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FINAL REPORT

Political Party Assessment

July 29, 2012

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

I. List of Acronyms

Afghan Analysts Network	AAN
Afghan Public Protection Force	APPF
Afghan Youth National and Social Organization	AYNSO
Afghanistan Parliamentary Assistance Project	APAP
Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit	AREU
Central Electoral Complaints Commission	CECC
Civil society organizations	CSOs
Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening	CEPPS
Democracy and Governance	D&G
Democratic Congress of Afghanistan	DCA
Election Complaints Commission	ECC
Independent Electoral Commission	IEC
Initiative to Promote Afghan Civil Society II	IPACS
International Crisis Group	ICG
International Foundation for Electoral Systems	IFES
International Republican Institute	IRI
Movement of Afghan Sisters	MAS
National Coalition of Afghanistan	NCA
National Democratic Institute for International Affairs	NDI
Office of Inspector General	OIG
Political Party Assessment Team	PPAT
Single Non-Transferable Vote	SNTV
Scope of Work	SOW
State University of New York	SUNY
Support for Increased Electoral Participation in Afghanistan	SIEP

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III. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The intent of this assessment is to identify what has prevented Afghan political organizations from developing and to recommend interventions for USAID to encourage the development of a pluralistic, democratic, competitive, and accountable political party system. This assessment uses the USAID/University of Pittsburgh Political Party Assessment Tool (Pittsburgh Methodology).[1]

From February through March 2012, the assessment team reviewed materials produced by USAID Democracy and Governance (D&G) implementers as well as materials produced by reporters, researchers, academics, and think tanks. The team interviewed over 120 individuals involved in Afghan politics in five cities across the country.

The team found that Afghanistan has significant traditions of democracy, some long standing, others, such as the past decade's electoral cycles, more recent. The full expression of these traditions is hampered by violence, corruption, and local interpretations of Islam that discourage questioning of many cultural norms and power structures and prevent the full participation of women in politics.

Beginning with the constitution, the Afghan institutional framework is weak. The executive dominates the National Assembly, the Provincial Councils, the judiciary, and has total legal control over the electoral administration. Enforcement of laws is limited and elections are corrupt. The single non-transferable voting system (SNTV) encourages electoral corruption and, by preventing political organization development, fragments the national and local legislatures, freeing the executive from the checks and balances of an effective legislature essential for the proper functioning of a presidential system.

Afghanistan has more than 45 registered political parties, most small and weak. They are generally centered on one major leader who makes all party decisions. They are patronage based, designed to secure resources from the state and distribute them to party members, though demographic affiliation plays a role in establishing party loyalty. Ideology plays a minor role in party competition. As a result, their relatively small size is not a disadvantage; rather it is a necessity to ensure that party patronage benefits do not become diluted by a broad based membership. Because the leader is usually the key to securing state resources, if the leader is removed, the party often splinters. Some parties have become members of coalitions or fronts, along with some individuals and other non-registered political parties. While these coalitions are better able to span ethnic divides, they otherwise do not represent an improvement on the party structure.

Several civil society organizations (CSOs) also claim to have had political success in recent elections. The team found that the most significant differences between parties and these purportedly successful political CSOs relate to their funding and their origins— the CSOs that claim the most political success were founded by an international implementer and receive significant international encouragement, though the team questions whether that success is real. Other CSOs have a more organic, Afghan origin, and do not claim to have had any electoral success thus far. However, the team believes that they may be more durable in the long run and do engage in real political action, though they would not define it as such.

[1] http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pnaea111.pdf

The team found that the development of political organizations, whether parties or otherwise, was constrained both by Afghan and international programmatic factors. On the Afghan side, a failure of rule of law and Afghan governance gave Afghan political organizations little reason to develop beyond patronage-based organizations and encouraged corruption. Further, the lack of effective and empowered elected government institutions at the local level, exacerbated by the failure to establish the elected sub-national elected government structures mandated by the Afghan constitution, has left a yawning gap between Afghans and their highly centralized, Kabul-based government. The team notes that according to some commentators, the Taliban, in contrast, have been shown to be significantly decentralized in their decision-making, with local decisions often made by consensus and vetted with local individuals of influence.

On the programmatic side, the team found that there were clear political party development successes, most especially the campaign training of trainers program implemented by NDI for the past electoral cycle. There were significant weaknesses, however. The team found that implementers targeted political party development programs at those with little reason to support change, ignored elected officials, were Kabul-centric, were poorly coordinated, did not address political issues with elected officials, focused on form rather than function of political entities, and were supported inconsistently. In addition, the team found that the training was deficient in building political organizations and over-emphasized campaigning.

The team recommends that USAID take several steps. First, USAID should directly address the identified weaknesses in political party development programming, as well as continue to support programs that have been very successful, such as civic education. Second, USAID should use its monetary and diplomatic leverage to encourage change in the Afghan factors retarding political organization development. Specifically, as a condition of monetary assistance to the electoral process, USAID should require reform of the legal foundations of the electoral administrative and adjudicative bodies to insulate them from the influence of the executive and reduce electoral corruption, thus incentivizing honest competition in the electoral process and political development. USAID should also consider greater programmatic interventions to strengthen the existing organs of government charged with providing oversight of the executive: the legislature and the judiciary. Finally, USAID should provide support to the further empowerment of the Provincial Councils and the election and establishment of the constitutionally mandated sub-national government structures yet to be established, to provide political organizations more opportunities to develop and to make government political life relevant to average Afghans.

IV. INTRODUCTION

This is the latest in a series of papers assessing Afghanistan's political parties, the most recent completed by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) in June 2011.[2] In addition, a USAID-funded Election Process Programming Assessment was completed in August of 2011, a key part of which concerned political entity development programming.[3]

This assessment is targeted at assessing the political entities themselves in the expectation that USAID D&G programming will be reduced from current levels. This team recognizes that in the expected tighter fiscal environment, programming must be targeted as efficiently as possible, and even good programs must be examined with a more critical eye to ensure value for money. This report will not replicate most recent, and rather lengthy, party or programming assessments, and instead looks to identify areas of political development where USAID intervention could have the greatest positive impact.

The Scope of Work (SOW) states:

> The purpose of this assessment is to assess the current state of political entities in Afghanistan in the lead up to the 2014 elections and make recommendations on how best to target limited USG resources to support greater political participation. This scope of work (SOW) requires the completion of two tasks:
>
> > (1) assess the nature of Afghanistan's political party system and associated political parties, political movements and coalitions, and issue-based coalitions to identify what has prevented them from developing further, and;
> >
> > (2) recommend possible interventions for USAID/Afghanistan, if any, that may be effective in the current environment to foster the development of a pluralistic, democratic, competitive and accountable political party system.

V. METHODOLOGY

The Political Party Assessment Team (PPAT) is composed of two senior internationals and an Afghan national, all with diverse and complementary experience. Together, the international component of the team has over 10 years combined experience on the ground in Afghanistan in project management, evaluation, and implementation in democracy, governance, and elections. The Afghan component of the team has experience in Afghan governance, civil society, and academia.

The team began work in February 2012, by reviewing three prior USAID political party and programming assessments, documents from key implementers,[4] including program reports, quarterly reports, websites, et al, and documents produced by reporters, researchers,

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[2] *Political Parties in Afghanistan: A Review of the State of Political Parties After the 2009 and 2010 Elections*, National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, June 2011.

[3] *Electoral and Political Processes Programming Assessment*, Checchi and Company/USAID, August, 2011.

[4] NDI, International Republican Institute (IRI), International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), Afghan Parliamentary Assistance Project (APAP), Counterpart.

academics, and think tanks such as Afghan Analysts Network (AAN), International Crisis Group (ICG), Brookings, and Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU).[5]

The team also met with over 118 individuals in five locations: Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif, Jalalabad, Samangan, and Kabul.[6] The team's intent was to canvass individuals from diverse backgrounds to avoid repeating conventional wisdom from the usual Afghan/international opinion-makers and to obtain first hand information, rather than second hand impressions. Security incidents and severe weather put full implementation of this meeting plan in danger on more than one occasion. Through the flexibility of USAID, our Afghan interlocutors, and creative deployment of team resources, the team was, however, able to complete its intended program by mid-March, successfully meeting people from the highest levels of Afghan government and politics to ground level party activists and 'average' Afghans.

As required by the SOW, the team conducted information gathering and analysis in accordance with the Pittsburgh Methodology, which provides a guide for information collection and a recommended analytical structure. The undeveloped nature of many sectors of Afghan society required some adaptations of the methodology to ensure its relevance to the Afghan situation and to the team's broader mandate to look at political entities, rather than just parties—a situation anticipated by the authors of the methodology.

The Pittsburgh Methodology breaks down political party assessment as follows:

- Political Context
  - Democratic Context
  - Institutional Context
  - Party System and Coalitional Context
  - Party Attributes
- Democratic Development Characteristics
  - Organizational and Technical Capacity
  - Accountability, Representation, and Participation
  - Governability and Good Governance
  - Stable and Peaceful Contestation
  - Rule of Law and Fair and Honest Elections

This paper will address the political context categories individually, but it is important to note that in some areas there is significant overlap in content, resulting in what might appear to be an omission in one area or an over-inclusiveness in another. In addressing these overlaps, the team chose to err on the side of clarity and ease of reading and understanding, rather than hewing slavishly to the methodological structure. In the section on Democratic Development Characteristics, the team dispensed with specific findings for each characteristic, and instead used the characteristics to inform the team's recommendations.

The team endeavored to ensure that its findings in this report are based upon its research and interviews made in country. All documents used in writing this report are cited where they inform the basis for our report, however, nearly every finding made is based primarily on the team's interviews in county. To avoid an overwhelming number of citations, the team did not cite each event, but generally provided notice in the text.

[5] See Annex G for a bibliography of key materials.
[6] See Annex C for a list of interlocutors. The list does not include individuals who would not meet with the team unless promised anonymity for security or other reasons.

VI. POLITICAL CONTEXT

"[E]xplaining the institutional context and socio-economic factors that help determine who holds power, their degree of power, why the institutions exist as they do, and the behavior of politicians and citizens… The contextual analysis has three parts; the broadest part focuses on the level of democracy, the next level considers the constitution and other parts of the institutional framework, and the third considers the party system and traditional patterns of coalitions."[7]

IV.a. Democratic Context and the Party System: Open or Closed?

"[E]xamine the degree to which the political system allows parties and others to participate in the process…"[8]

The democratic context is, simply put, the ability of political actors to participate in the political process. As required by the SOW, the team took a broad view of the definition of "political actors," and included everyone from individual Afghans to any sort of politically interested organizations, whether the organization believes that it is involved in politics or not. It should be noted that Article 2 of the Political Parties Law of 2009 takes a more restrictive view: "In this law "political party" means an organized society consisting of individuals which undertakes activities for attaining its political objectives, locally and/or nationwide, based on the provisions of this law and its own constitution."[9]

On a superficial level, Afghan politics fall toward the open end of the scale. Since 2004, Afghanistan has held six elections across the country in which more than 10,000 candidates ran, hundreds of thousands of party agents engaged in electoral observation, and millions of Afghans voted.[10] Members of the Provincial Councils and the National Assembly who were not re-elected gave up their seats for their newly elected replacements, not without the unnecessarily drawn out, and likely illegal Special Court process, but, importantly without taking up arms.[11] Individuals could and did run as candidates for all elected offices in enormous numbers.[12] Political party formation, while discouraged by law, is in practice relatively unhindered.[13] Parties did participate in the electoral process and, while party participation was constrained on the ballot,[14] parties could and did provide campaign and other assistance to candidates. Minorities are well represented in Afghanistan's National Assembly, as are women, though for women, that achievement is, at least in part, thanks to legal quotas.

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[7] Pittsburgh Methodology, p. 4.
[8] Pittsburgh Methodology, p 11.
[9] Annex E, Political Parties Law, 2009.
[10] Statistics compiled from the IEC website: http://www.iec.org.af/eng/.
[11] See A New Result for the Parliamentary Election?, AAN, Martine van Bijlert, August 21, 2011, http://www.aan-afghanistan.org/index.asp?id=2032.
[12] See Electoral Law, Article 43.
[13] Under the 2003 Political Party Law, only 700 signatures were required for political party registration, leading to the registration of over 100 political parties. Under the 2009 Law, 10,000 members in 22 provinces are required, but already 45 parties are legally registered.
[14] Party affiliations were only barred from the ballot in 2004, however, in 2010, because of party re-registration difficulties, only 5 parties were able to have their candidates' party affiliation noted on the ballot.

Civil society, while somewhat mercenary[15] and lacking in experience, does exist, and notwithstanding its problems, its development was characterized by several interviewees as one of the great successes of the international presence. In general, civil society organizations (CSOs) are weak, their development constrained by numerous factors in Afghan society, not least corruption, poor education, and poverty. In the area of service delivery, there are CSOs that perform better, however, this paper focuses on those parts of civil society that are politically focused and thus service delivery, aside from civic education type activities, was not a significant component of their work.

Political CSOs are generally not yet able to provide an effective or consistent voice for the interests they represent, but, deficient though they may be, they do provide a link between the population and opinion-makers and decision-makers, and the development of this link should be a priority. It should be noted that even amongst political CSOs there is little interest in interacting with parties and coalitions and vice-versa. Both groups express skepticism regarding the usefulness of such interaction, but the parties and coalitions have the added baggage of being seen as dishonest organizations responsible for much of Afghanistan's history of violence.

The team questions the long-term sustainability of many CSOs as they seem highly aid dependent and international support is expected to decrease. However, the team believes that a small but genuine grass-roots civil society movement— not dependent on international assistance— is developing and will survive in the long term, though the individual organizations may not. Whether grass roots CSOs can develop into replacements for the current political parties and coalitions is less certain. Whether is desirable is even less so. One commentator cautions against over-reliance on civil society as the foundation stones for an effective political system, a strong temptation where, as in Afghanistan, the political parties are seen as corrupt, violent, and ineffective.[16]

Aside from these recent democratic developments (and notwithstanding Afghanistan's monarchical history), the Afghan/Islamic democratic tradition of shura,[17] loosely translated as a 'consultation,' has deep roots in Afghan society.[18] Shura occurs in Afghan society in both formal and informal assemblies or councils called either shuras or jirgas— for clarity, the team will endeavor to use jirga in this paper to refer to the assemblies and shura to refer to the Islamic tradition of consultation.

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[15] Civil society can be defined as excluding those with mercenary motivations. However, the team believes that defining the imperfections of civil society away in this manner hides the real problems facing those implementers working with civil society in Afghanistan. The team heard over and over again that many of the people making up civil society and running the organizations operating in the civil society realm are motivated by money, not a surprise in a poor country.

