>10</sup>

### **Workshops**

RLS-I legal education workshops are conducted by esteemed university professors and other legal professionals to deliver targeted messages on aspects of Afghan law relevant to ensuring legal compliance in dispute resolution. RLS-I's materials and trainers intentionally demonstrate congruence between Afghan law and local cultural/religious beliefs to ensure the messages resonate and to help bridge the gap between local communities and the state. The core curriculum, developed from RLS-I assessment findings, and in consultation with participants and university trainers, consists of Constitutional law, criminal law, family law, inheritance law, property law, and property deeds. Workshops contribute to the achievement of AO 1, IR 1.1, Sub-IR 1.1.4, and to the achievement of RLS-I Program Objectives 1, 2, and 3.

**Constitutional law** workshops focus on the importance of constitutional provisions, stages of adopting legislation, equal protection (i.e., equitable treatment in the courts, equity in civil rights and civil responsibilities), citizens' rights and responsibilities (i.e., rights of freedom of speech, to vote freely, and the presumption of innocence), as well as the role and responsibilities of government and the relations between Afghan law and Shari'ah.

**Criminal law courses** cover court jurisdiction, types of crimes under the Criminal Code, procedures for referral of crimes to the formal justice sector (i.e., police and prosecutors), and the state's criminal adjudication process.

**Family law** addresses common disputes arising out of engagement, marriage and divorce, and covers the specific topics of marriage engagement rights, consent to marriage, dowry and bride price, marriage expenses, the respective rights and responsibilities of husband and wife, guardianship, alimony, and divorce. Due to the extensive material that is covered, and to allow more interactive learning, the family law workshop has been extended to a two days.

**Inheritance law** covers the allocation of a decedent's estate under Afghan law, women's inheritance rights, and common disputes arising out of inheritance cases. Inheritance is the most complex subject in the RLS-I core curriculum, with program participants routinely requesting additional time and instruction on the rules governing the division of property among heirs. For this reason, RLS-I has shifted to two-day inheritance law workshops.

**Property law and property deeds** workshops describe the definition and types of real property, leasehold and freehold rights, concepts of preemption and right of first refusal, seizure and access rights, the types and validity of deeds, and common disputes arising from property and deeds issues.

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<sup>10</sup> See Appendix A. All activity types contribute to the achievement of each Program Objective to some degree.

## Discussion Sessions

RLS-I discussion sessions provide a forum for formal-informal justice sector working groups (approximately 30-35 elders and five officials) to jointly develop and commit to solutions to challenges facing the formal and informal justice sectors, as identified through assessments and participant input. RLS-I's current set of topics, developed over three years of experience, includes alternatives to baad (the customary practice of settling a dispute by pledging a girl from a guilty party's family to a member of the harmed family); establishment of spinsary groups (women's dispute resolution groups); dispute prevention among children and neighbors; addressing corruption within the formal and informal justice sectors; addressing the influence of powerbrokers; longstanding disputes; women's participation and access to justice; alternatives to disputant deposits (machalgha); and ethics and best practice in TDR. The core program includes four of these topics, chosen based on each district's needs. Discussion sessions contribute to the achievement of AO 1, IR 1.1, Sub-IR 1.1.4, and to the achievement of RLS-I Program Objectives 1, 2, and 3.

The discussion session on addressing the influence of powerbrokers explores the challenge of power discrepancies between disputants and between disputants and outside parties in formal and informal justice mechanisms. During these sessions, formal and informal justice sector actors discuss ways to limit this influence in order to promote fair justice outcomes.

In the discussion sessions on alternatives to baad, participants discuss the negative consequences of the use of baad and work to develop alternatives – such as the exchange of property – that can serve a compensatory incentive in reconciling disputants.

The discussion session on anti-corruption provides an opportunity for informal and formal justice sector actors to identify and address the undermining influence of corruption on both sectors. Participants pledge to abstain from corruption and often agree on measures to prevent the practice, such as mutual monitoring and accountability.

The spinsary group formation and sustainability meetings follow a two-step sequence in which an interested group of women from the district network meeting later meets to discuss disputes particularly affecting women and women's access to justice. By the end of a second group meeting, participants elect to form spinsary groups in their villages. These women commit to support each other in addressing local disputes, typically involving families, children and neighbors.

Discussion sessions on dispute prevention among children and neighbors are an outgrowth of the spinsary groups, whose members report that violent disputes between families often arise out of the squabbling of children. Through sharing personal experiences, spinsary group members have learned to intervene on such occasions to defuse any escalating tensions between children.

