



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

AFGHANISTAN

GENDER ANALYSIS

SUPPORTING AFGHANISTAN'S FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

MAY 2014

This report was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). It was prepared under contract with Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc. for USAID's Afghanistan "Services under Program and Project Offices for Results Tracking Phase II" (SUPPORT II) project.

Activity Signature Page

This report was contracted under USAID Contract Number: AID-306- C-12-00012.
Afghanistan Services Under Program and Project Office for Results Tracking Phase II
(SUPPORT II).

This Activity was initiated by the Office of Program and Project Development (OPPD)
through Ms. Belien Tadesse, COR/SUPPORT II.

Assignment Title: Supporting Afghanistan's Fight Against Corruption (SAFAC) Gender
Analysis

Team Leader: Suzanne Savage

Team Members: Manizha Wafeq

Activity Start Date: April 11, 2014

Completion Date: July 4, 2014

Hoppy Mazier, Chief of Party

Waheed Ahmadi, Deputy Chief of Party

Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc.

Kabul, Afghanistan

Disclaimer:

The views expressed in this report are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect
the views of USAID, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, or any
other organization or person associated with this project.

Table of Contents

I. Executive Summary.....	5
II. Introduction	10
1. Project Background.....	10
2. Purpose of Analysis	10
3. Methodology	11
III. Findings	12
1. Awareness and Attitudes.....	12
2. Participants in Corruption	13
a. Victims	13
b. Perpetrators.....	16
3. Anti-Corruption Entities	17
a. High Office of Oversight for Anti-Corruption (HOOAC).....	17
b. Joint Independent Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (MEC).....	17
c. Vulnerability to Corruption Assessments (VCA) and Training.....	17
4. Women-Focused Civil Society Organizations.....	18
5. Professional Associations	20
a. Business Associations	20
b. National Union of Working Women.....	20
c. Legal Associations	21
6. Anti-Corruption CSOs	21
a. Integrity Watch Afghanistan (IWA)	22
b. Equality for Peace and Democracy (EPD).....	23
7. Who Stands Up to Corruption and How	24
8. Media and Technology	24
9. Regional Differences	27
10. Best Practices	27
11. Relevant U.S. Gender Policies and Indicators	28
IV. Conclusions	29
V. Recommendations	30
Annex I: Bibliography of Documents Reviewed.....	33
Annex II: Methodology Description.....	336

ACRONYMS

AACN	Afghan Anti-Corruption Network
AAWU	All Afghan Women's Union
ACCI	Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries
ACEP	Afghanistan Civic Engagement Program
ACTA	Afghanistan Coalition for Transparency and Accountability
AfCAC	Afghan Coalition Against Corruption
AGO	Attorney General Office
AIBA	Afghanistan Independent Bar Association
AIHRC	Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission
AWCAC	Afghan Women's Coalition Against Corruption
AWN	Afghan Women's Network
CSC	Civil Service Commission
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DoWA	Department for Women's Affairs
EPD	Equality for Peace and Democracy
EVAW	Elimination of Violence Against Women
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GEFE	Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GRB	Gender Responsive Budgeting
HOO	High Office of Oversight for Anti-Corruption
IDLO	International Development Law Organization
IWA	Integrity Watch Afghanistan
LEAD	Leading Entrepreneurs for Afghanistan's Development
MEC	Joint Independent Monitoring and Evaluation Committee
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoI	Ministry of Interior
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MoW	Ministry of Women's Affairs
NAP	National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security
PAD	Project Appraisal Document
PC	Provincial Councilor
SAFAC	Supporting Afghanistan's Fight Against Corruption
SMS	Short Message Service
SOW	Statement of Work
USIP	United States Institute for Peace
VCA	Vulnerability to Corruption Assessment

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Given the pervasiveness of corruption in Afghanistan that poses severe roadblocks to development and security, USAID is undertaking a \$30 million, five-year project to reduce corruption. The Supporting Afghanistan's Fight Against Corruption (SAFAC) project is designed to work with both the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) and civil society stakeholders to identify vulnerabilities in government processes, monitor and advocate for reforms, and strengthen civil society capacity to stimulate civic engagement that can drive change.

With empirical evidence linking state security and gender equality,¹ U.S. Policy requires foreign assistance resources to contribute to increasing women's capacity, increasing opportunities for women to influence decision-making and empowering women to be equal partners. The magnitude of gender-based disparity in Afghanistan calls for explicit identification of how project design, budget, and management will provide women and men with equitable participation in decision-making and in benefit from SAFAC resources. Without action that affirmatively addresses gender-based inequities, SAFAC is likely to contribute to further increasing them.

1. GENDER DIMENSIONS OF ANTI-CORRUPTION

Gender-based disparities have enormous relevance to SAFAC in terms of the types of corruption that have differential impact on women and men; the dearth of Afghan women in decision-making positions in both government offices and donor-funded projects; and women's generally less active role in civic life. While men have the freedom to choose whether or not to participate in corrupt practices, social norms most often preclude women's participation. Compared to men, few women in Afghanistan are in positions of sufficient power that would enable them to perpetrate corruption. Furthermore, complicity requires a willingness to take risk and levels of trust and personal interaction that are outside the social construct of male/female relations in Afghanistan; interactions between men and women, no matter how innocent or professional, carry a risk of perceived impropriety that can damage not only a woman's reputation but can bring dishonor to the entire family.

Women's low level of professional involvement in anti-corruption mirrors that of Afghanistan's workforce in general. Within donor projects and counterparts, there are more qualified men who are more accessible and more mobile than women. Recruiting qualified women in Afghanistan takes commitment and frequently, additional time and dedicated resources.² Thus far, gender inclusiveness has not been a priority in anti-corruption

¹ Valerie Hudson, *Sex and World Peace*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2012, p. 102, 112.

² Based on interviews conducted with hundreds of employers and female job-seekers in Afghanistan for USAID Gender Analyses in 2011-2013 and *A Guide to Gender in Afghanistan*, USAID/Afghanistan 2013.

initiatives. Nonetheless, Afghans believe that women rarely engage in corruption, hence women may have more credibility working in anti-corruption efforts than men.

The Joint Independent Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (MEC), an independent non-governmental body established by Presidential decree,³ has conducted five Vulnerability to Corruption Assessments (VCAs), which review Ministry business processes. No women have participated in conducting VCAs in Afghanistan either as facilitators or within Ministries. Although the VCA tool itself is gender neutral, including women as VCA facilitators, trainers, and within government agencies as implementers could provide valuable alternative perspectives to VCA analysis and recommendations.

Corruption in the workplace and within the justice sector can have a cascade effect of not only widening gender disparities in access to resources but of further entrenching structural impediments to good governance. The cultural practice of *wasata*, personal connections that have historically served to manage inter-family obligations, is practiced almost exclusively by men (due to social norms already mentioned). *Wasata* is heavily relied upon in the workplace for securing employment and promotion, accessing opportunities to build skills through donor-funded learning and in contracting. *Wasata* is relied upon throughout the formal justice sector, determining the outcome of police reports, internment, and outcomes of court cases. While reducing corruption in both the workplace and the formal justice sector may have positive differential benefit for women, workforce issues appear more aligned with USAID/Afghanistan’s Gender Strategy that focuses on “entry and advancement of educated women.” As women seldom perpetrate corruption in Afghanistan, increasing their presence in the workforce, particularly in decision-making positions is likely to reduce corruption. Furthermore, a workforce hired and promoted on a non-merit basis is likely to underperform and corrupt practices become more deeply entrenched.

2. CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

Women-focused Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) currently conducting anti-corruption activities are process-driven rather than subject matter-driven, primarily conducting “awareness training” in response to grant opportunities. These CSOs do not collaborate with each other, do not use media to amplify messages, and do not attempt to measure effectiveness of training. The CSOs interviewed show resistance to applying social media and mobile technology in their work, perhaps reflecting lack of exposure, generational factors, and perceived threat to their existing business model. The Afghan Women’s Network (AWN) has demonstrated success in both mobilizing citizens and advocating action on highly

³ MEC is wholly independent from the Afghan government and the international community, reporting every six months to agreed-upon benchmarks to the President, Parliament, and people of Afghanistan through the media. MEC was created after the need for independent monitoring and evaluation of anti-corruption efforts was identified at the London and Kabul international conferences. Following the London Conference, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan invited the international community to form a joint Afghan-International monitoring and evaluation committee, which was welcomed by the international community. <http://www.mec.af/>

targeted issues. While the organization does not work specifically on anti-corruption, its national reach, particularly among educated women, could be a valuable addition to other initiatives.