[16] Doherty notes that in the long term, representative politics through parties are the most effective avenues to political influence and that strengthening civil society without strengthening political parties and coalitions runs the risk of undermining representative politics and failing to exploit the real avenues to political influence open to civil society through cooperation with political parties, rather than supplanting them. Ivan Doherty, Democracy Out of Balance, *Policy Review*, April/May 2001, page 26.

[17] Though both shura and jirga are terms used to refer to assemblies in Afghanistan, for clarity's sake, the team uses jirga to refer to these assemblies, and shura to the Islamic tradition of consultation.

[18] Basic democracy (Demos *and* Kratos) has existed in Afghanistan for hundreds of years. Liberal representative democracy, however, is quite new.

Jirgas are regular features of Afghan society, extending from the highest level of the constitutionally recognized national Loya Jirga down to a local informal village jirga.[19] Women have been part of the shura tradition from its first mention in the Qur'an,[20] and in that tradition, jirgas in Afghanistan can be, and often are, all male, all female, or open to both genders.[21] The fact that women are included in, and have an influence in, these meetings does not, of course, take away from the fact that they emphatically occupy a second position in Afghan society.

The legitimacy of a shura is, in part, established through consensus and the right of all to speak, and, as one might expect in a country where the concept of shura is so respected, Afghanistan has hundreds of news outlets available.[22] A highlight of the availability of media access was the internationally funded free broadcasting time afforded to all Wolesi Jirga and Provincial Council candidates in 2005. At the time, it was claimed to be the largest free media program in the world, but unfortunately, it was not continued in later elections.

However, while these democratic threads in Afghan society are strong, countervailing forces are considerable. Fundamentally, based upon our interviews and our personal experience in Afghanistan, the team believes that while disagreement with the powerful is tolerated to a point, there are cultural norms beyond which disagreement becomes intolerable and can evince a violent response.[23] While such norms exist in other functional democracies, the team believes that the strictness of Afghan norms and the high level of violence that can follow violation of those norms is incompatible with a healthy democracy. One of the most important of these norms is to avoid causing a loss of face, undoubtedly part of the reason why many of the criticisms Afghans expressed to the team of the international effort were couched in circumspect and roundabout language. For this reason as well, consensus is the preferred decision-making process in many bodies, to avoid creating a situation where anyone is viewed as losing an argument. Of course, like anywhere else, dissent that becomes a credible threat to power or well being can also lead to violence.

And violence is endemic in many parts of the country. Participants in the political system have been targeted, including government officials, candidates, election workers, party leaders, elected officials, and family members, both during electoral processes and in between. Since 2005, several members of the Provincial Councils and at least 10 members of the Wolesi Jirga have been killed out of a chamber of 249.[24] One of the largest attacks on the National Assembly was a veritable massacre of children, lawmakers, and others at the

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[19] In 2010, President Karzai took the step of holding an extra-constitutional Loya Jirga. Its legality was questioned by those who correctly noted that it was not called in conformance with the Afghan Constitution, however, arguing that it was not legitimate within Afghan cultural and legal tradition was a far more difficult argument to make (though many did make it) as a result of the deep roots that the shura tradition has in Afghanistan.

[20] Sura 2:233 recommends that fathers and mothers come to a mutual agreement on the time to wean a child.

[21] One of the team members had conversations prior to this assessment with a regular attendee of such jirgas, both female and mixed. For further examples, see http://www.law.harvard.edu/programs/ilsp/research/kakar.pdf, p8-10.

[22] "Afghanistan has never had more news outlets, with 200 print media, 44 television stations, 141 radio stations and at least eight news agencies." http://en.rsf.org/afghanistan-for-a-free-independent-and-25-11-2011,41474.html

[23] While we are discussing political parties in this instance, it appears to the team that such a pattern runs all the way through Afghan society; any move beyond the bounds of "acceptable" discord can justify a violent response. This applies to the powerful as well as the less so.

[24] 2010 Elections 1: Facts and Figures, AAN, Fabrizio Foschini, September 13, 2009, http://www.aan-afghanistan.org/index.asp?id=1031

Baghlan sugar factory in 2007.[25] After the first round of the 2009 Presidential election, during the turmoil surrounding accusations of fraud and misconduct under investigation by the UN backed Election Complaints Commission (ECC), a Kabul guest house for international UN electoral workers was attacked with eight people killed.[26]

As the withdrawal of US and other international forces continues, and Afghan forces are unable to fully replace them, the perceived threat of violence, as well as actual violence, seems to be increasing.[27] The security personnel of one political leader interviewed by the team stated that their employer had been informed that if he left his house, he would be killed.[28] Another highly placed elected official told the team that political parties are now rearming, and could be expected to resort to violence if the political situation deteriorates; even a casual review of the reportage on Afghanistan shows that this is becoming a widely accepted view.

The press is not immune to Afghanistan's violence. Even with all the media options available to Afghans, Afghanistan is generally placed in the bottom half of most press freedom rankings, [29] in large part due to violence and a disinterest on the part of the government in protecting press freedom.[30]

Adding to the strictures on the press is the previously discussed cultural preference for consensus and a desire to avoid causing a loss of face, leaving many Afghans with a belief that challenging the power structure is not wise, from the point of view of self interest, or polite.[31] Local interpretations of Islam have also led to a push from some to attempt to restrict some forms of speech and association. The recent guidelines issued by the Ulema Council and announced by the President on the status of women,[32] and recent government requests that female newscasters present a more "Islamic" face,[33] are worrying developments, both from the perspective of female participation in politics and larger society as well as from the perspective of press freedom in general.

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[25] Six lawmakers were killed and many estimates put the total dead at approximately 70, many of whom were school children there to welcome the legislators. Survivors Recall Baghlan Bomb Horror, Alix Kroeger, BBC, November 14, 2007, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/7094434.stm

[26] "Seventeen of the guesthouse's 25 residents worked for UNDP ELECT – the UN body supporting Afghan electoral authorities, a UN source said." UN workers killed in Afghanistan attack, Guardian, Jon Boone, October 28, 2012, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/oct/28/six-un-workers-killed-kabul-attack-afghanistan

[27] It is important to recognize that violence has two components in influencing behavior: the threat and the act. If the threat is effective, the act is usually unnecessary. Therefore, looking only at acts of violence can give a rosier picture of the level of violence in a society than looking at both threats and acts.

[28] For the security of our interlocutors, in cases such as this, the identity of the interviewees is protected.

[29] Team interviews. Reporters Without Borders places Afghanistan at 150 out of 179 countries rated. http://en.rsf.org/the-ranking-25-01-2012,41722.html. Freedom House rates Afghan media as "not free." http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2011/afghanistan .

[30] http://en.rsf.org/afghanistan-for-a-free-independent-and-25-11-2011,41474.html .

[31] Mainstream Sunni society recognizes *Fitna* (social discord) as a social evil. In practice this has allowed authoritarian rulers to survive in power simply because there is a fear of social upheaval. This construct is generally not found in Shi'ite political expression.

[32] The recommendations that women avoid mingling with stranger men and avoid travelling without a *mahram* will affect women participating in all aspects of public life, notably candidates for office and elected officials. See https://afghanistananalysis.wordpress.com/2012/03/04/english-translation-of-ulema-councils-declaration-about-women/ .

[33] See Afghan women TV presenters told 'more veil, less make-up', AFP, February 15, 2012, http://tribune.com.pk/story/336804/afghan-women-tv-presenters-told-more-veil-less-make-up/ .

Further, Afghanistan is a predominately illiterate society, where oral transmission of knowledge necessarily was of prime importance. While such information transmission can be effective, it does allow for "flexibility" in establishing absolute fact,[34] creating significant problems for citizens attempting to establish accountability and challenge established power. There is a notable disinterest amongst government officials in verifying facts, and it is not uncommon for official comments on breaking news change dramatically as time passes.[35] In the team's discussions with Afghans, there were numerous instances where the team could not easily establish basic facts—the definitive answers given by one interlocutor would be mirrored by an opposing answer given by another—and not once did an Afghan show or recommend to the team documentation in support of a fact.[36]

Corruption adds to the lawlessness. Afghanistan consistently ranks at or near the bottom on a number of base-line indicators, not the least being corruption. In one corruption study, Afghanistan ranked second to last, beating only Somalia.[37] Bribery, both petty and grand, seems to motivate the acts of many government officials, and many interlocutors said that the executive (amongst others) attempts to influence members of the National Assembly one by one through illegal threats and incentives.

To be sure, such corruption is not unique to Afghanistan, but the scope of Afghan corruption is enormous, reaching in to every aspect of Afghan life. One story, pulled from the extensive reportage on Afghan corruption, provides examples: "[P]olice officials who steal truckloads of gasoline; judges and prosecutors who make decisions based on bribes; high-ranking government officials who reap payoffs from hashish and chromite smuggling; and midlevel security and political jobs that are sold, sometimes for more than $50,000, money the buyers then recoup through still more bribes and theft…." The report goes on to note how one type of corruption results in more corruption as people attempt to recoup bribes: "To those buying [government] jobs, the payments are an investment they intend to recover, along with a profit. Jobs that bring more money, like posts near the Kabul-Kandahar highway that allow opportunities for extorting truckers and smugglers, sell for a premium, soldiers here say. But in the process, honest officials are passed over or punished."[38]

According to Deputy Attorney General Rahmatulla Nazari, corruption is a serious problem at the highest levels, and noted that "at least 20 corruption cases on his docket involved senior government officials, but because many of them are warlords with armed militias, it's not possible to arrest them…."[39] Another report notes the pervasiveness of corruption: "Afghans say they encounter corruption at every turn — from paying their electricity bill to electing

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[34] Maintaining the flexibility of facts is an undeniable part of Afghan political life. The lack of interest in the government to conduct a census, one of the most basic tools of governance, is a prime example of this.

[35] Recently, a reporter documented the changing stories provided by government officials in noting the challenges of reporting from Afghanistan. Reporter's Notebook: In Afghanistan, Facts Are Difficult To Pin Down, NPR, Sean Carberry, July 25, 2012, http://www.npr.org/blogs/thetwo-way/2012/07/25/157368490/reporters-notebook-in-afghanistan-facts-are-difficult-to-pin-down.

[36] This was most notable when the question of who is a party member was raised, and consistent answers of yes or no were often difficult to achieve.

[37] In 2011, Afghanistan tied for second last with Myanmar at a score of 1.4 out of a possible 10, slightly worse that Iraq 1.5. Somalia was rated at 1.1. Transparency International, Corruption Perceptions Index 2010, page 3.

[38] Corruption Undercuts Hopes for Afghan Police, NY Times, Richard Oppel, Jr., April 8, 2009, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/09/world/asia/09ghazni.html?pagewanted=all

[39] Accusations Of Corruption Rampant In Afghanistan, NPR, Quil Lawrence, April 12, 2011, http://www.npr.org/2011/04/12/135317575/accusations-of-corruption-rampant-in-afghanistan

their president. They discuss it constantly…."[40] And Afghan officials even manage to be corrupt about their corruption: Ambassador Ryan Croker was struck "by reports that even though many members of the Afghan grand council meeting to decide on the strategic partnership had been paid off to vote against it, primarily by Iran, the council decided to approve it anyway. "What basically happened is they pocketed the money and voted the way they wanted to," he said, with a touch of admiration."[41]

The difficulty of engaging in truly open (and honest) discourse leads the team to believe that, from a certain point of view, the Afghan government can be viewed as a one party state. Factions vie for supremacy within that one party, but are unwilling or unable to follow through on challenges to the party structure. Of course, this is not a literal fact, but a useful way of conceptualizing the incestuous relationships between many of the major political power players. Even a less sweeping application of this analytical tool can be useful in understanding the divide between the National Coalition of Afghanistan and the National Front, both of which share similar politics, personnel, and history, but maintain independent entities.

These and other factors discussed in this paper, may have contributed significantly to the decline in voter turnout in Afghanistan since 2004. While first elections tend to have enthusiastic voter turnout and one can expect declines in elections that follow, the dramatic decline in Presidential and Wolesi Jirga elections turnout is worryingly high, and the team believes that this indicates a serious failure in the development of Afghan democracy. This was first recognized in a December, 2005 study that argued that the decline in voter turnout between the 2004 Presidential and 2005 Wolesi Jirga election was a result of "growing frustration and disillusionment with President Karzai and his government."[42]

It should be noted that Provincial Council turnout did not appear to decline nearly as dramatically, providing support to those who would argue that sub-national governance structures are more legitimate in the eyes of many Afghans. Alternatively, the failure of Provincial Council turnout to decline in 2009 could be because the ECC did not focus on fraud in the 2009 Provincial Council elections, and it was not discovered, pushing up the number of apparently "valid" votes.

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[40] "Afghans say they encounter corruption at every turn — from paying their electricity bill to electing their president. They discuss it constantly…." Ibid.

[41] Retiring Envoy to Afghanistan Exhorts U.S to Heed Its Past, Alissa J. Rubin, NY Times, July 28, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/29/world/asia/ambassador-crocker-sees-fraught-foreign-landscape-ahead.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all.

[42] A House Divided? Analysing the 2005 Afghan Elections, Andrew Wilder, December 2005, AREU, p 32, http://dspace.cigilibrary.org/jspui/bitstream/123456789/15386/1/A%20House%20Divided%20%20Analysing%20the%202005%20Afghan%20Elections%202005.pdf?1.

Valid Votes: Number of Valid Votes Cast in Afghan Elections[43]

Added to the mix is a considerable level of uncertainty regarding the future. Several key events will occur over the next several years, all of which have the capacity to turn Afghan society upside down: First, most major political groupings can expect a generational change amongst key leaders within the next five to ten years, one of which has already occurred with the death of Burhanuddin Rabbani. Given the differences in upbringing amongst current leaders and the next generation, we should not underestimate the turmoil this shift may bring. Second, the US and its allies will significantly reduce both their military and development footprint, reducing the amount of money available, as well as changing the security complexion significantly. And finally, many expect that the Taliban will be back in the center of Afghan politics, whether through a negotiated settlement, or through violence.

As a result, viewed on a whole, the team believes that Afghan society has a real, but small, space in which democratic discourse can take place. However, disillusionment, caused by the extraordinarily high level of corruption and the threat of violence, as well as a cultural desire to avoid discord and un-Islamic conduct, puts democratic openness at risk. The upcoming transformative events create an opportunity to assist Afghanistan to follow the more democratic threads in its history. However, if this opportunity is not exploited to secure space for democracy, political organization development cannot be expected to continue.

IV.b. Institutional Context: Constitutional and Legal Framework

After describing the broad context, the next step in the process is to analyze the constitutional and legal framework and determine how it affects parties and the party system.[44]

[43] Compiled from http://www.iec.org.af/eng/ and associated sites. Because of the recognized unreliability of the Afghan voter registration system, the team chose to use the number of valid votes as an indicator of turnout. This makes the situation look better than it actually is, because it does not account for Afghan population growth between the 2004/05 cycle and the 2009/10 cycle.
[44] Pittsburgh Methodology, p 12.