The discussion concerning ethics and best practice in TDR aims to promote a collective affirmation by TDR practitioners of the qualities of a good jirgamar (TDR practitioner) and effective procedural practices to use in TDR cases. Participants are then encouraged to commit to live by those standards and implement best practices in disputes they resolve. During the ethics component, for example, RLS-I facilitators query participants on issues such as integrity and fairness. Best practice discussion questions

center on procedural issues such as freedom in selection of representation, neutrality of venue, and compliance with Afghan law.

As a supplement to network meetings on longstanding disputes, the discussion session on the topic have formal and informal justice sector actors identify specific disputes that have persisted over time and/or had a particularly destabilizing effect on communities in the district. RLS-I staff do not attempt to resolve such disputes, but instead facilitate discussions during which elders and state actors make assessments and become equipped to take independent action to resolve long-standing disputes.

When discussing women's participation and access to justice issues, participants consider how to increase women's access to formal and informal justice, and how to support female justice actors in their communities. Given cultural restrictions on women's interaction with unrelated men in most RLS-I districts, the debate is generally nascent, but one common theme that emerges is universal support for spinary groups sponsored by RLS-I.

The alternatives to machalgha (disputant deposit) discussion session allows participants to examine the impact of reliance on disputant deposits (to guarantee compliance with TDR decisions) on the quality of justice outcomes. Issues such as the misuse (corruption) of machalgha and its impact on elder attention to seeking voluntary disputant compliance are addressed. Participants are given the opportunity to develop and commit to alternatives to the practice.

### **Coordination Meetings**

The formal-informal justice sector working group holds coordination meetings. The first meeting builds familiarity and establishes common understandings of the appropriate roles of formal and traditional justice actors, including jurisdiction in civil and criminal matters, in collaborating to resolve disputes. The second and any subsequent meetings establish specific coordination procedures for dispute referrals, TDR decision reviews, and registration with formal justice institutions. Participants are also introduced to authority and decision letters<sup>11</sup> as the standard recording and registration formats for TDR decisions. State-TDR coordination meetings contribute to the achievement of AO 1, IR 1.1, Sub-IR 1.1.4, and, primarily, to the achievement of RLS-I Program Objective 2.

### **Women's Programming**

In addition to women's programming in most areas described above and addressing women's rights throughout male and female activities, RLS-I assists female elders in forming women's dispute resolution (or spinary) groups. The bodies focus on defusing family, children, and neighbors' disputes before they escalate into more serious and potentially destabilizing conflicts. Spinary group members also actively apply legal workshop lessons in advocating for women's rights in dispute resolution

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<sup>11</sup> Authority letters (waak leek) are forms signed by disputants who grant authority (waak) to jirgamaran to resolve their dispute (including disputes referred to TDR by formal justice sector actors) and who pledge to abide by the resulting decision. Decision letters are forms used by jirgamaran to make a written record of their decision in a particular dispute and that may be registered with formal justice sector authorities. Both forms are intended to reduce the likelihood that the disputants will seek to reopen the dispute and, in the case of a registered decision letter, to increase the likelihood that formal justice sector authorities will assist in enforcing at TDR decision if necessary. Authority letters and decision letters are forms developed by RLS-I, participating elders, and formal justice actors, and are bound in books distributed to elders by RLS-I.

processes. Spinsary groups contribute primarily to the achievement of Sub-IR 1.1.4 and RLS-I Program Objectives 1 and 3.

### **Outreach**

To help shape the local context in support of improved justice practice and respect for rights generally, RLS-I conducts an outreach campaign to the largely illiterate general public with illustrated materials, radio and TV programs, and work with community cultural center (CCC) village volunteers to raise public awareness of and demand for compliance with Afghan law relevant to common disputes and their resolution.