The two main CSOs which focus specifically on transparency and accountability (their preferred term), Integrity Watch Afghanistan (IWA) and Equality for Peace and Democracy (EPD), have historically focused on community-based monitoring, which is conducted by over 90% men for infrastructure and over 75% men for court monitoring. Similar to other CSOs, IWA and EPD do not show evidence of collaboration with other CSOs, nor have they made media a strategic component to inform and engage a broad base of public interest and support. IWA will launch an initiative similar to www.ipaidabribe.com using mobile technology to engage citizens in reporting corruption, with data publicly available through a web-based platform. The accessibility of mobile devices and anonymity of reporting have the potential to increase women's participation if the initiative is promoted to encourage their involvement.

3. ENGAGING WOMEN THROUGH CIVIC PARTICIPATION

Due to restrictive cultural practices that narrowly define gender “appropriate” behavior, Afghan women's active participation in civic endeavors increases when participation is considered “appropriate” and the social environment – family, community, and society at large - encourages it. Similarly, women are more likely to take action against corruption when they have a support network that reinforces their values; such networks build women's confidence to confront corruption at both an individual and an organizational level, and dissipate the potential for retribution against individuals.

A best practice for building women's agency (women's capacity for individualized choice and action as opposed to placing women in the position of a beneficiary of another's decision on what is best for them)⁴ in Afghanistan is suggested by the recent presidential election. The high level of women's participation in the presidential election can be replicated for women's active engagement in anti-corruption with inclusion of the following components:

1. A broad-based social movement that condones (at least) and encourages (at best) women's participation;
2. An issue with high stakes for women;
3. A mechanism to get involved;
4. Positive reinforcement⁵ through media and community members for taking action;
5. Anonymity; and

⁴ <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1541079/feminism-philosophical/284112/Feminist-theories-of-agency#ref1049948>

⁵ For example, media coverage of the elections talked about women's participation in a positive light, women's courage to vote despite Taliban threats, footage of women in solidarity.

6. Partnership and buy-in of media and civil society for continuous awareness and communication.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the purpose, findings and conclusions of the Gender Analysis, the following recommendations are offered (fuller descriptions of recommendations are provided in the [Recommendations](#) section of this report):

1. Make women's meaningful participation a priority for SAFAC-supported grantees; mandate women's participation as staff, trainees, monitors, government and CSO counterparts, and subcontracts for supplies and services.
2. Conduct VCAs of USAID activities to identify vulnerabilities in human resources and procurement that may be widening gaps in gender disparities.
3. Support organizations such as the Civil Service Commission (CSC), Gender Units, IWA and USAID-funded projects that have the capacity to collect valuable gender-sensitive data to better inform government policies on fighting corruption.
4. Based on results from the VCA that EPD is conducting on recruitment practices, support CSC and the Gender Units in implementing recommendations.
5. Approach anti-corruption in a way that creates the sense of a social movement which engages citizens and creates an enabling environment for women's participation, similar to the sense of a social movement created in the run-up to the recent presidential election.
6. Focus on a narrow issue such as workplace corruption primarily focusing on human resource practices (hiring, promotion, discrimination, and sexual harassment) that is likely to have a positive differential impact for women.
7. Create a grants opportunity focused on a narrow anti-corruption objective that includes both technical activities and managing true collaboration among CSOs and media to leverage strengths. Grants would be awarded for organizations to conduct advocacy, mobilization, mass media, mobile technology/social media, public service monitoring, and facilitating/managing collaboration in such a way that activities work together as a single initiative.
8. Facilitate values-driven collaboration among transparency and accountability-focused entities; for example, among IWA, EPD, and CSOs working with educated women such as AWN and the Union of Employed Women. AWN and the Union can learn from IWA and EPD experience of advocacy work. In turn, IWA and EPD can learn from IWA and EPD how to employ and engage educated women.
9. Support IWA and EPD in creating and implementing a comprehensive media strategy that reaches a broad audience through multiple channels; emphasizes the importance of both men and women's participation; educates people on benefits of participation; informs them how to participate; and maintains public awareness of how citizen participation is contributing. Messaging and targeting both women and men can set the stage for a social movement of the *entire population* (rather than the population

and women too) in which women are expected to have the same civic responsibility as men, thus creating an enabling environment for women to participate.

II. INTRODUCTION

1. PROJECT BACKGROUND

Pervasive corruption in Afghanistan is considered a severe roadblock to the nation's stability. SAFAC is a \$30 million, five-year project based upon the theory that strengthening the capacity of GIROA institutions to combat corruption from within while strengthening the capabilities of civil society and the private sector to monitor, research, and advocate for anti-corruption, will increase the legitimacy of GIROA in the eyes of the Afghan people.

SAFAC intends to work with both GIROA and civil society stakeholders to identify vulnerabilities in government processes, monitor corruption and advocate for reforms. SAFAC envisions working only with Ministries that exhibit commitment to conducting Vulnerability to Corruption Assessments (VCA) and to implement the resultant recommendations. Recognizing that expertise in anti-corruption methodologies among Afghan civil society organizations is sparse, SAFAC will seek to increase the capacity of organizations that already serve as watchdogs for government accountability and transparency; expand capacity among other CSOs to monitor government spending and reform efforts; broaden public discourse on anti-corruption; increase advocacy efforts; and engage citizens in reducing corruption.

2. PURPOSE OF ANALYSIS

Despite well-documented gender-based disparities in access to and control over resources in Afghanistan, the existing Concept Paper for SAFAC is gender-neutral. With evidence linking peacefulness of states with gender equality, United States foreign policy has made empowering women a cornerstone of its foreign policy a security issue.⁶ This Gender Analysis is conducted to explicitly identify the overlay of gender issues with anti-corruption and provide guidance for the SAFAC Project Appraisal Document (PAD) and aligns with USAID's Gender Policies on Gender Equality and Female Empowerment (GEFE) and the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (NAP), and with the Mission's new Ten Year Strategy.

This Analysis identifies cultural anomalies and structural impediments that may prove to be hindrances to women's participation in implementation and leadership of project activities, and provides recommendations for project design, management, activities, entry points, and indicators to offset gender-based disparities.

While the initial work plan for the Analysis focused on capacity building for government institutions and civil society, subsequent discussion with USAID led to streamlining the focus as follows:

⁶ Remarks at the *TEDWomen Conference*, U.S. Department of State, December 2010.

1. Engagement with civil society to make women full partners in anti-corruption through awareness and demand for good governance;
2. Selecting anti-corruption initiatives that may offer particular benefits to women; and
3. Engagement and capacity building of female civil servants in Vulnerability to Corruption Assessments (VCAs) and other initiatives to reduce opportunities for corrupt practices.

3. METHODOLOGY

Field work for the Gender Analysis was conducted from April 10 - May 15 in Kabul, Jalalabad, Mazar-i-Sharif and Herat. Interviews were conducted with 126 people (74 women and 52 men) representing CSOs, sector associations, youth groups, GIRoA, and donors/implementing partners ([Annex IV](#)). Individual interviews lasted 1 – 1 ½ hours and group interviews lasted 1 ½ - 2 hours. Interviews were conducted by an Afghan woman and an American woman. Some meetings were conducted in English and some were conducted in Dari with English translation.

Interview guides ([Annex II: Work plan](#)) were developed based upon questions proposed in the Statement of Work ([Annex I](#)) and were used as a framework for semi-structured discussions. Interviewees had varying levels of exposure to and understanding of anti-corruption and gender; very few interviewees were able to discuss a gendered perspective of anti-corruption. As a result, the conclusions in the Analysis are based on triangulation and synthesis of interviews, observation and literature review. A more in-depth discussion of methodology is contained in [Annex V](#).

III. FINDINGS

1. AWARENESS AND ATTITUDES

A variation exists in how men and women in Afghanistan define corruption. Both cite the misuse of authority for personal benefit, primarily using payment and connections to receive preferential treatment. However, women interviewed define corruption more broadly to include cultural norms that limit their participation in society such as harassment, discrimination, and Gender-Based Violence (GBV). Some women interviewed acknowledge the practice of *sextortion* (extortion of sex) however they more frequently cite cases of sexual harassment and intimidation that result in their loss of access to justice, employment opportunities, business contracts, and government services. Most men interviewed deny that the *sextortion* exists, although one male judge in Kabul contends that “women create opportunities for men to ask for sexual favors.”

Both male and female interviewees express the opinion that service-delivery level corruption is gender blind opportunism: exploiting anyone with less power, fewer connections, and fewer financial resources. This power differential generally describes the status of Afghan women relative to Afghan men. Men typically assume the household responsibility for accessing government services. Combined with men’s generally more active role in society, “A woman may directly experience corruption once a year but men experience corruption 365 times a year,” according to one observer. The *2010 National Corruption Survey* conducted by IWA confirms this, with male respondents 2.5 times more vulnerable to officials requesting bribes than women simply because of their exposure to state officials.⁷ The corollary is that both men and women interviewed view women as disadvantaged because they are excluded from participating in the corrupt practices that allow men to rise in their careers, access educational opportunities and business contracts, and win court cases.