We begin our analysis of the institutional context from the point of view of the Constitution, which creates the basic framework for Afghanistan's political system, followed by some of the key laws affecting political organization development and the structures they create. Unfortunately, the Constitution creates a weak foundation upon which to build a government.

To begin with, the government it envisions is highly centralized, with most decisions made in Kabul.[45] Provincial Councils are only advisory bodies,[46] provincial Governors are appointed by the President, and provincial level ministry officials report to ministry headquarters in Kabul, not to the provincial Governor.[47] The team found that political parties and their development partners also followed this centralized structure, to their disadvantage.

However, Afghanistan's fractured demography,[48] coupled with an impoverished infrastructure (both human and physical) and a forbidding geography, makes centralized government challenging. Further, Afghans in general, and Pashtuns in particular, partake of a culture that relishes autonomy and has a reputation for fierce violent resistance to external authority— not an environment in which a centralized government could be expected to thrive.[49]

The Constitution does contemplate elected posts below the level of Provincial Councils, specifically District Councils, Village Councils, Mayors, and Municipal Councils.[50] If properly structured, the establishment of these bodies could have softened some of the harsh edges of centralization in the Constitution, by providing local, elected linkages between the Afghan government and the people.[51] More empowered Provincial Councils also could play

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[45] The team's analysis of Afghan constitutional development since Emir Abdur Rahman Khan promulgated Afghanistan's first written constitution in the 1890s, shows a continuing drive by national authorities to centralize legal power in Kabul. The team believes that this has been an unrealistic attempt to proclaim authority that the national government has never been able to wield in practice, the opposite of the proverb "speak softly and carry a big stick."

[46] Article 139 of the Constitution strongly suggests that Provincial Councils are only advisory institutions, and this is the path taken by the Provincial Council Law. However, there is sufficient wiggle room in the Constitutional language to have established more robust institutions. The team notes that discussions with Provincial Councilors from Herat show that at least one Provincial Council is taking an expansive view of its power, and pushing its authority as far as possible within its current legal mandate.

[47] "The existing subnational government across Afghanistan is too centralized and weak to fulfill two basic requirements of legitimacy: effective service provision and representation. The few representatives of the state that are present at the district level are appointed by central government. They are not accountable to local populations and often have few incentives to focus their energies on anything other than personal enrichment, providing for their own client networks, and serving the interests of their patrons." Subnational Government in Afghanistan, Rand National Defense Research Institute, 2011, Michael Shurkin.

[48] Ethnic groups include, in estimated (and disputed) size order, Pashtuns, Tajiks, Hazaras, Uzbeks, Aimaqs, Turkmen, Baloch, and others. Pashtuns are further fragmented into tribes and sub-tribes. Language groups include Dari, Pashto, Uzbek, Turkmen, and others. Religions include both Sunni and Shi'a Muslims, along with very small groups of Sikhs, Hindus, and one Jew.

[49] "The Pashtuns are inclined not to accept any form of strict authority, even at the cost of discord and insecurity." The Taliban, An Organizational Analysis, Shahid Afsar, Chris Samples, and Thomas Wood, Military Review, May – June 2008.

[50] See Articles 140 and 141. Afghanistan currently has mayors, but they are appointed by the President, not elected as required by the Constitution.

[51] "Opportunities to make the system more participatory and representative should be sought at lower levels to compensate for weak central institutions…. Greater participation might make government actors more responsive to local needs, as well as create opportunities for citizens to interact and identify with the state, which otherwise is either distant or predatory. Constitutionally mandated district, village, and municipal elections, had they taken place, would have provided an opportunity to establish a positive link between

this role, but the Provincial Council law limits the bodies to an advisory capacity. Unfortunately, the Afghan government, with the acquiescence of the international community, has determined that such elections are currently not possible. As early as 2005, the electoral administration recommended ignoring district and village council elections,[52] though even that recommendation stated that municipal elections should take place, but never have.

The team believes that failing to fill in the constitutionally mandated sub-national governance structure, and empower the Provincial Councils has been a massive oversight and contrary to the U.S. military's stated counter-insurgency doctrine. U.S. military COIN doctrine recognizes the importance of local government[53] and argues that one of the two key tasks of an insurgency is to "break the ties between the people and the government...."[54] By failing to provide a credible and legitimate local government presence, the only government presence most Afghans will ever see, half of the insurgency's task has been achieved before firing a single bullet. Referencing Afghanistan in particular, David Kilcullen, among others, argues that "establishing effective local governance is more critical than national level politics,"[55] and that "events at the national level (such as the September 2009 elections) are important, but reforms targeting local and provincial government effectiveness are indispensable."[56] The team believes that the decision to postpone the constitutionally scheduled Provincial Council elections from 2013 to 2014 is another unfortuante step in devaluing sub-national governance.

It should be recognized that the Taliban apparently has an entirely different understanding of the importance of sub-national operations, both in building the organization and in day-to-day operations:

> The Taliban organization is a network of franchises, an arrangement that fits well with tribal traditions. A small militant group begins calling itself "the local Taliban." It gains some form of recognition from the central Taliban hierarchy in return for its support and cooperation. The new cell supports Taliban grand strategy, but retains local freedom of action. This modus operandi preserves tribal loyalties and territorial boundaries….
>
> The village cell acts in a semi-independent manner with minimum control from above. While they follow the Supreme Shura's policies, cell leaders plan and conduct activities based on the regional situation and incentives or dangers for the group….

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communities and the state, notwithstanding probable electoral fraud." Subnational Government in Afghanistan, Rand National Defense Research Institute, 2011, Michael Shurkin.

[52] "After consultations with various stakeholders, it was concluded that these elections are not likely to be held in the immediate future." Post Election Strategy Group Progress Report, JEMB, September 27, 2005, p4. http://www.iec.org.af/jemb.org/PESGreport.pdf

[53] US Army/Marines Counterinsurgency Field Manual, University of Chicago Press, p. 361.

[54] Army/Marines Counterinsurgency Field Manual, University of Chicago Press, p. 24.

[55] The Accidental Guerilla, David Kilcullen, p113.

[56] The Accidental Guerilla, David Kilcullen, p110.

> The Taliban's middle and lower tier leaders are more informal. They generally rely on consensus in a *jirga* to maintain their support. Clergy and tribal elders usually vet decisions to elicit the support of the populace.[57]

Whether the Taliban's decentralized approach is intentional or forced upon it by the "sporadic character" of communications,[58] this approach may have contributed to the organization's continued survival in the face of an impressive military alliance.[59]

Not surprisingly, given the government's fundamental structural problems and lack of elected presence in local communities, Afghanistan's government has found providing even the most basic services across this physical and cultural immensity nearly impossible, as most recently illustrated by the inability of 15 of 28 government ministries to spend more than 40% of their 2011 development budget.[60] The United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Index scores Afghanistan at 0.398, equivalent to a rank of 172 out of 187 countries with comparable data. Afghanistan's gender inequality index is 0.707, ranking it 141 out of 187 countries, just below Papua New Guinea.[61]

The Constitution is also riddled with internal contradictions, [62] omissions,[63] impossibilities,[64] and loopholes.[65] These make it nearly inevitable that, even with the best of intentions, the government structure created by this document would be weak and would facilitate the undemocratic concentration of power in the executive. These weaknesses have also encouraged an apparent preference to disregard the Constitution and the laws derived from it, weakening Afghanistan's rule of law. It has been noted elsewhere that good intentions are not to be relied upon in building a government,[66] but even with low expectations, the disinterest that many Afghans and the international community have shown in encouraging a more democratic interpretation and implementation of the Constitution is striking.[67]

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[57] The Taliban, An Organizational Analysis, Military Review, Shahid Afsar, Chris Samples, and Thomas Wood, May – June 2008, http://www.humansecuritygateway.com/documents/MILREVIEW_Taliban_Organizational_Analysis.pdf.

[58] Ibid

[59] The Accidental Guerrilla, David Kilcullen, p54.

[60] See http://ariananews.af/regional/wolesi-jirga-rejects-next-year%e2%80%99s-budget/, and http://www.fefa.org.af/Eng_Pages/Reports/VRP_Rep/P-ob-Fe.pdf p9-11.

[61] UNDP Human Development Report 2011, page 129.

[62] There are no less than 6 places in the Afghan constitution where presidential appointments are discussed, including Article 64, para. 11-14, Article 71, Article 91, para. 3, Article 117, Article 132, and Article 157. Some, such as Article 64, paragraph 13 and Article 132, both referring to the appointment of judges, seem to contradict each other, and the repetition of appointment powers in various places with different qualifications on that power may have contributed to undermining legislative oversight of the process.

[63] While Article 92 allows for a vote of no-confidence in a government minister, no consequences are specified if such a vote is successful. This was illustrated in the 2007 dispute over the status of Foreign Minister Spanta.

[64] Elections scheduled in the constitution are to occur early in the year when spring flooding makes access to large swaths of Afghanistan impossible.

[65] Article 79 allows the President to promulgate laws during the recess of the National assembly in case of "immediate need," without prior legislative consideration and has been used to circumvent the legislature several times, most notably in the passage of the 2010 Electoral Law.

[66] "But what is government itself, but the greatest of all reflections on human nature? If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself." Federalist Paper No 51. James Madison February 1788

[67] Many of the failures to adhere to the rule of law were documented in the 2012 Election and Political Processes Programming Assessment, however, one notable failure is the unconstitutional decision to delay the Provincial Council elections scheduled for 2013 to 2014.

Afghanistan's Constitution creates a three-branch government similar to the American system. Each is intended to check and balance the other two branches. Unfortunately, the executive has emerged out of the past 10 years as the pre-eminent institution, with the legislature unable and the judiciary unwilling to challenge the power of the executive. Partly, this is an artifact of history. The Emergency Loya Jirga elected Hamid Karzai as transitional president in 2002 and he was re-elected in 2004 and declared the winner after Dr Abdullah withdrew in the Presidential run-off in 2009. During the transitional administration, President Karzai appointed the Supreme Court unilaterally. While later appointments were confirmed by the Wolesi Jirga, the fact remains that every Justice currently on the court owes his appointment to the current President. The Wolesi Jirga and Provincial Councils were not elected until 2005, with the Meshrano Jirga established shortly thereafter, giving the executive in general, and this President in particular, a multi-year institutional head start over the government's legislative institutions.[68]

The current electoral administration is a prime example of what can happen when a three-branch system such as Afghanistan's becomes so dramatically unbalanced. The Independent Electoral Commission's (IEC) current Chief Electoral Officer and the Commissioners were all appointed unilaterally by the President.[69] Further, the current electoral law, unilaterally promulgated by the President under Article 79 in early 2010, allows the President to appoint all the members of the electoral adjudication body, the Central Electoral Complaints Commission (CECC) and all the members of the Provincial Electoral Complaints Commissions.[70] As a result, one branch of government has control over both the election administration (IEC) and the body intended to oversee the work of the IEC, the CECC.

Under such an administration, the electoral failures in 2009 and 2010 were not surprising.[71] Many of the team's interlocutors expressed no confidence in the work of the election administration, citing favoritism and rampant corruption by electoral workers. Many of those engaged in the electoral process stated that the only solution to the corruption problem was for a political party or candidate to engage in more effective corruption than their opponents. Parties shamelessly admitted committing fraud in the past elections, stating that they had to because all the other parties were doing so, and nobody was stopping them.

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[68] Afghanistan's history of monarchy also likely contributed to the presumption of executive pre-eminence, and the imprint of this history can be seen in the current Constitution's enumeration of Presidential powers, which is very similar to that for the King in the 1964 Constitution.

[69] Article 156 of the Constitution states that (IEC) shall be established to administer and supervise all elections. Decree 23, issued in 2005, is the current law enabling Article 156, however, it has no Commissioner appointment mechanism; in 2005, a separate decree, number 21, was promulgated by the President appointing the members of the first IEC by name. Decree 21 created no enduring appointment mechanism. However, on the two occasions since, the President has followed this precedent without legal authorization and named Commissioners unilaterally. The National Coalition of Afghanistan (NCA), commenting on the January 2012 appointment of the most recent Commissioners, stated: "[T]he new commissioners are close confidants and loyalists to the President of Afghanistan, with at least one of the commissioners being a key and decision making member of a political party. Considering the massive fraud and irregularities that occurred in Afghanistan's previous two elections, which significantly damaged the credibility of the electoral process, it was vital for the appointment of the new IEC commissioners to have been made in close consultation with key stakeholders."

[70] Article 61. After passage of the law, in an attempt to salvage some impartial membership on the CECC, the UN SRSG negotiated the presence of two internationals on the Commission, at least one of whom would have to agree with all decisions of the Commission.

[71] This is not to imply that the 2004 and 2005 elections were free of fraud, but the level of fraud found in the 2009 and 2010 elections, including institutional fraud within the IEC, was unprecedented.

In 2009, the IEC was not trusted and the ECC[72] focused its resources on the presidential election, leaving the 3,180 Provincial Council candidates with nowhere to turn for a remedy of their claims of electoral fraud. In 2010, the CECC declined to hear complaints regarding the decisions of the IEC, ignoring the fact that the IEC had proven untrustworthy in 2009, and that the ECC was established in the aftermath of the 2004 elections for the express purpose of hearing complaints against the election administration. Even though NDI trained over 60,000 candidate and party agents in 2009 and 2010 to observe the electoral process, with no effective enforcement of the rules, party agents were limited in how they could safeguard the process.

Without a more independent electoral structure, it is difficult to see how or why parties would spend time on the more desirable types of party development, such as platform development and internal democracy. The team was told by parties, coalitions, CSOs, and elected officials, again and again, that the key to winning an election in Afghanistan is corruption.

Aside from the executive's total legal control of the electoral system, the other key factor driving electoral system corruption is money. Nearly every party stated that their opponents were funding their operations from prohibited sources, whether from foreign governments[73] or from other illegal activities.

Since 2004, campaign finance regulations have been promulgated for each election and, for the most part, ignored.[74] The Constitution and the Political Party Law also have finance requirements,[75] though they too are ignored. The cash based nature of the Afghan economy, the masses of "dirty" money, the overall paucity of accounting skills in Afghanistan, and the mistrust with which Afghan banks are regarded in light of Kabul Bank's recent collapse means that effective controls on party and campaign finance seem unlikely in the near future. However, the impending decline in international funding from western countries can be expected to cause a reciprocal decline in the incentives for neighboring countries to funnel money directly to Afghan political parties, a source of revenue for numerous parties, removing at least some of the money currently overwhelming the political system.