## APPENDIX E: GLOSSARY

alem	religious scholar, considered to be more knowledgeable about Shari'ah than most mullahs
baad	customary practice of resolving a dispute by giving a girl from the offender's family in marriage to a male member of the victim's family
badal	exchange marriage performed between families or tribes to alleviate tensions or relieve the financial burden of walwar
COR	USAID/Afghanistan Contracting Officer Representative
CSO	civil society organization (usually but not necessarily incorporated as a legal entity)
d-i-d	difference-in-differences; impact evaluation measurement that includes an estimate of the counterfactual scenario of what would have happened in the absence of the USAID intervention.
DDA	District Development Assembly
diyya	(in Afghanistan often referred to by its Arabic plural diyat) the custom of paying bloodmoney in a murder case to the family of the victim to avoid retaliation, the sum of the compensation is determined by shari'ah
DST	District Support Team
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
hadith	collection of scriptures detailing the actions, sayings, and tacit approvals or disapprovals of Islamic practices and beliefs of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), as documented by his companions and accompanied and verified by an authenticating record of the origin and lineage of each part of the collection, determining its authority as a source of Islamic law supplementing the Holy Qur'an
haq-ullah	concept of Shari'ah that refers to the rights of society; i.e., issues that have the potential to disrupt the peace within the community and for which it is the duty of the state to issue and implement legislation (e.g., criminal law)
haq-ul abd	concept of Shari'ah similar to the notion of civil law and that refers to the rights of the person; i.e., those rights that private individuals have vis-à-vis one another and that can be forfeited by the individual
huqooq	GIRoA Ministry of Justice representative at the district level responsible for liaising with elders and the community to resolve civil disputes
IDLG	Independent Directorate of Local Governance, a GIRoA sub-ministerial body
islah	literally, "reform"; dispute resolution principle based on restorative justice, comprising the promotion of peace and social cohesion through mediation and reconciliation; in the context of registration of TDR decisions by Huqooq district offices, the term refers to the category in the Huqooq offices' record-keeping system for registering TDR decisions

jirga	ad hoc assembly of tribal elders convened to make specific decisions or resolve a specific dispute by consensus
khan	member of the wealthy, land-owning class, influential in the community
machalgha	deposit required from the disputants prior to the commencement of a jirga to ensure compliance with its decision
maher	money or goods given by a husband to a wife upon marriage and that remains the wife's property, to ensure financial security in case of divorce or the death of the husband
malik	tribal elder who has been chosen as the head of the village and often liaises between the community and the government; due to this position of authority he is also approached to play a role in dispute resolution.
manteqa	area within a district encompassing a cluster of villages that share a common characteristic such as population of the same tribal group, location within a valley, or access to a major irrigation canal.
maraka	currently, often used interchangeably with the term jirga, especially in southern Afghanistan. Originally, used to refer to a village-level conflict resolution mechanism that included members of only one tribe or sub-tribe
mawlawi	highly qualified Sunni Muslim religious leader, usually with a more extensive religious education than a mullah
mudir-e-huqooq	Huqooq office director
mullah	local religious leader
nahiya	municipal sub-district
nanawati (also nanawatai)	a tenet of the Pashtun tribal code pashtunwali: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. the act of a perpetrator's representatives (often an older female and/or a mullah together with jirgamaran) requesting forgiveness for a murder or injury from the victims' family in order to reconcile the parties and reinstitute harmony in the community</li> <li>2. allowing a beleaguered person to enter the house of any other person and make a request which cannot be refused, plead for clemency or sanctuary</li> </ol>
NGO	private or quasi-governmental not-for-profit organization (usually formally organized as a legal entity)
Platform	combined civilian-military teams at Regional Commands and PRTs that allocate resources, implement integrated programs, and assess results
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
RC	Regional Command: any of the four geographic military command areas into which Afghanistan is currently divided - north (RC/N), south (RC/S), east (RC/E), and west (RC/W). The geographic areas of RC/E, RC/S, and RC/N correspond to RLS-I regions in the east, south, and north, respectively.
RLS-F	USAID/Afghanistan Rule of Law Stabilization Program – Formal Component
RLS-I	USAID/Afghanistan Rule of Law Stabilization Program – Informal Component

Shari'ah	legal precepts found in the Holy Qur'an and the Hadith; sometimes used by non-scholars (and this report) to denote Islamic law or jurisprudence, which includes scholarly interpretations of the Holy Qur'an and the Hadith; ijma ("collective reasoning" or consensus among scholars); and qiyas or ijtihad ("individual reasoning" or deduction by analogy)
shura	established council of respected community members, often registered with GIROA, representing the interests of their community to other institutions such as GIROA bodies and that are often involved in resolving local disputes
spinsary	literally, feminine form of "white-headed"; respected female elder(s) involved in dispute resolution
TDR	traditional dispute resolution
USG	Government of the United States of America
waak	authority given by all disputant parties to resolve the dispute conclusively
waak leek	letter signed by all disputant parties authorizing a jirga to resolve their dispute conclusively
walwar	bride price; money or goods given by a groom or his family to the head of the bride's household