The entrenched nature of corruption in Afghanistan is obvious in the delivery of most public services, where the practice of bribery has become an institution. Male interviewees consider bribe payments as expediting fees that are preferable to time-consuming visits to government offices which interfere with work and school obligations. Nonetheless, a number of male interviewees believe that men suffer more than women as a result of corruption, as they carry the household burden of accessing government services and throughout their daily activities in which virtually all decisions hinge on connections or payment of money or favors.

Not only is bribery entrenched, but so too is the practice of *wasata*, “the magical lubricant that smoothes the way to jobs, promotions, university places and much else besides in business and government.”⁸ With roots in the Arab culture, *wasata* has a long history as a way of managing relations between families, clans and tribes. Those who have *wasata* can

⁷ Integrity Watch Afghanistan, *2010 National Corruption Survey*, p. 69, Kabul, 2010.

⁸ <http://www.nardelloandco.com/wasta-connections-corruption-arab-world/>

jump the queue and acquire permits; get jobs; obtain favorable legal rulings; get government contracts; and benefit from government rules that limit competition. While Western culture frequently perceives *wasata* as corruption, Afghan culture perceives it as a respectable way of managing family and social relationships. Given Afghanistan's cultural norms that preclude close relationships between men and women who are not related and the paucity of women in positions of power, women are virtually excluded from the benefits of *wasata* that men enjoy, particularly in the workplace and formal justice sectors.

Exclusion of women from enjoying the benefits of *wasata* may be a contributing factor to women's lower level of confidence in the international community's willingness to fight corruption.⁹ A number of women interviewees perceive corruption through *wasata* in donor project hiring, as evidenced by the predominance of men in leadership, management and technical positions.¹⁰ Similarly, women business owners interviewed observe that while men's businesses are directly notified by their male networks employed at projects to bid on contracts to supply donor projects, women business owners are not directly contacted to bid.¹¹

2. PARTICIPANTS IN CORRUPTION

According to the *2012 National Corruption Survey*, 58% of male and 42% of female respondents report that women's experience with corruption is primarily in paying bribes while men both pay bribes money and engage in *wasata*.¹²

a. Victims

Service Delivery

The ubiquitous nature of corruption in delivery of public services demands the participation of all Afghans. Services for documents such as ID cards, birth and death certificates, and attestations of everything from certificates of education, to land can entail hundreds of steps, each requiring a signature of a specific person. The result is a time-intensive process requiring interaction with a large number of government employees who are almost exclusively male. Given social norms that limit women's mobility and interaction with men outside the family, and hence women's more limited exposure to bureaucratic processes, the burden of accessing services typically falls on men. One interviewee recounts the story of a female relative who did not understand that each time an official instructed her to take documents to another person, a payment would have eliminated subsequent visits. Her document attestation took two years.

⁹ Integrity Watch Afghanistan, *2010 National Corruption Survey*, op. cit.

¹⁰ This theme is evident from interviews with women for over 35 USAID Gender Analyses in 2011-2013.

¹¹ A number of well-established associations, CSOs and donor representatives were adamant that USAID should not conduct an anti-corruption project unless it concurrently addresses corrupt use of US government funds at higher levels. Interviewees cited the following reasons for USAID to abandon the project: corruption cannot be addressed in a short-term project timeline; donor projects are perceived as contributing to corruption; a project without credibility will not succeed; wasteful use of USAID funds further contributes to the problem.

¹² Integrity Watch Afghanistan, *2012 National Corruption Survey*, Kabul, 2012.

Both women and men are able to circumvent the drawn-out process of accessing services through *commissionkars*, middle-men¹³ who charge a fee for expediting processes. Male interviewees comment that people do not need to bother learning official procedures because *commissionkars* provide the service. According to the 2010 National Corruption Survey, *commissionkars* are more often relied upon by men (52%) than women (35%), and are more often used in non-urban areas.

Legal System

The formal justice system is recognized by Afghans as the most egregiously corrupt structure among state institutions, with the highest number of bribes paid by households going to the police and the courts.¹⁴ While both men and women have limited understanding of how the formal justice sector operates and how to access it, women more frequently face the physical barriers of mobility, transportation and literacy required to access services. In addition, only a fraction of Afghan women's disputes make it to the formal justice system as the practice of women initiating a dispute and taking it into a public arena is frequently considered shameful.¹⁵ Among rural communities there is a prevailing perception that the formal legal system is corrupt and unjust and not an institution that women should approach, either as claimants or as professionals.

Since women generally have less in the way of financial resources and personal connections than men, and defendants in women's cases are typically men, men are more likely to win cases when judges and prosecutors engage in corruption.¹⁶ Sometimes legal professionals suggest personal interaction that while not carnal, is nonetheless considered inappropriate personal interaction, as a means to resolve women's cases favorably and expeditiously. These acts are rarely acknowledged or reported because women themselves are so frequently blamed for the overtures, and shame for the incident accrues to the entire family.¹⁷

While little is known about the frequency and outcome of such incidents, statistics gathered by the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) from March 2010 to March 2011 offer a snapshot. Among 2,299 cases filed under the Elimination of Violence Against Women (EVAW) Law, prosecutors opened only 594 cases (26%); indictments were filed in 155 (7%), and in only 101 cases (4%) did courts use EVAW as basis for their judgment, despite the EVAW's legal status to supersede other laws that may be in contradiction. As there is no standardized registration and tracking of cases from the police and court systems, a possible explanation for the exceedingly low percentage of cases opened, indictments made, and EVAW Law followed is due to plaintiffs using *wasata* and bribes to evade prosecution.¹⁸

¹³ Interviewees are not aware of female *commissionkars*.

¹⁴ Integrity Watch Afghanistan, 2010 National Corruption Survey, op. cit.

¹⁵ IDLO, *Women's Professional Participation in Afghanistan's Justice Sector*, 2014.

¹⁶ The local CSO Research Institute for Women Peace and Security (RIWPS) is monitoring cases in Herat courts to determine the extent to which men defendants' status and connections determine the outcome of cases. RIWPS was unable to be reached for details.

¹⁷ Transparency International, *Gender Equality and Corruption: What are the Linkages?*, op. cit.

¹⁸ World Bank, *Women's Role in Afghanistan's Future*, p. 133, Washington D.C., 2014.

Workplace

According to the *National Corruption Survey*, the cases of corruption that women report most frequently are related to their main source of income, either through employment or in securing contracts for business. This is corroborated through interviews in which both men and women cite workforce corruption as that which affects women most. Women's virtual exclusion from corruption, particularly *wasata*, almost guarantees that they lose out to male competitors in the workforce as hiring, promotion and training opportunities are frequently circulated only among male networks.

Heads of Ministry Gender Units interviewed observe corrupt hiring and promotion practices through their participation on hiring committees. Most common are the practices of male candidates getting advance notice of interview questions, and elevated scoring for candidates with *wasata*. While the Heads of Gender Units are not afraid to confront corruption and elevate issues to higher levels, they are simply discouraged by the lack of results when they do so. Furthermore, they are cognizant of their own job security which in most cases depends upon remaining in favor with higher-ups who may be the very people involved in the corruption.

Heads of Gender Units in Ministries cite some of the corruption emanating from donor-sponsored training opportunities for government employees in which participants are typically selected by Ministries based on cronyism among predominately male staff; in the meantime, donors are told that there are no women at the appropriate skill level or that women cannot travel.¹⁹ The unintended consequence is that these donor-sponsored training opportunities widen gaps between men and women's skills and experience. Recognizing the prevalence of this practice, the Gender Unit of the Civil Service Commission (CSC) is attempting to assemble a database of female civil servants' availability to travel. Heads of Gender Units²⁰ interviewed report that donor projects only contact them when they want to do a women-focused activity and suggest that if they were involved at project inception they could facilitate women's inclusion and circumvent some of the corrupt practices.

As women are virtually excluded from corrupt practices that propel men in their careers, the cascade effect is that few women are able to move into positions of authority and decision-making. Global research conducted by Transparency International points to a "statistically significant correlation between the increased participation of women in governance and reduced corruption" (although no causality has been shown between gender and corruption). The report adds that increasing women's role in governance is best promoted on the basis of equality rather than as part of an anti-corruption drive.²¹

¹⁹ This practice was also noted throughout interviews conducted for USAID Gender Analyses in 2011-2013.

²⁰ Heads of Gender Units also expressed resentment that donors regularly use them for interviewing but results from years of interviews are not evident.

²¹ Transparency International, *Gender and Corruption*, Working Paper #3/2007, 2007.