The team was initially skeptical of the claims of parties that the single non-transferable vote (SNTV)[76] electoral system used in the Wolesi Jirga and Provincial Council elections was the primary cause of their failure to develop— while SNTV certainly does not facilitate party development, it is an all too convenient scapegoat upon which parties can heap their own failings. SNTV is just a voting system, and parties can work within it, as demonstrated in Japan, which used the SNTV system for years.

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[72] Prior to passage of the 2010 law, the Central Election Complaints Commission was known simply as the Election Complaints Commission.

[73] Notably, when interviewees referred to foreign governments, they distinguished "surrounding" countries from the US and its western allies. While many interviewees had criticisms of the US and its allies, few believed that they were directly funding political parties.

[74] The difficulty of enforcing the campaign finance laws was most recently noted in the 2010 ECC Final Report, which questioned the feasibility of enforcing any campaign finance laws in Afghanistan. p. 30, 35.

[75] See Article 35 of the Constitution and Articles 6 and 15 of the Political Party Law (2009).

[76] A simple way of describing SNTV is simply as a "first past the post" system like that used in US Congressional elections but with more than one seat at stake in each electoral district or constituency. In Afghanistan, the largest constituency, Kabul, had 33 seats at stake in the 2010 Wolesi Jirga election, whereas the smallest constituencies had 2 seats at stake.

The Constitution does not require the use of SNTV to elect the members of the Wolesi Jirga or the Provincial Councils. Two reasons are commonly given why SNTV, only in use in a small number of countries, should be selected. First, there was a desire to ensure that all Afghans could understand the system.[77] Second, is the clear incentive for the President to choose a system that would hamper his political opponents' ability to organize effectively (another relic of the executive's institutional head start), illustrating the hazards of having one branch of government choose the selection process for the body intended to "check and balance" its powers.

SNTV does have strengths that, on paper at least, might make it an appealing choice for Afghanistan: each and every valid vote is powerful and capable of swinging a seat;[78] the voting system is easily understood, as voters tic one box and the candidates with the most votes win; and the system tends to reduce the power of political blocks, considered desirable when the choice for SNTV was made, given the violent history of the parties in existence at the time. But SNTV's weaknesses are the mirror of its strengths, and in Afghanistan, the weaknesses overwhelmed the strengths.

The power of each individual vote to change the results of the election meant that even small-scale fraud could be effective. This proved to be an irresistible temptation and created a policing nightmare— the trail of evidence almost inevitably created when altering hundreds or thousands of votes is easy to hide or may never even exist when altering only five or ten votes.

The apparent simplicity of SNTV was undercut by ballots topping twenty pages in length, making it extremely difficult for voters to find their preferred candidate, even for the small minority of literate voters in Afghanistan. Many voters did not understand how the majority of votes cast in the election could be for losing candidates, votes aptly described in election jargon as "wasted votes." Successful candidates were baffled by a system that gave legislators elected with tens of thousands of votes the same power as those elected with mere hundreds. This especially affected those women candidates who were seated over male candidates with more votes thanks to the electoral system's gender quota, which hurt their legitimacy, damaging their effectiveness in the various assemblies. A party list quota in a closed list proportional representation system tends not to create the same impression that female "losing" candidates are taking the seat of "winning" male candidates.[79]

Finally, SNTV seems to have succeeded all too well at reducing the power of political blocks. This has been exacerbated by the fact that in most elections held so far, candidates have not been able to include their party affiliation on the ballot,[80] further reducing the power of

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[77] One of the team's interlocutors was present at the cabinet meeting where the decision was made. He said that the presentation of a proportional representation system was confusing, and asked the question "if we in the cabinet cannot understand the system, how can average Afghans?" SNTV was the alternative choice.

[78] In Afghanistan, the tendency has been for the difference in the number of votes between the winning candidate with the smallest number of votes and the losing candidate with the greatest number of votes to be quite small.

[79] It should be noted that the Constitution, Article 83, creates a goal of, on average, two female representatives for each province in the Wolesi Jirga, and thus some gender quota in the law was necessary. However, no such Constitutional goal exists for the Provincial councils, but a gender quota was included in electoral law for Provincial councils as well. This could be viewed as a desire to ensure some gender balance in the Provincial Councils, or it could be viewed as an attempt by the government to reduce the number of seats available to powerful males.

[80] See fn. 14.

parties and removing a useful brand that voters could use to simplify voting and accountability. As a result, the Wolesi Jirga and Provincial Councils have generally been factionalized and new political organizations have generally not been able to form effectively.

Nearly every party made these points and after researching the other elements affecting party development, the team believes that the use of SNTV as the voting system has been one of the most powerful inhibitors of party development.[81] Currently, several organizations are running programs exploring alternatives to SNTV, and the IEC has recently presented a proposal for a mixed system, including SNTV and proportional representation for the legislature, to the executive for consideration. Given that amendments to the electoral law replacing SNTV with another system have been proposed to the government time and again, the first proposal occurring *before* the 2005 elections,[82] the team is not fully confident in this latest effort, but it does seem the most likely to succeed in quite a while.

Even if the new proposal passes, the electoral system will still have components of SNTV, and so parties will still need to learn how to work within the SNTV system. NDI noted that during the electoral campaign period, it provided parties with training on SNTV strategy, with some apparent success. Most parties understand how to work within the SNTV system, and some are capable of implementing at least the beginnings of an effective strategy.[83]

However, learning how to work within an electoral system is not a theoretical exercise, it is the product of experience. The lengthy electoral period in Afghanistan, with at least 4 years between each SNTV election cycle, has left parties with few opportunities to gain that experience; the presidential elections have provided little impetus to party development due to the highly individual nature of these simple first-past-the-post contests. The experience gap could have been ameliorated by holding more sub-national elections, but for the unfortunate decision was made not to hold such elections.

Hizb-i-Islami illustrates the importance of experiential learning. The party told the team that it had learned from its 2005 error of running too many candidates in each constituency. In 2009, the party restricted the number of candidates in the Provincial Council elections to the number that the party estimated would yield the greatest number of seats in each council, and

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[81] SNTV's negative impact was predicted by many as soon as it was adopted: "This system in fact virtually guarantees the formation of an unrepresentative parliament of local leaders with no incentive to cooperate with one another or the government. It places a premium on vote buying and intimidation, since swinging even a small number of votes can easily affect the outcome. Well-organized parties that can propose a limited number of candidates and discipline voters to spread their votes among them can win a disproportionate share of seats." Afghanistan: The wrong voting system, Barnett R. Rubin, New York Times, March 16, 2005, http://www.nytimes.com/2005/03/15/opinion/15iht-edrubin.html .

[82] The first proposal of an alternative to SNTV of which the team is aware was in the spring of 2005, during a review of electoral law by the electoral administration. That change, along with others proposed by the administration, was rejected by the cabinet and the electoral administration was instructed to revise its proposal to include only absolutely necessary changes. The cabinet made clear that an alternative to SNTV was not an "absolutely necessary" change. All subsequent attempts to change the system have also failed.

[83] An example of such a strategy could include estimating the number of votes required to win in each constituency and the number of actual votes the party should expect to receive in each constituency. Based upon these numbers, a party estimates the number of seats it can expect to win and divides the constituency into candidate "turfs" where only that candidate campaigns. Given the number of estimates or guesses a party must make correctly in order to do well, SNTV strategy is fraught with risks, especially with so few past elections upon which to base their estimates.

repeated this strategy in 2010.[84] However, this approach is not used by all political parties in Afghanistan, as it requires effective party discipline and structure, something Hezb-i-Islami has and many parties do not.[85]

Another party discovered the dangers of over-centralization in 2005, when the party headquarters disregarded the provincial organization's candidate choices, and instead presented its own Kabul imposed provincial slate. As a result, the party performed poorly in the province. In 2010, the party's headquarters respected the provincial organization's candidate choices.

On the bright side, Afghanistan's directly elected bodies have proven to be rather representative, with women constituting more than 25 percent of the membership in the Wolesi Jirga and the Meshrano Jirga. In this Meshrano Jirga, women hold 26 seats, significantly more than the 17 seats required by law. In the Provincial Councils, women account for 30 percent of the membership.[86]

Unfortunately, women are still elected to the Wolesi Jirga primarily due to the electoral quota, even more so in 2010 than in 2005: in 2005, 19 of the winning female candidates would have won seats without the quota, whereas in 2010, only 17 would. Significantly more women ran for the Wolesi Jirga in 2010 when compared to 2005, and while this could be viewed as great progress,[87] the number of women eventually elected only increased from the constitutional minimum of 68 in 2005 to 69 in 2010.[88] This means that a smaller percentage of female candidates for election won seats in 2010 than in 2005.

Determining a path forward to increase female representation in the all the councils above the legal minimums, and female participation in the political process as a whole, will be a continuing challenge. What might be a more productive path would be to determine how to make the women already present in the assemblies more effective.

In the Wolesi Jirga and the Meshrano Jirga, nearly all of Afghanistan's minorities are represented, sometimes only too well.[89] In 2010, Hazara candidates took all 11 seats in the province of Ghazni, considered a majority Pashtun province, creating an uproar and contributing to the conditions that led to the establishment of the Special Court. While part of this sweep is undoubtedly due to security problems in Ghazni, the importance of effective implementation of electoral strategy within a minority community should not be dismissed.

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[84] While, at least in theory, this is an effective strategy (if actually implemented correctly), the party said that the massive fraud that occurred in the 2009 Provincial Council elections overwhelmed strategy. The party said that in the 2010 election, local polling station and polling center fraud again nullified their strategy.

[85] Hezb-i-Islami is an extremely hierarchal organisation, run as it was when Gulbaddin was the official leader. Decisions are made at the Central Committee level and party members comply. For example, in one interview, a female candidate was asked why was she a candidate, and responded, "I have been a member of the party for 30 years and I ran because the party Central Committee asked me too."

[86] Afghanistan Index, Brookings, Ian S. Livingston and Michael O'Hanlon May 16, 2012, p 19. http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/programs/foreign%20policy/afghanistan%20index/index20120516

[87] In SNTV, this could also be viewed as a step backward. In SNTV, limiting the number of candidates in a group is key to electoral success. If one presumes that voters who selected female candidates would only vote for female candidates, the increasing number of female candidates in 2010 reduced the number of votes available for female candidates, weakening their position compared to male candidates.

[88] Afghanistan Index, Brookings, Ian S. Livingston and Michael O'Hanlon May 16, 2012, p 19. http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/programs/foreign%20policy/afghanistan%20index/index20120516

[89] Ibid.

Ironically, the team found that the Political Party Law had little impact on the development of political parties in Afghanistan. Following in the footsteps of the 1964 Constitution, the current 2004 Constitution specifically established the right of Afghans to form political parties. A party law requiring the registration of parties with the Ministry of Justice and detailing the steps necessary for such registration was promulgated in 2003, under which 110 parties registered. A second law, supplanting the first, was passed in the National Assembly and signed by the President in September 2009, with the intention of winnowing down the number of parties by legally imposed hurdles, rather than by leaving the task to voters at the ballot box.

After the President signed the law, three months passed before it was gazetted. When it appeared, the six-month period intended to allow already registered parties to re-register, was reduced in reality to three, apparently blindsiding the parties. While the major parties were all present when the law was passed in the National Assembly and should have been prepared for its requirements, regardless of the delay,[90] only four existing parties and one new party (all supportive of the President) were registered in time for the 2010 Wolesi Jirga election.[91] As of now, with approximately two years to go before the next election, more than 45 parties are already registered, so it seems that in the long term, the legislative culling of parties will fail.

According to the letter of the 2009 law, the successful registration of so many parties should be good news for Afghan political parties. The law's requirements should mean that there are more than 450,000 Afghan members of political parties, with each party represented in at least 22 of Afghanistan's provinces.[92] However, few believe that the registration process was honest,[93] and most parties seem to be regional or local and have small, if not non-existent, memberships. One senior leader said that, regardless of its small size, his party would be registered if he paid a bribe of $2000 to the right person in the Ministry of Justice.

Given the freedom with which parties are able to register,[94] combined with the fact that there are no delineated consequences for a failure to register, the entire registration process seems nearly irrelevant to party development; the only major benefit for registration, outside constitutional rights already vested in every Afghan, seems to be ballot access as a party.[95] Some parties recognize this, and therefore have not put a priority on registration, though presumably this will change as the next elections approach and ballot access becomes a more urgent issue. Jamiat, which should meet the requirements of registration with no chicanery required, seems to be taking this approach, and has yet to complete the process.

IV.c. Party System: Strong or weak?

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[90] The Afghan Analysts Network takes this point of view: as the law was passed by the National Assembly, where all the major parties claim representation, they should have known that re-registration was on the way and been prepared, regardless of the delay in gazetting the law. http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=1037

[91] Allegations were made that there were some intentional administrative delays on the part of the government in processing the applications.

[92] Article 9.

[93] *Political Parties in Afghanistan: A Review of the State of Political Parties After the 2009 and 2010 Elections*, National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI)/USAID, June 2011, p 37, 38.

[94] At least one party stated that the Ministry required them to change their party platform in order to comply with the constitution's restrictions, but the party did not believe that it was a serious problem, perhaps illustrating the irrelevance of party platforms.

[95] Article 12, Political Parties Law 2009.

Having been stated time and again, it has become something of a truism that political parties and politics are not respected in Afghanistan. The team's discussions with Afghans supported this assessment. Many Afghans view political parties as the cause of much of the violence and disruption in the decades subsequent to the adoption of the 1964 constitution, the first that recognized political parties.

This is not an irrational point of view, as the pedigrees of most of the organizations currently active and successful in Afghan politics extend back to the "decade of democracy" (1964-1973).[96] After surviving Daoud Khan's one party "directed democracy," nearly all of them had a hand in many of the calamities that followed the Saur Revolution of 1978 and the arrival of the Soviet Union on Christmas day 1979. Importantly, this includes the bloody and brutal Afghan civil war that followed the Soviet withdrawal, often forgotten in the west.

The parties' performance during Afghanistan's second "decade of democracy," from 2002 until now, has not rebuilt Afghans' confidence in the parties as institutions; they are viewed as corrupt and self-interested. Worse, perhaps, is that they are also viewed as irrelevant.

The contempt and disregard in which Afghans hold parties have poisoned the associated terminology of democracy in many Afghans' minds. Common terms, such as democracy, politics, parties, etc. have acquired such a negative connotation that for the Afghans the team spoke with, a rational assessment of the worth of the values these terms denote is almost impossible. For example, in a discussion with a young student activist, she told the team that her group, Young Women for Change (YWC), was working to make societal change by holding student meetings, discussing issues facing youth and women, and holding demonstrations on the street. When asked why she had gotten involved in politics she fervently denied that she was involved in politics. When asked if she ever considered joining a political party, she reasserted her disinterest in politics.[97]

Within the government, the taint of politics and party association can also be seen. In conversations with the team, legislators regularly denied any associations with political parties, even when they were publically known to have party relationships stretching back decades. Legislators stated that their colleagues did not want it to be known that they were party members because people would no longer trust them and they would lose public support—notably legislators always mentioned "colleagues" because nearly all the legislators we spoke with denied any party membership. Not surprisingly, party discipline within the elected bodies is practically non-existent. Members do not appear to act in support of party policy, or even try to act in coordination with other party members in their respective elected bodies.