The negative impact of corruption on women in the workforce may have deeper and longer-term negative effects on women than on men. Interviews conducted with hundreds of women in 2011 – 2013 for USAID/Afghanistan Gender Analyses reveal that when women lose job opportunities as a result of corruption, they frequently resign from their job, discontinue their job search, and make no further attempts at promotion. More frequently however, women do not bother applying for fear of not succeeding.

b. Perpetrators

Both interviewees and research indicate that Afghan women are rarely initiators or perpetrators of corruption. While research shows that women are not inherently less corrupt than men,²² in Afghanistan women have far less opportunity to engage in corruption. Compared to men, few women in Afghanistan are in positions of sufficient power that would enable them to perpetrate corruption. Research on corruption by Transparency International explains that transactions require trust among the criminal partners and that women appear less able or willing to establish this trust (particularly in a male-dominated environment) while men tend to engage in this positive reciprocity.²³ Furthermore, research on risk-taking behavior presents strong evidence that men are more willing than women to take risks.²⁴ This may be especially true in Afghanistan where the burden of family honor is carried by women and interactions between men and women, no matter how innocent or professional, have the potential to bring shame not only to the woman but to her entire family. The risk of perceived impropriety is one most women are not willing to bear.

While replacing low-level male civil servants with women may not reduce corruption, the *2010 National Corruption Survey* reports that 35% of Afghans surveyed believe that increasing the number of women in oversight positions would accomplish this.²⁵ The report goes on to say that the presence of a woman in a department in which corruption is dominant is likely to be neither an obstacle nor a threat to corrupt male officials as women in such positions are either marginalized in their functions or are threatened with dismissal. “On one occasion, a woman who did not comply with the demands of a corrupt male subordinate received death threats which resulted in her family members forcing her to quit the job. In another, the woman who was perceived as an obstacle was shifted from one office to another and was also accused of being mentally unstable.”²⁶

²² Anne Marie Goetz, *Political Cleaners: How Women are the New Anti-Corruption Force: Does the Evidence Wash?*, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton. (undated)

²³ Transparency International, *Gender and Corruption*, op.cit. The report also notes that “if workplaces become more feminised or when women take the top leadership jobs, it cannot be taken for granted that women will be less corrupt or not form their own networks.”

²⁴ Nelli Oster, *Men vs. Women: Risk Aversion*, 2013. <http://www.blackrockblog.com/2013/11/06/men-women-risk-aversion/>

²⁵ Integrity Watch Afghanistan, *2010 National Corruption Survey*, op.cit., p. 88.

²⁶ Ibid.

3. ANTI-CORRUPTION ENTITIES

a. High Office of Oversight for Anti-Corruption (HOO)

As with most GIRoA entities the High Office of Oversight for Anti-Corruption (HOO) is male-dominated with females holding fewer than 20% of positions in monitoring, research, and case tracking. According to a male HOO official, women monitors at HOO are more effective than their male counterparts. He observes that when women monitors go into Ministries they focus on gathering information; when men monitors go into Ministries they focus on solidifying personal relationships. Additionally, he noted that he would increase the number of female staff if he had authority over hiring, and says the only concession that has to be made for female staff is that they cannot easily travel alone outside the urban areas in which they are based.

Although Afghanistan has a *National Strategy on Anti-Corruption*, it contains no mention of gender, women, situations and types of corruption that differentially victimize women.

b. Joint Independent Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (MEC)

The Joint Independent Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (MEC) has a governing Board of six people, one of whom is a non-Afghan female. Among its 20 professional staff, four are female. Most interactions with GIRoA at MEC's primary counterparts, the Ministry of Interior (MoI), Attorney General Office (AGO), Ministry of Justice (MoJ), and Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat (electricity agency) – are with male staff. According to two MEC female staff who have direct interaction with Ministries, some of the Ministry counterparts were initially disrespectful and offered them bribes to overlook issues they were reporting on; however, these Ministry counterparts have since come to treat them with more respect.

MEC reports challenges in attracting applications of qualified females, attributing it to the male/female composition of Afghanistan's workforce in which fewer women have professional work experience. In an attempt to increase the number of female staff, MEC has recently adopted a positive discrimination policy and initiating a Gender Committee in an attempt to increase women working in the sector. As so few organizations specifically target anti-corruption, there is no standard of professional qualification. According to MEC, professional staff should have a university degree, three years of work experience with government administration, ability to conduct research, ability to analyze government procedures, ability to develop survey material, ability to communicate in sensitive situations, ability to conduct interviews and focus groups, and the ability to write concisely. Female staff believes that women do not have an inherent aversion to working on anti-corruption initiatives and "will work for any organization with integrity."

c. Vulnerability to Corruption Assessments (VCA) and Training

VCA's are gender-neutral tools that guide organizations through a review of business processes. MEC has thus far conducted five VCA's with Ministries and has several more planned; GIZ has conducted VCA and "integrity promotion" training with mid-level HOO and Ministry staff. According to GIZ, some Ministries had up to 50% women in the training sessions, and women participants were more motivated than men, particularly younger women. Nonetheless, no women thus far have participated in conducting VCA's in Afghanistan either as facilitators or within Ministries. MEC believes that if women's inclusion were a priority, the facilitating agency would work with the Ministry to identify women with requisite skill and experience. If none were available, women in junior positions could be included as a way to build their skills and experience.

In reviewing the VCA tools, there appears to be little room for engendering the tools themselves. Nonetheless, including women as VCA facilitators, trainers, and in government counterparts could add insight and dimension to VCA analysis and recommendations. Given that women are virtually excluded from benefitting from corrupt practices in human resources, women may answer the VCA human resource questions (such as the sample questions below that are taken from a VCA questionnaire) differently than men:²⁷

Human resource management greatest vulnerabilities are:
 _____ % of staff evaluated vulnerabilities are due to regulation
 _____ % of staff evaluated vulnerabilities are due to human resources
 _____ % of staff evaluated vulnerabilities are due to de facto practices

4. WOMEN-FOCUSED CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

The Analysis Team interviewed 22 CSOs, half of which are women-focused CSOs conducting anti-corruption activities. Most of these CSOs have carved a niche defined by expertise in a process rather than in a specific subject matter. Their expertise is in face-to-face training and community-level mobilization. Although a number of these organizations belong to the Afghanistan Coalition Against Corruption (AfCAC), With 70 member NGOs, AfCAC was initiated in 2012 by the USAID-supported A4 project. AfCAC accepts reports of corruption that are followed-up by legal professionals. While the coalition is a step in the right direction for loosely networking NGOs who have or want to receive funding for anti-corruption activities, lessons learned about civil society from other countries with declining funding point to the need for collaboration with "coherent and complementary activities" for a strong civil society in Afghanistan's transition.²⁸

When asked, these women-focused CSOs interviewed reveal that they have not been exposed to specific anti-corruption approaches or tools, including those used in other countries. Most

²⁷ VCA Questionnaire provided by MEC.

²⁸ Langer Research Associates, 2013 Afghanistan Civil Society Assessment, p. 111, IPACS-II/Counterpart International, Kabul, December 2013.

CSOs interviewed describe their anti-corruption activities as simply “awareness-raising” or as “making people aware of what corruption is.” While raising awareness of corruption is one step along the anti-corruption continuum, increasing awareness of the problem without offering avenues to address the problem could actually serve to increase citizens’ sense of disempowerment and government illegitimacy. Nonetheless, this focus on awareness could be the outcome of a 2013 Heinrich Böll Institute conference during which civil society participants suggested focusing anti-corruption efforts more on awareness, transparency and accountability, rather than on accusation and punishment as effective in getting political elites on board.²⁹

The focus on awareness rather than action-based initiatives among CSOs could be explained by findings in the 2013 Civil Society Assessment which states that, “There is an inherent conflict between CSOs stepping up their watchdog role on one hand, yet addressing an often adversarial relationship with government on the other.” The report goes on to say that “in-depth interviews found few examples of anti-corruption advocacy or of attempts by CSOs to challenge government officials,” suggesting that CSOs have avoided confronting the government on corruption for fear of reprisals.³⁰

The USAID-funded Afghanistan Civic Education Project (ACEP) as part of their multi-faceted civil society engagement and empowerment activities is currently reviewing grant proposals from CSOs to conduct work in anti-corruption. ACEP’s policy is to award 50% of its grants to women-led/women-focused CSOs, and considers gender mainstreaming as part of the grant selection criteria.³¹ According to ACEP most proposals focus on budget monitoring. Nonetheless, both ACEP and MEC express concern with these CSOs’ capacity to understand what to look for when monitoring, how to access decision-makers, and how to effectively use monitoring information gathered. One CSO has submitted a grant proposal to ACEP to work with government institutions in Mazar-i-Sharif to develop business process maps for administrative services of seven government offices. Their plan includes broadcast media and if successful, the activity could be scaled to other regions.

CSOs interviewed confessed that they do not attempt to measure effectiveness or use media due to “lack of funds.” When asked, none of the CSOs are able to articulate how they would measure effectiveness if funds were available. While some of the CSOs are part of a coalition, they do not work collaboratively to leverage strengths in training, advocacy, monitoring, or public awareness to achieve a specific objective.

The Afghan Women’s Network (AWN) is a well-established women-focused CSO which, while not conducting anti-corruption activities, has gained recognition for its success in

²⁹ Langer Research Associates, op. cit., 108,

³⁰ Langer Research Associates, op. cit., 76.

³¹ It is worth noting that several CSOs submitting proposals to ACEP are also funded by Tawamundi. SAFAC may want to consider conferring with ACEP, Tawamundi, and other sector donors to ensure that project activities are not double-funded.

advocacy to effect national policy change on criminal codes and election laws effecting women. Among women-focused CSOs, AWN has the most extensive reach into networks of educated women.

5. PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

a. Business Associations

The Analysis Team interviewed professional associations in the business and legal sectors as well as an association for women working across professions. The Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) does not consider gendered differences in its activities, which has led to women business owners establishing Leading Entrepreneurs for Afghanistan's Development (LEAD), an organization whose primary focus is advocacy for women's businesses. LEAD does not formally address anti-corruption however members cite examples of how their close affiliation with other women business owners has helped them deal with attempted extortion. Harakat (DfID-supported) has recently launched a one-year "Business Integrity Network" project with 20 members (three female) from business, government, anti-corruption, and media, with priorities and activities to be defined by members. Harakat and ACCI are working with the Ministry of Religious Affairs in an attempt to incorporate anti-corruption messages into Juma prayers. No women are involved in this activity and women interviewees caution against relying on mullahs to interpret Islamic teachings.

b. National Union of Working Women

The National Union of Working Women has 2,000 members nationally with 1,200 members in Herat. Membership includes prominent women judges, lawyers, teachers, doctors, and employees of donor projects. The Union's purpose is to defend working women against corrupt, discriminatory and criminal practices that limit their hiring, promotion, and career opportunities. Union activities are initiated in response to specific incidents by gathering members to conduct advocacy with decision-makers. The Union has called upon the media to report on incidents when advocacy fails. The Union has defeated attempts to push women out of positions in favor of a male with *wasata*; removing police commanders who raped girls but were untouchable because they paid so much for their jobs; and correcting a variety of workplace incidents within CSC. The Union receives no outside funding; all expenses are covered by members.

Members attribute their success to "strength in numbers," an approach that is cited by the UNDP report *Grassroots Women and Anti-Corruption*. According to the report women are empowered to raise their voices against corruption if they are actively involved with a group of women who serve as a social safety net for individual members."³² Further evidence of

³² UNDP, *Seeing Beyond the State: Grassroots Women's Perspectives on Corruption and Anti-Corruption*, New York, 2012.

this was confirmed during the Analysis as members of a tightly-knit women’s businesses organization recount their confidence in standing up to attempted extortion while women without affiliation to an organization silently retreat.

c. Legal Associations

In the legal sector, the Afghanistan Independent Bar Association (AIBA) could be reducing the incidence of corruption, albeit not through systemic change. AIBA monitors lawyers’ practices and has prosecuted 35 cases of corruption in the past 18 months, a practice that could be a strong deterrent to others. Another way in which AIBA may be reducing corruption is through community education on formal justice processes and directing citizens to AIBA counseling centers and legal clinics. According to AIBA, educating citizens helps to demystify formal justice processes and in so doing, reduces some of the stigma associated with women accessing justice. AIBA Herat reports that it normally serves three to four female clients each day and sees an increase in the weeks immediately following community education sessions. While AIBA legal clinics and counseling do not systemically curtail corrupt practices, they do reduce the likelihood that clients will fall victim to corruption.

AIBA is cognizant of the need to have female attorneys to interact with the female population; community education, counseling centers and legal clinics are run by both male and female attorneys. According to AIBA, the agreement under which it receives U.S. funding requires all training courses for attorneys to have 50% female participation. The Herat office seems to embrace this affirmative action approach, recognizing that more qualified women attorneys will be a benefit to the entire justice sector.

Community-based paralegal programs are increasing globally to stimulate community empowerment, improve the quality and delivery of legal services, and in the process, reduce corruption in the justice sector. Analysis of community-based paralegal programs credits the approach with shifting citizens away from “clientelism” toward citizenship. Nonetheless, detractors question the service quality and sustainability, particularly within conflict-affected settings. The *Initiative for Peacebuilding* voices concern that although paralegal programs may promote women’s access to justice and alleviate some of the burden from the state, “attention needs to be paid to addressing the required longer-term gender-sensitive reforms of the formal security and justice sector.”³³

6. ANTI-CORRUPTION CSOS

Three of the five CSOs that are anti-corruption focused EPD, AfCAC and AWCAC³⁴ are women-led. CSOs working in this sector prefer to use the terms “accountability” and

³³ Carley Robb-Jackson, *Justice Watchdogs: Promoting Women’s Access to Justice Through Community-Based Paralegal Programs*, p.12, Centre for International Sustainable Development Law (CISDL), Quebec, 2012.

³⁴ See Annex VI for additional information.

“transparency” rather than “anti-corruption.” Among anti-corruption CSOs, only IWA and EPD appear to be conducting substantive work in anti-corruption.

a. Integrity Watch Afghanistan (IWA) ³⁵

Integrity Watch Afghanistan (IWA) engages community volunteers to monitor infrastructure projects, courts, public services and extractive industries. Among its staff of 70, IWA employs only four women who are based in Kabul. IWA cites the same challenges in recruiting women as most other organizations: few qualified female applicants. Although IWA gives “special consideration” to women applicants, it does not take extra steps to recruit women. As volunteer recruiting for IWA is conducted through male staff, cultural norms create barriers for engaging with women’s *shuras*; without a female focal point to liaise with the women’s *shuras*, IWA struggles to identify female monitors. While the Jalalabad and Mazar-i-Sharif field offices cite women’s mobility as a significant challenge, IWA Herat claims that this challenge could be overcome with female focal points, financial resources, and creative approaches such as husband and wife teams. “Women in this region want to get out of the house and get involved with civic activities,” explains the IWA representative.

Two of the four IWA staff working with extractive industries in Kabul are women. Although they work with the heavily male-dominated Ministry of Mines in an industry with big money at stake, the women claim that they feel no more threatened in their job than they would in any other profession. Nonetheless, recruiting women monitors for extractive industries is extremely challenging, requiring door-to-door visits, talking to families about women’s civic obligation, and convincing both men and women of the “appropriateness” of the activity for women. Yet despite the challenges, the extractive industries pillar of IWA has the most women monitors of all sectors, a situation that is likely attributable to the active and dedicated efforts of female staff. As described previously, cultural norms create barriers for men staff engaging with women through *shuras* or communities to recruit volunteers. As the extractive industries pillar has female staff, cultural barriers are overcome and at least some women engaged in monitoring. The highly conservative nature and remoteness of the mining locations typically results in women monitors who are less educated and less mobile than women in more urban areas, and less so than men in the same areas. As a result, women require more training and are frequently unable to participate in exchange visits with other communities.

Monitors are required to be literate, visit sites several times each week, and communicate effectively with private sector representatives to collect monitoring data on construction materials, planned versus actual work, budgets, and schedules. Opportunities for women to participate in monitoring duties are limited as the male population is more literate and free to travel without cultural restrictions. Furthermore, women typically have less-developed interpersonal communication skills than men due to more limited experience outside the

³⁵ See Annex VI for additional information.

home and community. Communications can also be stymied by the cultural power imbalance between men and women; women who are assertive and confident are sometimes viewed as inappropriate. While threats to monitors and IWA staff are rare, both male and female staff believe that real and perceived threats are the same for men and women.

IWA produces a comprehensive *National Corruption Survey* every two years. The survey employs equal numbers of male and female surveyors and surveys an equal number of male and female citizens. While the survey disaggregates some of the data by sex, IWA has not considered a gendered analysis to identify significant disparities in male/female responses. A new survey is anticipated to be released in mid-2014.

IWA is in the early stages of two major initiatives. One initiative is to create a network of anti-corruption CSOs with the objective of educating them to work effectively in anti-corruption. This initiative is funded through a core grant³⁶ from Tawanmandi (a human rights initiative of the British Council). The grant carries no gender targets or objectives however Tawanmandi indicates that grantees are requested to address “cross-cutting issues” such as gender.

IWA’s other activity is based on the *I Paid a Bribe* (www.ipaidabribe.com) initiative in India (discussed more fully in the [Media and Technology](#) section), creating a public platform to report incidents of corruption using mobile and internet technology. While IWA had not considered capturing data on male/female reporting, it is responsive to the suggestion. The initiative has many of the same elements that contributed to women’s high level of participation in the recent presidential election:

- High upside benefit to women;
- Use of multi-media to create a sense of a social movement that provides an enabling environment supportive of women’s involvement;
- A mechanism to get involved; and
- Anonymity.