Facilitating this chaos is the lack of roll call votes in the elected bodies, which tend to vote by raising red or green cards, giving legislators the leeway to claim to have vote whichever way seems most convenient if confronted afterwards by party comrades, voters, or contributors.

[96] The 1966 political party bill eventually passed both the Wolesi Jirga and the Meshrano Jirga after years of discussions, but never received royal assent. This left political parties at the time in a sort of permissive legal limbo, which allowed party development but gave the government the power to shut parties down at any time for not complying with the (non-existent) law.

[97] The constitutional history of political parties may suggest the psychology underlying this disconnect. Afghans do not seem to view parties as organizations rooted in civil society, but rather as some sort of elite creation, imposed from the top by law rather than growing naturally from the bottom as alliances of various interests. The fact that the modern parties started, for the most part, in universities, does not help this perception.

SNTV, which puts party members in direct competition with each other during their election, contributes to the lack of structure in the elected bodies.

One member of the Wolesi Jirga's leadership, a leader of one of the Peshawar Seven,[98] explained to a team member several years ago that a key problem facing many legislators is understanding how to work together in a group. As many of the members of the legislatures had operated as their own "kings" for many years, compromising and making deals was a skill with which they were not familiar. In our discussions with Afghans, many referred to lengthy negotiations over position and power eating up the time of political actors, with policy (or action) being a distant afterthought. But, even after the "decade of democracy's" legislative elections in the 1960s, well before the disasters of the next decades, assemblies did not form organized or cohesive blocs.[99]

This has led to an odd situation in Afghan politics: though there are numerous reasons why politically active individuals should come together, and most sophisticated political actors recognize the value of building organizations, few are willing to come together under the banner of a "political party." By building parliamentary groups, civil society organizations, or coalitions composed of parties, groups, and individuals, political leaders have found limited ways of achieving some of the benefits of organization without being tarred with the name or the legal obligations, of being a political party, while still pursuing more or less the same electoral goals as a party.

This willingness to transcend categories is not limited to political parties. The team found that there was little to distinguish political parties, coalitions, civil society organizations, and even for-profit businesses from each other.[100] Parties told the team about their many forays into humanitarian development and business, and some CSOs bragged about their political accomplishments. While many CSOs held themselves apart from political work and focus on service delivery type programming, two, the IRI supported Movement of Afghan Sisters (MAS) and the Afghan Youth National and Social Organization (AYNSO), claimed to have elected legislators, leaving the team somewhat befuddled as to the functional difference between some civil society organizations and political parties in Afghanistan. Indeed, aside from allegedly electing legislators, the team was unclear as to what AYNSO does at all. By

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[98] Islamic Unity of Afghanistan Mujahedeen (Peshawar Seven) was the Sunni mujahedeen coalition formed in the 1980s to fight the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and based in Peshawar, Pakistan.

[99] NDI report, 7. It should be noted that a first past the post system of election was used for the legislative elections in the 1960s. While a first past the post system is not as hostile to party development as SNTV, it is not nearly as hospitable as proportional representation, and so perhaps, had Afghan democracy continued to develop through the 1970s and 1980s, the beginnings of political groupings may have begun.

[100] And the differences are often hard to discern, aside from political parties' drive to elect candidates. USAID describes political parties as having these qualities:

Electoral

1. Recruit and nominate for elective office
2. Mobilize electoral support for candidate and stimulate electoral participation
3. Structure choices amongst competing groups of candidates along different issue dimensions

Governmental

1. Represent different social group
2. Aggregate specific interest into the broader electoral and governing coalitions
3. Form and sustain governments
4. Integrate citizens into the nation-state and its political process

Compare this to Doherty's comments on civil society: "A dynamic civil society should foster many elements essential to democracy: participation, accountability and sustainable political reform, and an organized civil society should give a voice to the underprivileged and amplify their influence in the political process."

becoming members of AYNSO, young Afghans are entitled to a membership card. The membership card provided no benefits, but, as the membership card cost nothing, this was not a hindrance. The one component of AYNSO's activities that appeared concrete was the organization's for-profit district learning centers—leading, of course, to the question of what is the actual difference between a CSO and a for profit business.

The team believes that this blurring of the lines between organization types is not inappropriate in all cases. The team believes that organizational sophistication will lead to specialization as it is required and when the efficiency and effectiveness gains provided by specialization outweigh the benefits of networking and mobilization provided by a broader range of activities. But the parties and coalitions examined by the team (including nearly all of the "leading" parties) do not have sophisticated formal structures in reality, though on paper they may be quite detailed.

For programmers, this means supporting organizations according to the functions that they perform, rather than the category into which they might happen to fall legally, or even in their self-perception. Failing to do so can result in programming failures as organizations executing in accordance with programmers' aims are turned away because they do not fit the right category, as noted later in some detail.

Hostility toward political parties has not stopped them from forming, though many of the 45 parties that have already registered under the 2009 Political Party Law are likely not much more than names.[101] Only about 21 of the 45 registered parties have been able to attain *any* representation in the elected assemblies; only 10 can be said to have significant (meaning more than one seat in the Wolesi Jirga), durable representation, a tiny number considering the number of parties registered, with more, undoubtedly, to come. Of those 21, most have less than 10 seats and only the three largest have between ten and twenty— independent candidates currently hold more than half the Wolesi Jirga seats.[102]

The team believes that there has been little improvement in party performance since the first election in 2004. This is in contrast to NDI's assessment in its 2011 Political Party Assessment:

> • Party performance in elections has improved since 2005 with a greater understanding of the electoral system, more preparation, and increased internal cohesion. However, parties noted that the benefits of this experience should not be left to stagnate between elections.
>
> • Empirical results from the recent elections demonstrate that a few parties are able to overcome the challenges of the SNTV system with an organized approach to campaigning and candidate selection, in spite of fraudulent and violent elections.[103]

However, according to NDI's own data,[104] only 6 parties actually increased the number of seats held in the Wolesi Jirga from the 2005 election to the 2010 election— and 7 held fewer

[101] 2011 *Political Parties in Afghanistan: A Review of the State of Political Parties After the 2009 and 2010 Elections*, National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI)/USAID, June 2011, p 29-30.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Ibid. p 4.
[104] Ibid.

seats. Further, giving the parties the benefit of the doubt and taking the numbers showing the best estimated performance[105] of all parties in the Wolesi Jirga in both elections showed a dramatic 42 seat decrease in seats attributed to parties after the 2010 election.[106] Even taking the low end of the 2005 seat estimates results in a net loss of 14 seats attributable to parties in 2010.[107] The numbers clearly show that non-party affiliated candidates are gaining at the expense of parties, forcing the team to question the conclusion that party electoral performance has improved.

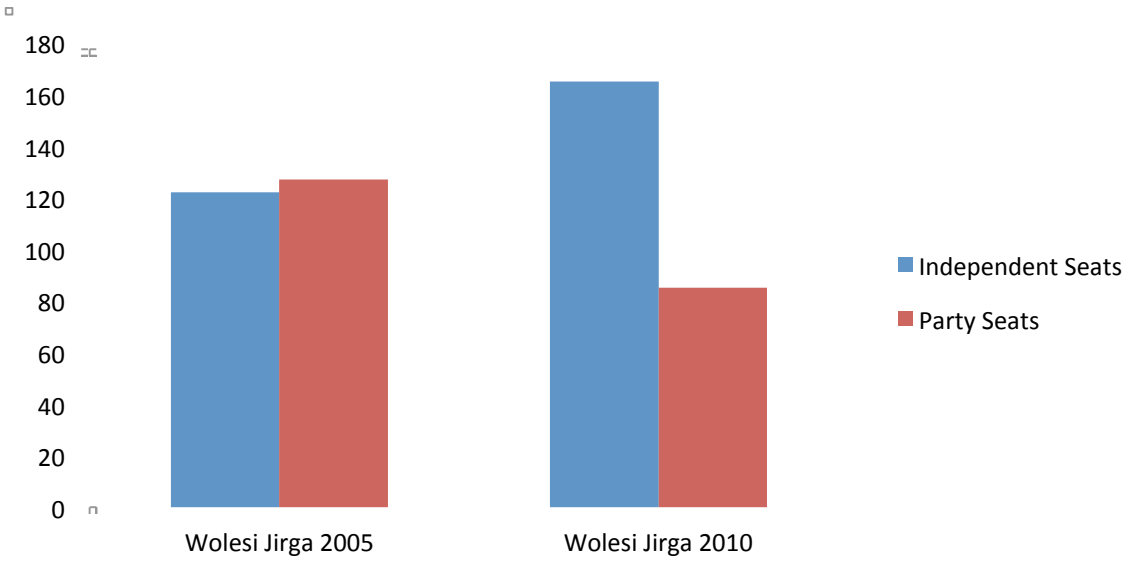

Figure 2: Decrease in Total Party Seats

While the decrease in the size of the party affiliated contingent in the Wolesi Jirga is worrying, the team believes that the parties are, in fact, appropriately sized for their method of operation. Based upon the team's interviews and research, the team believes that most parties are patronage organizations, highly centralized, with a leadership composed either of one individual or a small cadre of elites. Through personal relationships and a sufficient number of seats in the legislatures to be credible, the leadership has or acquires a level of influence sufficient to secure access to state and other resources, resources that are then distributed to garner allegiance to the leadership and the party. Where those resources come from is unclear. Party finances are non-transparent, and there is every indication that the prohibitions against illegal funding are regularly ignored.[108]

The leadership has an incentive to building a base of activists to a size sufficient to maintain the party leadership's credibility by, for example, delivering votes for candidates or providing demonstrators. However, there is a disincentive to too much growth: if a party grows beyond its resource stream, diluting the benefits of party membership, party loyalty will be weakened. To prevent dilution, actual membership in most parties is restrictive,[109] with

[105] Some figures from 2005 are a range—giving parties the benefit of the doubt, the team chose the top end or best performance end of the range.
[106] Using the best performance estimates of party seats made by NDI gives parties 127 seats in the first Wolesi Jirga and 85 in the second: 127-85=42.
[107] Taking the low or the worst performance end of the ranges from 2005, the 2005 party total is 99, meaning that the parties as a whole still lost 14 seats from 2005 to 2010: 99-85=14.
[108] The team found that party businesses, individual donors, party leaders, corruption, and foreign governments, provide most party funding.
[109] Of course, organizations typically claim many more members than they actually have. Nearly every organization the team met with made enormous claims on the loyalties of Afghans. Assuming all these claims

potential members recruited from the elite of Afghan society and then put through an application/screening process prior to admission. Change, whereby party members fund parties rather than parties providing support to their members, may be a long way off given Afghanistan's low level of economic development; dues paying party members should not be expected anytime soon.

In such a structure, internal party democracy is irrelevant, and we saw little evidence of any parties with real internal democracy. All registered parties are required to have constitutions,[110] but few follow them. Party congresses are regularly skipped, and decisions made by the local party branches are often overruled by the national leadership.

Policy and party platforms are also almost entirely irrelevant. To the extent that policy and party platforms exist, they are developed by the leadership, with little consultation with the grass roots. Policies are fleshed out only in the broadest terms, such as general support for a mixed economy, or opposition to corruption, or opposition to the Durand line, with little attempt to establish anything more concrete. An exception to this is in those areas where parties are self-interested, in particular regarding federalism and their proposals to limit the power of the executive. The irrelevance of party platform was demonstrated by the reaction of one party prohibited from registering because a major part of its platform, in the opinion of the Ministry of Justice, violated the party registration law. Rather than fight the decision, the party merely removed the offending reference, and resubmitted the registration application.

The rent seeking behavior of party leadership illustrated by the presence of numerous key "opposition" leaders in appointed positions in the executive itself. There is little evidence that such agreements are based upon ideological or political concessions; the consensus is that party leaders make such agreements for their own personal benefit. If ideology and policy were a concern, such accommodations would not be possible across the swath of parties with these executive positions. The payback for the executive is a relatively compliant "opposition" competing for the favor of the executive, eviscerating the system of checks and balances critical to keeping a presidential system healthy. Parties or individuals who are too vigorous in challenging the executive find their access to state resources cut off, as occurred to some figures now known as members of the "opposition." At least one political grouping seems to be designed for no purpose other than to fight for the presidency in 2014, leading several Afghans to speculate that the leader, currently also considered an opposition leader, is only bargaining for a high position within the government.[111]

From this perspective, parties can be viewed as bargaining tools, or even factions within a one party state, not as counterweight to the executive. This may be why so many minor parties, with little hope of electing anyone to office, have registered. A leader of a registered party can claim, though with dubious credibility, to have the support of 10,000 people, perhaps giving the leader entrée to forums from which he might otherwise be excluded.

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are true, the number of loyal political supporters in Afghanistan amounts to ten to twenty times the current actual population of the country.

[110] Articles 2, 12, Political Party Law, 2009.

[111] A lack of understanding about the proper functioning of a presidential system amongst international interlocutors leads some to characterize the installation of party leaders in the government as a positive development, representing "national unity." However, this assumes that the Afghan legislature is, as it is called all too often, a parliament. It is not. It is a branch of government that is, and should act as, one co-equal with the executive.

The bias in party structure towards centralization and elite decision-making means that internal party communication is not an essential part of party activity—since the grassroots is not consulted on policy and platform development, there is little need to develop a party communication infrastructure.

Party offices are rarely used; those that the team visited, including national headquarters, showed little evidence of activity. Many claimed to have an extensive network of local offices but, when investigated, their claims had little credibility. Provincial branches regularly complained of isolation from their party headquarters— cross provincial communication within parties seems to be non-existent, an unfortunate fact as parties that would function better as regional entities are forced by the Political Party Law (and a desire for status) to acquire a national veneer. Communication between members of the various legislatures and their parties does not occur unless the members of the legislatures are party leaders.

Parties' relationships with voters are little better. Voters do have the opportunity to meet with members of the various legislatures, especially with the Provincial Council members, whose geographic proximity makes them the most available representatives to many Afghans, but the accountability here is individual, not party based, and it seems to be exercised on the basis of demographic affinity, rather than party or policy affinity.

As a result, with little creating cohesion inside the party structure, aside from access to resources, when a party leader dies or otherwise is cut off, party structure becomes chaotic, and may collapse, as has been seen recently in Jamiat.

Ethnicity does provide an alternative source for party cohesion, and nearly every party is demographically uniform, though none can claim that they alone exclusively represent a particular ethnic group. Our Afghan interlocutors stated that this ethnic affinity, while strong, was not deeply rooted, and that the party organizations that grew in the '60s and '70s were not ethnically based. They stated that the current ethnic affinity is a relic of the following decades of violence, when the only leader people could rely upon was one of the same ethnicity, regardless of that leader's quality.

This demographic uniformity would be more troubling if minority ethnic groups were unable to obtain representation. On the contrary, the team found evidence that minority groups, notably the Hazara, may have actually developed more sophisticated electoral strategies than others, perhaps driven by the fear that they would be boxed out of the process without political discipline. Some analysts suggest that the Hazaras managed to obtain nearly double the representation they could expect based upon their percentage of the population alone.[112] Of course, the Hazara's relative over-representation came at the cost of other ethnic groups, most especially the Pashtun segment of the population. The team believes that this majority under-representation currently poses a greater danger to Afghan democracy than minority under-representation.

[112] While some of this is rightly attributed to security concerns, getting out the vote is a key job of political activists on election day, and clearly the Hazara parties did a better job of this, regardless of the reason. See Final Afghan Election Results Show Hazara Minority Trumped Dominant Pashtuns, Tom A. Peter, Christian Science Monitor, November 24, 2010, http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Asia-South-Central/2010/1124/Final-Afghan-election-results-show-Hazara-minority-trumped-dominant-Pashtuns.

Interestingly, coalitions of parties (and other organizations and individuals) seem willing and able to reach across ethnic and religious divides, something which takes upon more import as the membership of the major coalitions seem to be jelling in preparation for the upcoming elections.

Unfortunately, the coalitions do not seem to have made many other improvements on the structure of political parties. Though the single leader structure is obviously more difficult to maintain in a coalition, centralized power seems to have been replaced with a more diffuse impotence as members of the coalition jockey over power and privilege. Further, replacing one leader with a group of squabbling elites, none of whom lead parties with any significant internal democracy (or who lead no party at all), is not a significant improvement in political organization governance.

The structure of Afghan political parties and coalitions has a frankly male appearance. While the team met with a large number of women, including party members, in other contexts, such as with members of the Wolesi Jirga, Provincial Councils, and CSOs, in not a single party or coalition meeting did the party see fit to include a female party member or leader—the one exception being a meeting with DCA. Active women in parties are relegated to women's caucuses or youth and women committees, which the team saw, frankly, as irrelevant ghettos, at least from the perspective of party leadership. Given the *tanzim* history of most Afghan political parties, this rather exclusive gender structure is not a surprise.

The team finds it difficult to say that women's marginalization in parties itself is a problem, given the fundamental dysfunction of political parties and coalitions, and questions whether increasing gender balance in dysfunctional organizations would improve their function or serve the interests of women. Further, Afghan women clearly do not need to be present in political parties or coalitions to attain influence and political office (though with effective organization they might achieve more). The gender quotas in place in both Houses of the National Assembly and in the Provincial Councils[113] ensure a higher percentage of female representation than the 16.8 percent of seats in the U.S. Congress held by women, and in each body, women have achieved a higher representation than strictly legally required.

The team believes that at least some female political actors agree. The team found evidence that female legislators are taking steps to organize with other legislators, both male and female, outside the party system, and notes that a large number of the effective grass roots CSOs are female dominated, though it is difficult to establish their relative number as a certainty. The apparent robustness of the female dominated CSOs, especially when considered in light of the near total female absence in the parties and coalitions, leads the team to speculate that perhaps young women with an interest in politics see the discrimination in political parties and categorize them as a dead end, leaving them free to move on to other options.

The team finds that the Afghan political party system is extremely weak. The team also notes that time and again, when asking civil society activists, or businesspeople, Afghan and international government officials, international implementers, or "average" Afghans whether

[113] Article 83 of the Constitution establishes a goal of 64 female representatives in the Wolesi Jirga, which legislation has interpreted as being a floor below which such representation may not fall. The Provincial Councils have a similar requirement established through legislation, though there is no constitutional requirement to do so. Article 84 of the Constitution requires that the President's Meshrano Jirga's appointments be 50% women.

they consult with parties or coalitions on any issues, the answer was invariably "no, they are not useful or effective."

Aside from parties and coalitions, the team found evidence of politically active grass roots CSOs developing outside the donor community, particularly in the universities, including Afghan Young Leaders Initiative, Afghan Women's Network, Afghanistan 50% Campaign, Afghanistan Youth In Action, Sela Foundation, Afghanistan Anti-Corruption Network, and YWC.

The team believes that these grass roots CSOs are where the most rapid political developments are now occurring. All seem to have similar overall structures. They are modestly sized,[114] with an elite, well-educated cadre of volunteers composed of students and recent graduates, all of whom view themselves very consciously as the "next generation" of leaders, separate from what they see as a violent and corrupt generation.

The team believes that training members of these grass roots CSOs about the basics of political action, including rehabilitating the tainted concept of politics in their minds, would be one of the most effective methods of assisting Afghanistan in making a long-term transition to democracy. Further, should these organizations choose to become involved in electoral politics in the next election, the SNTV system and their demonstrated networking ability would likely be sufficient to allow them to capture seats in the National Assembly and Provincial Councils, even if the mixed system currently under consideration becomes law.[115]

The international community has attempted to "seed" several CSOs, specifically AYNSO and MAS, but the team has not found these efforts to be successful, as detailed in the next section.[116] As a result, the team believes that internationally seeded political CSOs cannot be expected to be the agents of real political change in the near future.

IV.d. Individual Party and Political Organization Attributes

With more than 45 registered parties and growing, and numerous coalitions and CSOs, details on each political organization's structure would not be possible in a paper of this size. Further, most organizations' structures appear so chaotic and ineffectual that the team believes that putting the details on paper would create the impression of structure when, in fact, there is none. For example, while nearly all the parties the team spoke to had party congresses at some point in the past few years, these party congresses did little to change the brittle, personality-based structure of the parties, and more to the point, they did not make them more successful in the most recent round of elections. However, the team believes that several political organizations should be watched as they are illustrative of the types of developments that may occur in the near future.

Democratic Congress of Afghanistan (DCA) is a coalition being built almost entirely within the Wolesi Jirga. The coalition is made up of parliamentary groups, currently Peace Caravan,

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[114] Compare YWC's Noorjahan Akbar's claim this year that "Now in less than one year, we are over fifty volunteers in three different provinces of Afghanistan" to less prominent organizations' claims of tens of thousands of members in every province of Afghanistan. http://www.youthkiawaaz.com/2012/02/interview-with-noorjahan-akbar-co-founder-young-women-for-change-afghanistan/.

[115] The IEC proposal to move to a mixed electoral system. Thomas Ruttig, AAN, June 28, 2012, http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=2835.

[116] The team was unable to meet with Turk Tabor.

the Voice of Justice, and Resalat; DCA intends to add two more groups to their coalition shortly. DCA also claims to have control of the chairs of 13 of the 18 parliamentary commissions and to have elected the Speaker and Second Deputy Speaker. DCA's intention is to take control of the Wolesi Jirga through its lock on leadership positions, allowing the coalition to begin working on its legislative agenda, which it states includes specific electoral and governmental reform. DCA says it developed this agenda and associated legislation without any involvement or guidance from USAID or other implementers.

DCA holds meetings of coalition members on a daily basis when the National Assembly is in session to plan strategy and share information. DCA's focus is entirely on the legislature. It does not seem to have a public outreach component, and lacks both the interest and ability to reach out to the wider population. While somewhat counterintuitive, the aversion many Afghans have for political parties among the general population means that DCA isolation from voters may indeed be a viable political structure, as it gives its members the ability to claim that they are independent. In any event, DCA seems to be a rare issue-based political organization and its strategic vision is impressive, though its ability to execute has yet to be tested.

As noted earlier, DCA is the only political organization that included a woman in the team's meeting with the party. The team believes that this reflects the fact that membership is restricted to legislators, and all legislators, whether male or female, have votes of equal weight. The respect that this mandates suggests that improving the functioning of the legislatures would increase the stature of women in political organizations, as well as improving the overall state of governance in Afghanistan.

Dr. Abdullah's Hope and Change Coalition has now become the National Coalition of Afghanistan (NCA). While the new coalition has yet to be officially "launched," the structure of the organization has been in the works for more than a year. The coalition has prepared an impressive slide show detailing an extensive organizational structure that may be more ambitious than realistic, composed of a 600 member High Council and a large party congress-type structure, responsible for electing a leadership council. There will also be an elected policy board, an executive committee, and a secretariat.

The lengthy negotiations over balancing voting rights in the various bodies seem to have been the sticking point in finalizing the coalition. Lengthy negotiations are not a positive sign, especially given the small size of the membership. At the present time, only one registered political party is a member of the coalition (though ten parties total are claimed) and only a dozen or fewer National Assembly Members attended the inaugural event—whether such a hamstrung coalition can effectively scale up in time for the next election is questionable.[117]

NCA's focus is on the 2014 presidential elections and has little interest in working on the Provincial Council elections. Whether the coalition participates in the 2015 Wolesi Jirga elections remains to be seen. However, from the coalition's focus on the presidency, it seems as though the new democratic structure is just another electoral vehicle for Dr. Abdullah.[118] If so, it will lose its reason for being in 2014, regardless of the outcome of the election, an unfortunate development give the apparent amount of effort invested in building up the

[117] National Coalition vs National Front: Two opposition alliances put Jamiat in a dilemma, Thomas Ruttig, April 1, 2012, http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=2418 .

[118] This may be a reason for the disinterest that NCA shows in aligning with the National Front, given their otherwise near uniformity on issues.

organization. What is more worrying is that if the NCA does become a powerful force, its lack of interest in the legislature seems to demonstrate an autocratic, presidentially-centered, approach to government deep within its structural DNA.

Jamiat is now dealing with the loss of its leader, a situation which many other parties will be facing in the next several years. The death of Professor Rabbani caused the slow leadership reforms that were rumored to be occurring within the party to be overcome by events, resulting in a power struggle. The way in which Jamiat deals with this power struggle may provide insight in to what can be expected as other parties pass through this test. Alternatively, it may become a lesson for other parties to heed.

Paiwand-i-Milli was the only political party office that the team visited that actually felt like a political party office. Most party offices that the team visited suffered from nearly sepulchral stillness, with almost no activity and few people in evidence. Paiwand's offices, on the other hand were buzzing with activity. There was a stream of constituents coming in to see party leaders and legislators. The party leader, Sayed Mansur Naderi, has a clear understanding of who is in the party, and party discipline seems excellent.

However, Paiwand is based upon very traditional Afghan structures.[119] All four of the legislators in the party are closely related to the party leader. The Ismaili branch of Islam is the primary glue that holds the party together, as the leader of the party is also the leader of the Ismaili community in Afghanistan. Paiwand is, at the same time, both the best example of an Afghan political party, and the worst. It is a structure which seems to work and yet, it is a structure from which, programmatically, we are trying to move Afghan parties away, suggesting that a rethink of party support programming may be in order.

YWC is a relatively new, co-ed student group. Since its inception in mid 2011, the group has opened the first internet café for women in Afghanistan,[120] holds debates, and has held numerous street protests against harassment of women and domestic violence.

YWC's work has been effective, garnering attention in the media and causing concern in the ranks of government officials; the team witnessed first-hand government officials calling members of the organization to attempt to prevent a planned demonstration. However, YWC's conception of the connection between its work and the political system still displays the Afghan aversion to politics the team found so often: "Though YWC *is completely non-political*, it has been able to arrange protests to *pressure political powers* to pay more attention to women's legal cases or to the injustice women face in the society [emphasis added]."[121]

This is fertile ground for political training, but the focus of most political programming has been on easily identifiable organizations and individuals, such as political parties, coalitions, and internationally created and funded CSOs. Working with real grass-roots organizations is far more challenging, though we believe some training already underway could effectively reach these types of organizations. It is worth remembering that most of the current major parties began in Afghan universities. While these now developing grass roots organizations

[119] It also has *tanzim* aspects: Jaffar Naderi, the son of Sayeed Mansoor Naderi formed a Baghlan tribal regiment in 1984. Later it became a brigade and eventually the 80th infantry division in 1988. Antonio Giustozzi, Empires of Mud War and Warlords in Afghanistan (London: Hurst and Company, 2009) page 61.
[120] https://www.facebook.com/YWC.af#!/SaharGulNetCafe.
[121] http://www.youngwomenforchange.org/?page_id=38.

are small, and perhaps will not survive, they are in the right place at a decisive time in Afghan history, and it would be a mistake to write them off.

AYNSO and MAS are IRI supported "issue advocacy organizations," which the team believes is intended to be a type of internationally seeded CSO. Both claim significant numbers of elected members in the National Assembly and Provincial Councils, and, if true, could be organizational models for alternatives to parties and coalitions. AYNSO claims to have elected 9 members to the Wolesi Jirga in 2010, equaling or beating every party but Jamiat-i-Islami, Wahdat-i-Islami Mardum, and Junbish. MAS claims to have successfully elected 27 of 46 candidates to Provincial Councils in 2009, outpacing the two largest parties, Junbish, with only 25, and Jamiat-i-Islami, with 20. AYNSO claims to have done almost as well, with 21 elected to the Provincial Councils. With their claimed memberships of 40 to 45,000 each nationwide, initially these accomplishments do sound reasonable.[122] However, as with the political parties, organizational discipline does not seem to be a strong point, and the team found no evidence that the organizations exist in the legislatures in any meaningful sense.

The team does not believe that the numbers as stated by these CSOs are necessarily inaccurate, but does believe that they are probably meaningless. Mere membership in AYNSO and MAS involves no obligations on the part of the member, nor is there any particular baggage associated with these organizations, so it is quite possible that people elected to the various legislatures might have agreed to be "members" at some point in time. The organizations did tell the team that they hold meetings with their elected "members" from time to time, but, based upon the fact that nearly all elected officials meet with petitioners on a regular basis, the team does not believe that this is necessarily evidence of any particularly strong relationship.

IV.e. Overview and Observations About USAID Programming

A lengthy and detailed USAID-funded Election Process Programming Assessment was completed in August of 2011, a key part of which concerned political party and political entity development programming.[123] This report will not replicate that document or that assessment, and does not enter into the amount of programmatic detail of the prior report, though this report includes both general and specific programming recommendations.

Within the democracy and governance portfolio are several examples of good work by implementers. However, while there is merit in much of the programming, (though not all), as a whole it has failed to move parties to the "next level."

Several organizations work in areas related to the development of political entities. The most on point, with just over $79 million dollars, is the Office of D&G's Support for Increased Electoral Participation in Afghanistan (SIEP) program, implemented by the Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening (CEPPS) partners, IRI, NDI, and IFES.[124]

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[122] As these are internationally supported organizations, the team was disappointed to find such ambiguity in the number of members.
[123] *Electoral and Political Processes Programming Assessment,* Checchi and Company/USAID, August, 2011.
[124] Office of Democracy and Governance (ODG) Project Portfolio, September 2011. This includes the add-on of $9 million for the period of December 01, 2011 to August 31, 2012.