Nonetheless, IWA has failed to include a critical component to citizen engagement: a comprehensive media strategy that places information in the public arena to create a popularly supported movement and to provide positive reinforcement for participation. The importance of this type of awareness surfaced repeatedly during interviews: People will participate in anti-corruption initiatives only as long as they believe that justice is served.

b. Equality for Peace and Democracy (EPD)

EPD’s signature work is its annual national budget analysis which it conducts under the umbrella organization Afghanistan Coalition for Transparency and Accountability (ACTA). The analysis is conducted by EPD’s two female principals who have extensive experience in

³⁶ Tawamundi defines “core grant” as up to \$400,000 over three years.

government and Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB). While providing a valuable bridge between the Ministry of Finance (MoF) and Parliament, the budget analysis offers little opportunity for citizen engagement as the highly technical nature of the document is unlikely to be understood by the general public. EPD appears to engage media only for press conferences to launch its reports. Similar to IWA, EPD supports community-based monitoring; despite concerted efforts to engage women at the community-level, it claims that conservative norms in the areas it works preclude women's involvement.

EPD is planning to undertake VCAs documenting procurement and recruitment processes. EPD is keenly interested in conducting VCAs within the health and education sectors as entities that provide services to meet the most basic human needs. EPD's team lead for VCAs is female; EPD unequivocally states that VCA participants will be 50/50 male/female "because it is important," according to one of the managing directors.

7. WHO STANDS UP TO CORRUPTION AND HOW

During interviews some women and no men described individual instances in which they directly confronted a person or situation in business, at work, or with government, that was corrupt. Examples of confrontations include the following:

- The Head of a Gender Unit took issue with a specific recruitment in which a woman was passed over in favor of a less qualified man. The Gender Head was supported by a male employee of CSC and the decision was overturned.
- A female Provincial Councilor (PC) refused to approve a budget for a non-existent facility and refused to falsify attendance records of male PCs. The budget item was removed but the female PC was threatened at gunpoint to stop creating problems.
- A woman business owner informed a potential client that she had been approached by the client's procurement manager for a kickback. Her business was subsequently vandalized.
- The Union of Employed Women in Herat was instrumental in removing sexually abusive police commanders and protecting women government employees in decision-making positions when attempts were made to replace them for *wasata*.

Although no examples of individual men confronting corruption were raised during interviews, they may use approaches that are less confrontational. As men rely more heavily than women on their personal/professional relationships in order to maintain their position, they may find other ways to let colleagues know that they will not be complicit to corrupt practices. As social norms preclude men and women from developing close personal/professional relationships that could be used for *wasata*, women may be less careful about nurturing relationships. Furthermore, women's attempts to more gently handle such a situation with a man could be misconstrued as a personal invitation.

8. MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY

While CSOs interviewed unanimously promote face-to-face training as the primary way to engage women in anti-corruption, evidence of the effectiveness of mass media and social media are undeniable. For example, social media has been used to assemble hundreds of women for the *One Billion Rising*³⁷ demonstration in Kabul in February, and in another instance this year, to rally legal action to overturn legislation threatening women's justice in cases of GBV.

While Afghans are increasing their use of social media and internet, radio is still the most accessible, used by 80%; mobile phone 57%; and television 54%. Only 3% of Afghans use the internet for obtaining information.³⁸ A USAID-sponsored report in 2010 found that internet users are predominately youth and university students who connect several times a week, typically from internet cafés; and adults who work in organizations with an internet connection.³⁹ Among the main challenges identified in the report are the much lower rate of use among women, as internet is accessible primarily in urban workplaces and internet cafés that are male-dominated and therefore inappropriate for women.⁴⁰ However, the recent surge in smartphones that provide internet access is likely to be increasing internet accessibility, particularly among women.

According to an Afghan social media and mobile technology company, most Afghans equate social media with Facebook. The company's founder says that civil society fails to recognize the strategic and powerful potential of mobile technology. Meanwhile, she says, criminal networks "use mobile technology really well." She says mobile technology can help to "shine light into the dark corners" of government but adds that fostering citizen engagement, especially in Afghanistan, has to draw on a range of tools. While social media provides a mechanism for people to actively engage with civic initiatives, she stresses the importance of using a combination of mass media and personal interaction to motivate, educate, provide a mechanism to take action, and to find out results. She cites how radio was used to promote, educate and train would-be citizen journalists to report stories from remote parts of the country during the presidential election. "Crowd-sourcing delivered over 500 reports through SMS, Twitter and the internet during the elections," claims the spokesperson. The company sees mobile technology as a "workaround" for women to raise their voice and has a number of women-focused projects in the pipeline.

A report on digital citizenship in Indonesia echoes the importance of using multiple forms of communication: "To be successful, online advocacy and action must also be performativity [sic] networked in significant ways to the work and activities of offline networks and committed individuals, NGOs, public interest groups, and other associational forms as well as

³⁷ *One Billion Rising* is a global initiative to end violence against women. <http://www.onebillionrising.org/>

³⁸ The Asia Foundation, *Afghanistan in 2013- A Survey of the Afghan People*, Kabul, November, 2013.

³⁹ Altai Consulting, *Afghan Media Report 2010 - Synthesis Report*, p. 108, Kabul, October 2010.

⁴⁰ Kamminga, Jorrit, *Public Diplomacy in Afghanistan beyond the 2014 Transition*, Clingendael Institute, June, 2013.

a range of sites and spaces where actions are staged and ideally amplified in relation to each other.”⁴¹

India, Kenya and Pakistan have been using crowd-sourcing via mobile phone and internet through www.ipaidabribe.com as a way to give citizens a voice and bring corruption into the public discourse. Using SMS and internet, citizens can easily and anonymously submit notification on a government office or representative who demands a bribe in order to provide service. Notifications are aggregated and published on the web site to identify departments and officials with the highest incidence of corruption, providing an anonymous yet very public way to castigate those involved. The web site provides information on how to access various government services and a section on how citizens can resist paying bribes.”⁴² The original site in India reports that its data has armed mass media and CSOs to advocate for change and has allowed some reform-minded government officials to push through reforms. It is not known if the sites collect sex-disaggregated data on the source of reports however in cultures where women may be reluctant to directly confront a male about corruption, the anonymity offered by the site could serve to engage women.

Afghan mass media journalists and media associations that were interviewed adamantly defend their role exclusively as reporting on events, even when presented with the possibility that media can create and interpret stories to explain events and drive social change. Cultural norms and personal security (in general) limit female journalists’ ability to conduct field work; most women work in studios. A number of TV stations host talk shows on corruption that provide information about how to report incidents of corruption, how to access legal clinics, and resources for women who experience GBV, harassment, and human rights violations.

Despite the general reluctance to get substantively involved, two journalists in Jalalabad (one man and one woman) took bold steps in reporting on corruption:

1. A male journalist in Jalalabad broadcast a report about a female doctor who demanded money for service that should have been free. The doctor subsequently ceased the practice of asking for money.
2. When a female journalist in Jalalabad filed for divorce the judge asked for a “private meeting” during which he offered to settle the case quickly if she would marry him. She had the foresight to record the conversation on her phone and broadcast the recording, accompanied by a statement that if harm came to her it would be because of this incident. The judge was moved by the Supreme Court to a different location.

⁴¹ Nico Warouw and Patricia Spye, *Digital Citizenship and Indonesia’s Anti-corruption campaign: New Forms of Public Action and Accountability?* (undated) http://www.kitlv.nl/pdf_documents/Digital_Citizenship_and_Indonesia.pdf

⁴²Stephanie Strom, *Web Sites Shine Light on Petty Bribery Worldwide*, *New York Times*, March 6, 2012.

http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/07/business/web-sites-shine-light-on-petty-bribery-worldwide.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0

9. REGIONAL DIFFERENCES

Very few regional differences that have bearing on this Analysis were observed during field interviews; nonetheless, the following may be worth noting:

1. Kabul interviewees frequently mention the importance using Islam in reducing corruption, while Herat and Jalalabad interviewees mention it less frequently and those in Mazar-i-Sharif did not mention it at all.
2. Both men and women interviewees in Kabul express a high degree of pessimism about the impact of anti-corruption and express a high degree of cynicism relative to donors reducing corruption, as donor projects are considered to practice corruption in hiring and contracting processes. Interviewees outside Kabul (with the exception of media representatives in Herat) are relatively optimistic about the potential to reduce corruption.
3. Herat interviewees reflect a more active, mobile, optimistic and fearless population of women engaged in anti-corruption than in other cities. While women in other cities talk about a passive approach that increases awareness of corruption, Herati women are more inclined to describe actions they have taken. AIBA Herat has 38% female members compared to 19% nationwide.