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) stated in 2011 that the SIEP program was "performing well in achieving outputs such as training thousands of Afghans."[125] However, the report further states;

> [T]here is no persuasive evidence that these outputs have influenced the achievement of higher-level results such as increased citizen awareness of the electoral process or a stronger democratic political party system.[126]

NDI has been the center of gravity for political party programming, in part due to a "gentlemen's agreement" made before 2005 between it and IRI, leaving NDI as the leader in political party training in Afghanistan.[127] The team found that the majority of NDI's work to be generally effective in what it attempted to do, though the team believes that its goals are too narrow, partly as a result of that agreement with IRI, which focused too much on the form of political actors, rather than their function.

The team's primary concern is that NDI's program has been too Kabul-centric, in a way that has reinforced the parties' centralized natures and left the provincial branches, which the team believe are most likely to drive change, without support. NDI already has offices in several provinces, but they work only on sub-national governance programming, similar to SUNY's APAP program in the National Assembly, and likewise limited to strictly technical assistance, with no political component. This was confirmed by Afghan program managers of several years experience, who told the team that the provincial offices' primary program function is almost exclusively technical sub-national governance assistance. The staff structure makes this emphasis clear, usually consisting of a manager and a sub-national governance trainer or a general program officer, but no political party trainer.

The team believes that NDI's most effective training has been during the various campaigns, on campaign work, not party building. While there have been moves to do other types of training, nothing has matched the extremely well-received campaign period training of trainers campaign period program, which, in three waves of training, successfully provided party training nationwide. More recent, shorter training programs, have not been nearly as well received, and were the subject of biting assessments by many of the team's interlocutors, commenting most especially on their brief nature.

The team finds that the NDI program relies too much on one expatriate political party trainer. While the team believes that the quality of the training work done has been high, to rely on one person to deliver this training across Afghanistan is a mistake, and a reflection of a larger decision on the part of funders to put a relatively low value on political party development.

During the in-country assessment the team was advised that the IRI office was going to cease operations in Afghanistan. The team was told by IRI in meetings in Kabul that this was instigated by the government mandated handover of security responsibilities to the Afghanistan Public Protection Force (APPF), though the team was later told that there was

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[125] Audit of USAID/Afghanistan's Support to the Electoral Process and Support for Increased Electoral Participation in Afghanistan Programs, Audit Report No. F-306-11-003-p, Office of Inspector General, June 19, 2011, Kabul Afghanistan, p. 1.
[126] Ibid.
[127] NDI initially targeted the 26 political parties that won seats in the 2005 elections. Of these, NDI chose 15 parties with a sufficient internal structure and worked with a selection of them: in 2009, 11; 2010, 13; and 2011/12, 15. See Annex F.

another reason for the closure. IRI has now reversed its position and reopened a much smaller office with one resident expatriate and several Afghan program staff. The team notes that during its in-country assessment, the IRI team had significantly greater restrictions on movement and activity than any other implementer, and raising concerns about how effectively IRI can manage a program in country.

Prior to the March hiatus, IRI took the lead in training individual candidates and building legislative caucuses. Not surprisingly, the team found no evidence that IRI's focus on individual candidates assisted in building political entities, as this was not its intended goal. However, legislative caucus work was intended to encourage political entity development.[128,129] Unfortunately, the team confirmed the finding of the August 2011 EPP assessment that "caucus work has not been an effective path to political party development."[130]

IRI indicated to the team that future, town hall style meetings will be convened with the presence of relevant members of the WJ, with a direct follow up with WJ members. IRI is also considering a Dari and Pashto media campaign to raise general awareness of the rights and responsibilities Afghan citizens. Related to this are a series of short 15-minute television documentaries focusing primarily on how to deal with the Government.

IRI also works with three issue based advocacy groups, AYNSO, MAS, and Turk Tabor,[131] in what the team sees as an attempt to "seed" Afghan CSOs. As the question of whether CSOs are genuine alternative to political parties and coalitions was a focus of the team's brief, the team did examine these groups closely, but did not find significant evidence that these particular groups are real alternatives to the current structure.[132]

It is notable that NDI's 2011 Political Party Study includes no mention whatsoever of either AYNSO or MAS. It is hard to believe, though not impossible, that the study team would have such a blinkered focus on parties that they would not make even a passing mention of growing political blocs so effective that, according to their own numbers, they now rank among the three or four most powerful political groupings in Afghanistan—unless of course that is not the case. NDI's 2010 to 2015 Wolesi Jirga Directory,[133] which has biographies that include the civil society affiliations of all Members, has only two Members who claim affiliation to MAS, and one that claims an affiliation with AYNSO.

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[128] "Following the historical model of the evolution of organized political parties in the early history of the United States, IRI encouraged Independent candidates to band together around concrete issues upon which they could all agree, without the divisive commitment required for a formal political party. In this way IRI sought to assist issue-based caucuses to emerge in the upper and lower houses of the parliament." IRI Quarterly Report, April 2009-June 2009, p. 2.

[129] The issue-based parliamentary caucus program was shut down, as recommended in the 2011 EPP Assessment, for a failure to produce results. Further, it was specifically targeted at creating structures in the legislature apart from political parties.

[130] *Electoral and Political Processes Programming Assessment,* Checchi and Company/USAID, August, 2011, page 14.

[131] The team did not meet with members of Turk Tabor.

[132] The team notes that the August *Electoral and Political Processes Programming Assessment* found that these were effective organizations. However, the August team did not have the benefit of the extensive travel around Afghanistan that this team did. This team did not have to rely on second hand statements and reports, but rather could hear from provincial councilors, party members, and field members of these organizations directly about these organization's activities.

[133] The 2010 – 2015 Wolesi Jirga Directory, NDI.

Comparing the web presence alone between YWC, which does not receive USAID support, and AYNSO and MAS, is not flattering. YWC has a webpage,[134] Facebook page (6,779 "likes,", 2,241 "talking about this"),[135] Twitter feed (548 followers),[136] and YouTube channel.[137] AYNSO's webpage[138] consists primarily of text nearly identical to that of a travel website[139] and information apparently written years ago.[140] MAS's only significant web presence, aside from a limited number of news stories (most from several years ago), seems to be on IRI, USAID, or associated websites. When even unlikely politicians such as Abdul Rashid Dostum have a Facebook page,[141] it is surprising that organizations supported by USAID, intended to assist Afghans in networking and organization, have little to no web presence whatsoever.

This does not mean that the organizations have not been effective in the past— one prominent Member of the National Assembly said that MAS was "known and useful"— but she, like we, are unable to specify precisely how they are currently active. One Provincial Council member said that after supporting her opponent in the elections, MAS was no longer active in her province.

An AYNSO leader in one province told the team:

> Last week I talked to Shafiq Popal, who is the head of ANSYO, and asked him if there has been a recent activity. Nothing. I have given membership cards to over 400 youth in Samangan but since 2010 we do not have any activities. At the time I used to go to provinces asking youth to join our group and gave them membership cards, nothing else. I am not in touch with the 400 or so members in Samangan. They gradually realised we are not doing much so they became disappointed. This had a negative impact as they made us go to provinces and we made promises to youth that something positive will come out of this, now we cannot even go to these youth.

In response, AYNSO's National Communications Director, who was also an IRI staff member,[142] explained that AYNSO had no contact with UNAMA or other organizations, and maintained a low profile deliberately "in order to keep people and members safe," though the organization seems sufficiently agenda and activity free to have avoided creating powerful enemies.

The team recommends that, to the extent these organizations are politically effective, they be supported as political organizations or parties through existing or future political party and political organization programming, and not as CSOs. Ideally, the team believes that NDI's current political party programming should be expanded in focus to be political entity programming, open to organizations attempting to elect people to office, and that the IRI

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[134] http://www.youngwomenforchange.org/.
[135] https://www.facebook.com/YWC.af.
[136] http://twitter.com/ywcafghanistan/.
[137] http://www.youtube.com/user/YOUNGWOMEN4CHANGE.
[138] http://aynso.org/
[139] Compare, for example, http://www.world66.com/asia/centralasia/afghanistan/balkh and http://www.world66.com/asia/centralasia/afghanistan/mazarisharif, with http://aynso.org/english/balkh.php.
[140] http://aynso.org/downloads/aynso_accomp.pdf.
[141] https://www.facebook.com/abdulrashid.dostum.90#!/abdulrashid.dostum.90?sk=friends&ft_ref=mni.
[142] The team questions the wisdom of such a close relationship between AYNSO staff and the Institute, and believes it creates the danger of IRI not assessing the effectiveness of AYNSO programming objectively.

CSOs should be folded into this programming, if they are deemed worthy of support. The team does not believe the sub-grant model IRI had proposed for future programming with these organizations will be effective as the team does not believe that these organizations have the capacity to manage funds or deliver programs effectively.

IFES works primarily on civic education, mostly targeted at university students. IFES has two youth organizations, Women of Influence and Future Leaders Club, a debate program, a website, campaign finance, etc. We believe that IFES' work on civic education, though small scale, is cost effective, targets agents of change (young, educated future members of Afghanistan's elite), and will produce good results in the long term. Further, with continued support, these programs can scale up, and IFES has already pushed this programming out of Kabul to major cities.

While IFES' work is not of immediate relevance to political organization development, in the longer term, opinion leaders trained in analysis and critical thinking is an indispensable element of political organization development. Combining such critical thinking skills with the political organizing skills promoted by NDI and in other areas of USAID programming would turn these students into effective political actors. The growth of organic Afghan grassroots CSOs, as recognized by the team, can only be supported by these type of civic education programs.

Unfortunately, the team notes that there is no course on democracy in any Afghan state-run university. This, combined with the lack of a civics program in the middle to senior years of high school, present a significant challenge to long-term Afghan political party development, making donor provided civic education a real necessity. Given that children who were eight years of age in 2004 at the first Afghan Presidential election in 2014, will be voting in 2014, it is sobering that they will not have for the most part undertaken any structured course on democracy.

The State University of New York's (SUNY) Center for International Development's Afghanistan Parliamentary Assistance Project (APAP) builds the technical skills of the members of the National Assembly. APAP's assistance is strictly non-political and the program will not entertain engagement with political party entities within the legislature as political entities.

Counterpart International's Initiative to Promote Afghan Civil Society II (IPACS) is working with local CSOs using a cascade training methodology and small grants to improve the capacity and sustainability of more than 400 NGOs, social organizations, community development councils, and local jirgas. The team met with IPACS and beneficiary organizations to determine whether any groups had been identified as being alternatives to the current political parties, however, the team found no evidence that this is currently the case, even though some of IPACS' organizations engage in advocacy.

It is disturbing to note that there is no USAID-funded entity providing skills to elected members of the National Assembly or Provincial Councils on political and attitudinal issues, including how to operate as members of a party in a legislature. To be clear, APAP trains legislators on the technical processes relative to legislation, not why a particular part of legislation should be passed, debated from a political party platform standpoint. APAP also told the team that SUNY will not entertain providing any political support within the National Assembly. NDI trains parties, not legislators. But the majority of legislators are not in

parties, and those that are, have limited, if any, contact with their parties—any political training of legislators amounts to unintentional programmatic spillover.[143] What this means is that current USAID political organization development programming is not specifically targeted at the one group of people who have successfully done what political parties are expected to do: get elected.

VII. DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

[A]ssess the nature of Afghanistan's political party system and associated political parties, political movements and coalitions, and issue-based coalitions to identify what has prevented them from developing further…[144]

There are two main categories of factors restricting political party development. First are those growing out of Afghanistan's political context as described earlier. The second are those related to programs. Of course, given the international community's deep involvement in Afghanistan since 2001, neither group can be viewed as exclusive.

The team has attempted to identify causes, rather than effects or symptoms. For example, the lack of party platforms and ideology is a symptom of other pathologies, including electoral system corruption, a poorly chosen electoral system, poor education, etc. If these underlying pathologies are successfully addressed, the symptoms will change—in this example, identifying why party ideology and platforms have not developed, and then addressing these factors, rather than just holding party platform development training.

V.a. Indigenous Afghan Constraints

Failure of the rule of law

On paper, Afghanistan is a relatively democratic state. It is the utter failure of the government to enforce its own laws, especially election laws, both through incompetence as well as intent, that makes Afghanistan much less democratic than it could otherwise be. The international community has not discouraged this tendency, and when convenient, has actively encouraged derogations from the rule of law, taking a results-based, Machiavellian approach to Afghan engagement.

As a result, Afghan power players (and others) believe that political power is not obtained primarily through honest votes at the ballot box, but by other means. In nearly every interview, political actors stated that the political game in Afghanistan is rigged; nearly all also stated that in turn, they are compelled to try to rig the system as well.[145] Until honest participation in the electoral system actually matters, parties have little incentive to develop into something other than what they are, which is resource distribution networks based upon demographic and patronage loyalties. While true rule of law may be decades away in

[143] DFID (not USAID) funded NDI to do political training of legislators targeting some members of the Wolesi Jirga for 9 months during 2011 and 2012, but the program has not been extended.
[144] Scope of Work, Question 1, p. 1.
[145] As noted earlier in the paper, some of these failures include the President's total legal control of the Independent Electoral Commission and the Election Complaints Commissions, the continuing underfunding and poor legal foundation for the electoral complaints mechanism, the ease with which money and threats can influence electoral officials, most especially at the lower levels, a lack of confidence in the impartiality of the international community in assisting in the administration of the electoral process, and the SNTV system itself, which makes the improper shifting of small numbers of votes an effective tool of electoral corruption.

Afghanistan, it is possible to make some small steps in the right direction that would make a big difference in the short and medium term.

Failure of governance

The Afghan government cannot govern, in large part due to its impossibly centralized structure as well as lack of effective legislative and judicial oversight of the executive, at both the national and provincial level. This is exacerbated at levels below the province, as the constitutionally required local components of government have never been elected. As a result, the spoils of governance that successful political leaders usually bring back to their supporters, such as highways, hospitals, railway lines, sewers, etc., do not exist. Therefore, political supporters must be paid off in other ways. In the team's interviews, Members of the National Assembly, Provincial Councils, and others said that such payoffs include sinecures, lavish dinners, other perks, or just plain cash.[146]

Such corruption is facilitated through the promulgation of generally unenforceable laws that create opportunities for government officials to assert their power to extract money from citizens. A germane example, though many more are cited in previous sections of this paper, is the Political Party Law's requirement that parties have significant support national support, a requirement that, in exchange for a bribe, is easily waived.