10. BEST PRACTICES

When asked to point to initiatives that have been successful in reducing corruption or engaging women in anti-corruption, interviewees unanimously agree that there are none. While the Union of Working Women and AIBA show some success, their approaches do not address corruption on a systemic basis. By broadening the search to best practices for engaging Afghan women in civic activities, one needs to look no farther than the recent presidential election. With 36% of votes cast by women, the high turnout surprised even the civil society organizations who contributed so heavily to women's mobilization.⁴³ Indeed, three-quarters of the 438 CSOs interviewed for the 2013 Civil Society Assessment indicate that they were engaged in activities intended to increase women voters' turnout.⁴⁴ Elements contributing to the high turnout of women include the following:

1. High stakes for women as their right to be outside the home, educated, in the workforce and in public life could be either solidified or lost.
2. Engagement with the population at large to facilitate a socially enabling environment for both women and men to undertake their civic responsibility to

⁴³ <http://www.npr.org/blogs/thetwo-way/2014/04/26/307147763/afghan-election-heads-toward-runoff-women-cast-36-percent-of-votes>

⁴⁴ Langer Research Associates, op. cit., p. 17.

vote, with the spirit of a social movement that is organic rather than an activity prompted by outsiders.

3. Use of multiple tools, including mass media, digital and mobile technology, and in-person mobilization appealing to a broad range of the population, cultivating support for civic responsibility, and educating citizens on how to actively engage.
4. A mechanism to actively engage (vote) yet with an element of anonymity allowing women the agency to make a personal choice.
5. Relative credibility of results.
6. Positive feedback for citizen engagement.

11. RELEVANT U.S. GENDER POLICIES AND INDICATORS

Both stakeholders and documentation reveal that existing and previous anti-corruption programs in Afghanistan have failed to make gender equity a priority. Instead, initiatives have worked with the population that is most visible, accessible, mobile, experienced, and as a result, expeditious: men. Nonetheless, United States Gender Policies provide clear guidance to design programs which contribute to women's agency while USAID/Afghanistan's *Gender Strategy 2012* sharpens the focus to "institutionalizing opportunities for the entry and advancement of educated women within the public, private, public and civil society sectors ... to establish a platform on which to build on current advances as the country transitions."⁴⁵

U.S. Gender Policies direct foreign assistance resources toward programming that takes affirmative action to build women's agency and reduce gender disparities:⁴⁶

1. *Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy (GEFE)*: Reduce gender disparities in benefit from resources; and increase capability of women and girls to realize their rights, determine their life outcomes, and influence decision-making at all levels.
2. *National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (NAP)*: Empower half the world's population to act as equal partners in preventing conflict and building peace in countries threatened and affected by war, violence, and insecurity.

The following three USAID Gender Indicators have relevance to anti-corruption programming:

⁴⁵ USAID/Afghanistan, *Statement of Work for Gender Analysis for the Women in Transition (WIT) Program*.

⁴⁶ USAID ADS 205: <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/205.pdf>. USAID's How-to Note on Gender provides guidance in gender-sensitizing program design and implementing gender indicators: http://usaidlearninglab.org/sites/default/files/resource/files/How-To_Note_Gender_and_PPRs_2013_0719.pdf.

1. *GNDR-2*: Proportion of female participants in USG assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources (assets, credit, income or employment).
2. *GNDR-3*: Proportion of females who report increased self-efficacy at the conclusion of USG supported training/programming.
3. *I.3-9*: Number of training and capacity building activities conducted with USG assistance that are designed to promote the participation of women or the integration of gender perspectives in security sector institutions or activities.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Few women have participated in activities related to anti-corruption for the simple reasons that the workforce is more populated with men in professional positions; that qualified men are more accessible and recruiting women typically takes a more concerted effort; and that women's participation has thus far not been a priority. Nonetheless, women may work more effectively in anti-corruption than men as perception and evidence indicates they are less often complicit.

While reducing corruption will benefit both men and women, some sectors such as the workforce and access to justice may have positive differential benefits for women. As women seldom perpetrate corruption in Afghanistan, increasing their presence in the workforce, particularly in decision-making positions is likely to reduce corruption. Furthermore, a workforce hired and promoted on a non-merit basis is likely to underperform and further perpetuate corruption.

Due to restrictive cultural practices that narrowly define gender "appropriate" behavior, Afghan women's active participation in civic endeavors increases when participation is considered "appropriate" and the social environment encourages it. Similarly, women are more likely to take action against corruption when they have a support network that reinforces their values, which results in confidence to confront corruption and dissipates the potential for retribution against individuals.

The high level of women's participation in the presidential election can be replicated for women's active engagement in anti-corruption with inclusion of the following components:

1. A broad-based social movement that condones women's participation;
2. An issue with high stakes for women;
3. A mechanism to get involved;
4. Positive reinforcement for taking action; and
5. Anonymity.

Women-focused CSOs are best utilized as part of a collaborative effort to augment work of subject-matter CSOs such as IWA and EPD. Unless IWA and EPD use CSOs and media to amplify results of monitoring and create a social movement, impact will remain limited.

Given the lack of strategic partnerships among CSOs and media, collaboration will need to be mandated through the procurement document and will need to be closely managed throughout the activity's implementation.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the purpose, findings and conclusions of the Gender Analysis, the following recommendations are offered:

1. Make women's participation a priority for grantee staff, trainees, monitors, counterparts, and subcontracts for supplies and services.
 - a. Require grantees to have a minimum of 30% women in technical and professional positions; as trainees; as monitors; and as government counterparts for positions and activities funded by USAID resources. If qualified women are not readily available, the project should consider increasing the number of women in more junior positions and articulate a plan to build their skills and experience to a professional level.⁴⁷ Project timelines and funding should anticipate that identifying qualified women may require additional resources and plan accordingly.
 - b. Require women's participation in VCAs as facilitators and Ministry counterparts. Coordinate with Ministry Gender Units for their direct participation in VCAs and for their assistance in identifying female employees to participate.
 - c. Conduct VCAs with USAID-funded projects to identify vulnerabilities in human resources and procurement that may be widening gaps in gender disparities.
 - d. Ensure Ministries participating in VCAs understand the requirements for women's participation at the onset of the VCA process.
 - e. Require that women-owned businesses are contacted to bid on contracts for supplies and services funded by SAFAC.
 - f. Require reporting on gender indicators and sex-disaggregated data. Use standard USAID Gender Indicators such as GNDR 2, GNDR 3, Standard Indicator 1.3-9, or custom gender-sensitive indicators. GNDR 2 and Indicator 1.3-9 report qualitatively on the extent to which women are included in activities. This information could be compared to changes in the level of corrupt practices and changes in real or perceived gender equality within the group to determine whether a correlation exists. GNDR 3 offers qualitative information on changes in women's self-efficacy as a result of their participation. Such information could be used to determine whether activities contributed to women's empowerment; to develop messaging to encourage women's further participation; and correlating

⁴⁷ The Analysis Team heard of some instances in which USAID projects were told to "hire more women" but were not provided with guidance or instruction on revising recruitment strategies to attract qualified women. Following direction, some projects have increased the number of women hired which has resulted in unintended negative consequences including women with minimal duties because they do not have sufficient skill and experience; resentment among male staff for hiring "unqualified" women; resentment of counterparts that staff are hired on gender rather than qualification.

efficacy to changes in accountability and transparency practices. The simple practice of tracking these indicators may serve to increase awareness among activity staff and counterparts that USAID resources are required to include and benefit women as much as men.

- g. Determine whether MEC's Gender Committee has potential to increase women's involvement in anti-corruption and support accordingly.
2. Support organizations such as CSC, Gender Units, IWA and USAID-funded projects that have access to data to collect gender-rich data.
 - a. Provide funding to IWA to add questions regarding how women and men are affected differently by corruption; situations in which corruption is encountered; disparities in how men and women define corruption; and how men and women stand-up to corruption. Either funding or technical assistance should be provided to conduct more in-depth analysis of sex-disaggregated data. This could be done in conjunction with Recommendation 3.c.
 - b. Based on results from the VCA that EPD is conducting on recruitment practices, offer support to CSC and the Gender Units to implement recommendations.
3. Approach anti-corruption in a way that creates the sense of a *social movement* which engages citizens and creates an enabling environment for women's participation.
 - a. Create a grant opportunity that mandates collaboration with a full spectrum of activities and competencies such as advocacy, mobilization, mass media, digital technology/social media, and public service monitoring. Provide technical assistance to develop true expertise in anti-corruption for a highly select number of organizations through subject matter experts (rather than through off-the-shelf training) and actively manage collaboration. The initiative should include the following elements:
 - Public information platform such as www.ipaidabribe.com as a mechanism to actively engage;
 - Messaging focused on civic participation;
 - Multi-media strategy to reach a broad range of the population and cultivate a socially enabling environment for women's participation; and
 - Continuous feedback to positively reinforce active engagement.
 - b. Focus on a narrow issue such as workplace corruption that is likely to have a positive differential for women and is in alignment with the Mission Gender Strategy.
 - Conduct a baseline to enable measurement of changes in hiring, promotion, and learning opportunities that women are able to access. Engage both men and women stakeholders to identify meaningful measures of results.
 - Provide support to Gender Units and women-focused CSOs dealing with working women to help them learn and promote strategies for standing up to corruption.

- c. Facilitate values-driven collaboration among IWA and EPD with CSOs working with educated women such as AWN and the Union of Employed Women. While AWN and the Union can gain subject matter and advocacy expertise, IWA and EPD can learn how to employ and engage educated women.
 - d. Support IWA and EPD in creating and implementing a comprehensive media strategy that reaches a broad audience through multiple channels; that educates people on benefits of participation; informs them how to participate; and maintains public awareness of how citizen participation is contributing. Planning, implementing and managing a comprehensive media strategy is likely to require substantial technical assistance.
4. Monitor the grant activity proposed to ACEP by the women-focused CSO that documents government processes. If the initiative appears scalable, connect this CSO to IWA and the collaborative grant implementer (described in 3.a.) to scale-up.

ANNEX I: BIBLIOGRAPHY OF DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

Altai Consulting, *Afghan Media in 2010*, October 2010. Available from USAID.

Azfar, Omar, Knack, Steve, Lee, Young, and Swamy, Anand, *Gender and Corruption*, November, 1999.

Blagojevic, *Vulnerability to Corruption Assessment as a Risk Management Tool*, Ljubljana Institute of Finance and Economics (L.I.FE.), September 2012.

Chene, Marie, *Gender and Corruption in Humanitarian Assistance*, Transparency International, December 2009.

Chene, Marie, *Gender, Corruption and Education*, Transparency International, July 2009.

Delesgues, Lorenzo, *Corruption and Conflict*, Integrity Watch Afghanistan, November 2010. Available from Integrity Watch Afghanistan. <http://www.iwaweb.org>.

Eqbal, Reza, *ADPP Community-Police Consultation MOU and Work Plan Analysis*, UNOPS, December 2013. Available from UNOPS Afghanistan.

Feghali, Rana, *Wasta: Connections or Corruption in the Arab World*, Nardello & Co., February 2014, <http://www.nardelloandco.com/wasta-connections-corruption-arab-world/#sthash.NnUIWuTk.dpuf>

Goetz, Anne, *Political Cleaners: How Women are the New Anti-Corruption Force. Does the Evidence Wash*, University of Sussex, 2003.

Group of States against Corruption (GRECO), *Conference on Gender Dimensions of Corruption*, December 2013.

HUAIROU Commission, *Seeing Beyond the State: Grassroots Women's Perspectives on Corruption and Anti-Corruption*, October, 2012. Available from HUAIROU Commission and UNDP.

IDLO, *Women's Professional Participation in Afghanistan's Justice Sector: Challenges and Opportunities*, 2014.

Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee, *1st-4th Sets of Recommendations and Benchmarks*, March 2013. <http://www.mec.af>

Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee, *5th Set of Recommendations and Benchmarks*, March, 2013. <http://www.mec.af>

Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee, *Report on the Implementation of Anti-corruption Related Elements of Presidential Decree 45*, March 2013. <http://www.mec.af>

Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee, *Illegal Hiring of Prosecutors and Lack of Comprehensive Training Contributes to Impunity and Risks of Corruption*, February 2014. <http://www.mec.af>

Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee, *Summary of the VCA on Civil Service Appointments*, January 2014. <http://www.mec.af>

Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee, *Summary of the VCA on University Examination Administration*, January 2014. <http://www.mec.af>

Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee, *Summary of the VCA on the Land Distribution Process for Repatriates*, January 2014. <http://www.mec.af>

Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee, *Summary of the VCA on Pension Administration*, January 2014. <http://www.mec.af>

Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee, *VCA Report on the Certificate Issuance Process in Four Central Universities in Kabul*, October 2013. <http://www.mec.af>

Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, *Strategy and Policy for Anti-corruption and Administrative Reform*. (date unknown)

International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/ The World Bank, *Women's Role in Afghanistan's Future – Taking Stock of Achievements and Continued Challenges*, February 2014. Available from the World Bank.

Integrity Watch Afghanistan, *Afghan Perception and Experiences of Corruption- A National Survey 2010*, July 2010. Available from Integrity Watch Afghanistan. <http://www.iwaweb.org>.

Integrity Watch Afghanistan, *National Corruption Survey 2012*, August, 2013. Available from Integrity Watch Afghanistan. <http://www.iwaweb.org>.

Langer Research Associates, *2013 Afghanistan Civil Society Assessment, IPACS-II/Counterpart International*, December 2013.

Ljubljana Institute of Finance and Economics (L.I.FE.), *Vulnerability to Corruption Assessment*, September 2012.

Nawaz, Farzana, *State of Research on Gender and Corruption*, Transparency International, June 2009.

Nawaz, Farzana, and Chene, Marie, *Gender, Corruption and Health*, Transparency International, August 2009.

Rivas, Fernanda, *An Experiment on Corruption and Gender*, University of Granada, December 2008.

Robb-Jackson, Carley, *Justice Watchdogs: Promoting Women's Access to*

Justice Through Community-Based Paralegal Programs, Centre for International Sustainable Development Law, McGill University, Montreal, 2012.

Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *Audit Report- Afghan Customs: U.S. Programs Have Had Some Successes, but Challenges Will Limit Customs Revenue as a Sustainable Source of Income for Afghanistan*, April 2014.

Transparency International, *Gender and Corruption: Understanding and Undoing the Linkages*, March 2007.

Transparency International, *Corruption and Gender in Service Delivery: The Unequal Impact*, February 2010.

Transparency International, *Gender, Equality and Corruption: What are the Linkages*, January 2014.

The Royal Danish Embassy, *A Gender Analysis of Corruption- Forms, Effects and Eradication Strategies*, September, 2009.

USAID/ACEP, *Government Monitoring and Policy Advocacy Campaign Grant Proposals*, May 2014.

USAID/Management Systems International (MSI), *Assistance for Afghanistan's Anticorruption Authority (4A) Project*, November, 2013. Available from Management Systems International.

United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) PAU, *ADPP Summary*, February 2013.

Vulnerability to Corruption Tools, provided by the Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (MEC), April 2014.

ANNEX II: METHODOLOGY DESCRIPTION

Field work for the Gender Analysis was conducted from April 10- May 15. Key informant meetings were conducted in Kabul, Jalalabad, Mazar-i-Sharif and Herat. Individual interviews lasted 1 – 1 ½ hours and group interviews lasted 1 ½ - 2 hours. Interviews were conducted by a female Afghan and female American consultant with discussion in English or in Dari with English translation. Interviews were conducted with 74 women and 52 men representing the following types of stakeholders:

Type of Organization	Number of Organizations	Number of People
Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)	22	30
Media	13	13
Government	13	17
Sector Associations	8	26
Youth Groups	5	25
Donors/Implementing Partners	9	11
Total	70	126

The largest group of stakeholders interviewed, women-led/women-focused CSO, were represented predominately by women in the age range of late 30's to mid-50s; two representatives of these CSOs were men approximately 40 years old. CSOs interviewed have established themselves over the past 12 years, primarily through a model of face-to-face workshops and trainings. This traditional approach, combined with age of CSO leaders, may explain their resistance to new media and digital technology. With the exception of two women-focused sector associations, all media and sector associations interviewed have male leadership.

Interview guides were developed as a guide for interviewers to gather information however each interview required adjusting interview questions and approach based on stakeholders' individual experience, depth of knowledge, and perspectives relative to the intersection of anti-corruption and gender. As interviewees reflected a very traditional approach to their work and low level of subject matter knowledge, interviewers pursued transformational interviewing techniques by offering subject information and introducing possible alternative scenarios for reflection.

Few interviewees were able to directly answer questions relative to anti-corruption and even fewer were able to discuss gender dimensions of anti-corruption. Instead, interviewees focused on corruption. The perception of futility and powerlessness in the face of large-scale political corruption is evident during interviews as stakeholders recited stories of both small-scale corruption and public figures whose corruption has gone unpunished. As a result, triangulation among interviewee responses, literature, and observation have been used extensively for the analysis.

As one of the Analysis outcomes is to identify sectors that could have a differential positive benefit to women, interviewees and topics of discussion conducted in the first two weeks were broad. As themes emerged, they were investigated during subsequent interviews. Similarly, categories of stakeholders were narrowed to investigate the emerging themes more deeply

Cecchi and Company Consulting, Inc.
Afghanistan SUPPORT-II Project
Wazir Akbar Khan
Kabul, Afghanistan