This extensive corruption runs through Afghan society and constrains development at every turn. The team was told in one interview that in positions requiring trust, family members are preferred, where they cannot be found, members of the same ethnic group are preferred, and so on, as in the proverb "I against my brother; my brother and I against my cousin; my cousin, my brother and I against a stranger." This dynamic can clearly be seen in Paiwand-i-Milli, where every elected member is a close relative of the party leader, and examinations of other organizations show similar patterns. This means that in many Afghan organizations, the best person for the job might not be the person with the best skillset, but instead the person who can be trusted to not run off with the monthly payroll.

V.b. Programmatic Constraints

Targeted groups have little incentive to change

Looking at the number of seats obtained by the various parties in the two cycles of elections shows little change in the relative strength of most parties, *vis a vis* each other or independent candidates. In many countries, the maintenance of such a political status quo would indicate broad satisfaction with the operation of the political system. In Afghanistan, we do not believe there is any evidence whatsoever that most Afghans are rewarding their politicians for a job well done, if that job is defined as governing a country effectively and responsibly.

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[146] Vanda Felbab-Brown argues that the upcoming presidential election will make things worse, and notes the campaign periods likely deleterious impact on good governance: "2014 is also the year of another presidential election and hence of major power infighting, whether or not President Karzai will seek to remain in power. The fight over the remaining rents of the ending political dispensation and the need to consolidate one's support camps in anticipation of the shaky future, and hence to deliver spoils to them in order to assure their allegiance, will not be conducive to consensus decision making and broad-based good governance." |
Security and Politics in Pre-transition Afghanistan, *Afghanistan in Transition: Crafting a Strategy for Enduring Stability*, Vanda Felbab-Brown May 9, 2012 http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2012/05/08-security-afghanistan-felbabbrown.

On the contrary, the dramatically declining voter turnout seen from the 2004/05 election cycle to the 2009/2010 election cycle indicates serious problems with voters' relationship with their elected officials.[147] That decline in voter turnout coupled with the parties' net loss of seats in 2010, clearly demonstrated parties' inability to maintain the loyalty of those who had voted for them in the first electoral cycle. To be sure, some voters may be pleased with the performance of their particular leader, but this does not translate into overall confidence in Afghanistan's system of governance.

Instead, the team believes that, as noted in the analysis above, the current patron-client structure of the political system works well enough for Afghanistan's powerful elites. Parties and political organizations are able to obtain and deliver resources for their leadership and members, which is, the team believes, the point of most political organizations in Afghanistan.[148] For people benefiting from such a structure, opposition to change cannot be overstated. Change to this structure represents a direct threat to personal and familial well being.

The team believes that current and past political programming has all too often been targeted at those with no incentive to change the system: central party power structures that already are functioning as they wish to be. Though some leaders have proposed more developed democratic political structures and may even intend to implement such systems, the team saw little evidence of implementation. Telling donors what they want to hear is a skill well honed in Afghanistan over the past 10 years.

Where programming has targeted people with incentives to change the system, the process has not been terribly creative, targeting primarily youth and women as change agents, nowadays both nearly reflexive targets of political programming. Certainly, both groups have an interest in changing the system, but before they can make changes in the system, they have high hurdles of prejudice to overcome, especially in Afghanistan.

Women, in particular, are firmly emplaced in the second tier in Afghan society. Dr. Najibullah's Soviet backed regime sought to force a more equitable view of gender equality as part of his attempt to create Afghan utopia based upon Marxist-Leninist dogma. This turned women's rights from being merely a religious and cultural issue to an issue of patriotism as well and, combined with the more extreme interpretations of Islam that became dominant after the Soviet withdrawal, made Afghanistan one of the most difficult places in the world to be a woman. Today, many women may not travel without a male escort. Women and girls are used as *baad* payments, a way of settling disputes by providing a women in recompense for an offense. Child marriage is believed to be a serious problem, though the scope is difficult to assess.[149] Honor killings and mutilations have a long history, and most recently made the news as a woman was killed for adultery in Parwan.[150]

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[147] See Figure 1.

[148] This is, of course, the function of parties in every democracy, but it in more developed democracies, obtaining these resources is done through effective democratic governance, not by looting the state.

[149] Study on Child Marriage in Afghanistan, S. Bahgam, W. Mukhatari, May 2004, Medica Mondiale http://www.medicamondiale.org/fileadmin/content/07_Infothek/Afghanistan/Afghanistan_Child_marriage_medica_mondiale_study_2004_e.pdf.

[150] *Killing of Afghan Woman for Adultery Provokes Kabul Protests,* AP, July 11, 2012, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/jul/11/killing-afghan-woman-adultery-kabul-protests.

Youth face do not face prejudice that extreme, however, a respect for elders is deeply engrained in Afghan culture, as it is in many parts of the world. It is no accident that the upper house of the National Assembly is known as the Elder Council. In addition, Afghans may not be considered for any national office until at least the age of 25, and for others, 35 or 40.[151] While such age requirements are not unusual in more developed democracies, consider that life expectancy for Afghans is currently in the late 40s, and the median age for Afghans is 18.[152] With such numbers, only half of all Afghans will survive long enough to experience more than one or two elections cycles in which they are eligible to run for all the offices on the ballot.

These prejudices will take time to change, in the case of women, or to become irrelevant, as the youth of today become the respected elders of tomorrow. This is not to say that programming should ignore either group, rather, given the challenges facing both, the team believes that they should be engaged, but not with the expectation that they can be the best near term effective agents of change.

More creatively, but less effectively, programming has been targeted at those unlikely to have the power to change the system: independent candidates. While there may be a place for programming with independent politicians, it should wait until they have achieved electoral success, and should not, as has been done in the past, be restricted to on being independent politicians.

The one group which clearly has both the placement and potential power to make change in political parties has been studiously avoided: party members elected to the legislatures, as will be discussed in the next section.

Political training is not provided to politicians

The point of effective political organizations is to create an effective and accountable government by building effective government institutions. This happens primarily in the legislature where the structures that political organizations lend a legislature (ideally) enable the institution to work effectively, efficiently, and to become an effective check and counterweight to the executive.

That is why it is surprising that no USAID implementer works with elected officials in either the National Assembly or the Provincial Councils on how to be a political party member and how to use party membership to work more effectively in the legislature. SUNY APAP provides only technical assistance to the National Assembly. IRI actively excluded party members from their parliamentary caucus program. NDI told the team several times, in no uncertain terms, it does not work with the National Assembly (but might in the future and did in the past), and its work with the Provincial Councils is limited to the type of technical assistance provided by APAP. DFID did provide funding for a limited program with NDI in the Wolesi Jirga for nine months, but that program has ended.

[151] The Constitution states age requirements as follows: 40 years to be President (Article 62) or Supreme Court Justice (Article 118), 35 to be a Minister (Article 72), or member of the Meshrano Jirga (Article 85), and 25 to be a member of the Wolesi Jirga (Article 85).
[152] See https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/af.html.

As a result, the international community, after spending hundreds of millions of dollars on electing members of the Afghan legislatures, is in the odd position of not providing them with any training on how to operate politically in what are, fundamentally, political institutions.

Implementation is too Kabul-centric

The team found that the local party branches were hungry for political training. All political party provincial branches complained bitterly about the isolation they felt from their Kabul-based party headquarters. Almost without exception, the party members said that parties make all their decisions in Kabul, creating serious resentment, and resulting in decisions out of touch with the needs and interests of the local communities. The team believes that their dissatisfaction with the status quo makes them prime candidates to be effective agents of change.

The team found that even those implementers with a significant field presence suffered from a Kabul-centric perspective. The majority of international staff at the implementers we spoke with had never been outside Kabul. Of those that had, few had engaged in actual programming on these trips; most limited their business to internal administration. We believe that this Kabul-centrism has been a significant hindrance to effective support of the development of political parties overall.

For example, provincial party members noted with resentment that during NDI's three (otherwise very well received), "training of trainer" training waves, only Kabul based party members participated in the initial NDI training.[153] One young Kabul based party activist noted with pride that after he participated in the training at NDI headquarters, party leadership regularly consulted him on various political issues, making him a resource denied to provincial party leaders.

Implementers are strengthening party headquarters, the base of those most invested in the current system, at the expense of building provincial branches more naturally connected with the grass roots. Because provincial branches are so definitively outside the current party power structures, the team believes they are more likely to have an interest in building a broad based party and to demand structural party change. Essential to this calculus is that provincial party members are closely connected with provincial voters. This gives them power, which, if used correctly, can overcome resistance to change in the Kabul-based party leadership, who are well connected among the elite, but clearly alienated from voters in the rest of the country. For this reason, the team believes that provincial party members are more likely effective agents of change than well-connected Kabulis co-opted into the current system, and do not (necessarily) have to overcome the hurdles of youth and gender before attacking current power structures.

Further, the team found that provincial implementer offices often had little knowledge of the work of other USAID implementers, or, in some cases, even of their existence in the same province. Such ignorance is fatal to building cross implementer synergies and prevents projects from supporting one another. Only with an intimate understanding of other organization's programming can efficiency dividends be identified and acted upon.

[153] NDI countered that, in fact, many provincial based party members participated in the last wave, and that a few had participated in earlier waves. However, in development, perception is important. Further, the fact remains that the vast majority of participants were from Kabul, which represents, perhaps, 10 percent of Afghanistan's population.

The team found little evidence that USAID has encouraged a less Kabul-centric attitude. Indeed, one implementer reported being told by USAID that trips outside Kabul by that organization for any reason were *prohibited*; a statement that the team hopes was rooted in miscommunication. The Afghan government has proven itself incapable of governing Afghanistan through a centralized power structure. By emulating the Afghan government's Kabul-centric power structure, USAID training has embraced this model, with no greater success.

Illogical divide of programming responsibility

Part of the failings of both the IRI and NDI political party development program can be laid at the feet of the "gentlemen's agreement" to divide programmatic responsibilities between the two organizations. Their devotion to the agreement led to several instances where a mania for categorization took precedence over programmatic common sense.

In 2009, a presidential candidate was directed from NDI to IRI because he was an "independent not a party." However, the other institute was not able to support him due to their own internal program limitations, and possibly because he was viewed as a party not as an independent. In another incident, a senior party leader and former high-ranking government official told the team: "Three times I asked them [IRI] to help me and three times they did not," apparently because of party affiliations. Conversely, a large, multi-faceted group, headed by a former senior government official and leading political figure was initially not offered support because it was not a party but a coalition. A leading presidential contender for the 2009 election asked NDI has assistance to form a party but the team was told that NDI did not believe it was serious request so did not follow it up. IRI's caucus work excluded members of political parties and only allowed independent candidates to join, most likely dooming the attempt from the start.

Organizations such as the NCA blur the lines between CSOs, independent candidates, and parties. It is a broad-based movement that includes political parties, individuals, and civil society leaders under one all-encompassing umbrella— it is not a political party, nor is it individuals, nor a coalition of political parties. It seeks to be both a shadow government as well as a shadow cabinet; it is very much an Afghan model for democratic opposition and participation in government.

This type of odd hybrid, as noted earlier in this paper, is not unusual. For the purpose of building political entities, the seeded CSOs, specifically IRI's MAS and ANYSO, certainly fit the broad definition of what political parties purport to exist for (electing candidates to office) and also meet NDI's criteria, assuming that the organizations' claims of political puissance are not a mirage.

Treating CSOs that run candidates for office (whether grass roots or seeded), independents, and political parties differently with respect to providing political and organizational training, and providing political training for one and not the other, assumes that they are fundamentally different types of entities. The specialization that occurs in more sophisticated political environments has not yet happened in Afghanistan. Acting as though it has and attempting to distinguish the two types of organizations is an attempt to fit an inappropriate outside paradigm to the Afghan environment and unnecessarily complicates programming structure.

Political party development requires, but does not get, long term commitment

The team has found that the donor community has placed far too little emphasis on the development of political parties, or, for that matter, on the development of the legislative and judicial branches of government. At the same time, the donor community has expressed growing dissatisfaction with the progress made in political party development and has regularly expressed criticism of the ineffectiveness of the National Assembly, an institution that would be greatly strengthened by effective parties.

Nearly $1 billion was spent by donors running Afghan electoral events. Compared to this, the $79 million spent on SEIP, the primary political training program is tiny.[154] Even so, after the enormous donor investment in the 2004/2005 election cycle, funding to political party programming was cut and money reassigned to meet immediate needs until 2008, a decision described by NDI as a "huge mistake." A senior Afghan member of NDI's staff stated that even four years on, NDI's relationship with political parties remained strained because of this gap in funding. Parties agreed and stated that it significantly affected their internal development between electoral events and broke trust between the parties and implementers.

With less than an estimated 30 months before the Presidential and Provincial Council elections, it is a critical period for fiscal and technical support to political parties, however, steep cuts in political party programming are again expected. Ironically, donors have provided significant aid to civic education programs to build Afghan understanding of civil society and basic democratic concepts, yet the main delivery mechanisms for democratic stability— political parties— have had limited funding devoted to their development.

Too much focus on campaign skills

A major impact of the cessation of political party support in 2006-2008 was the reduction in the universe of appropriate training topics when funding for party training became available again. The proximity of the 2009/2010 election cycle made it impossible to do any training aside from tactical campaign training. NDI previously stated that its development work with political parties was a program to strengthen their ability to compete in elections.

As a result, parties were trained in how to run campaigns on how to win office, but not why they were running to win office, or what to do once they got there. If one focuses only on the how, the key "why" and "what to do" questions do not get asked.[155] While it can be argued that the primary goal of political parties is to win elections, the reality is that political parties

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[154] A conservative estimate of electoral events' cost is over $800 million dollars for four elections *without* including ISAF costs. Further, much of SIEP's funding is *not* directed at political party programming.

[155] Thomas Ruttig asks this question with regards to NCA and the National Front: "Both organisations are rather similar in their genealogy, their leading personnel and their political programme. Both go back to the period of the jihad against the Soviet occupation and resistance against the Taliban in the north, and key personnel of both come from *Jamiat-e Islami*, a former mujahedin 'party' that always had been characterised by an extremely diversified – some might say: fragmented – organisational structure. Many of their leading personalities have been closely allied with each other over long years. Politically, both alliances support Afghanistan's shift to a parliamentary system, the decentralization of power and electoral reforms as well as talks with the Taleban. This will make it difficult to distinguish them from each other, and has made many observers wonder whether the two have to exist simultaneously at all." *National Coalition vs National Front: Two opposition alliances put Jamiat in a dilemma*, Thomas Ruttig, AAN, April 1, 2012 http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=2418

exist to win elections (the vehicle) to enact their policies (the action goal) and to change the societal landscape according to their agenda (their ultimate outcome). If parties win an election without solid platforms, the result will be a chamber without purpose, and a chamber without purpose is a chamber without power.

According to our interlocutors, political organizations did not receive significant training on how to build a political party (or coalition), internal party democracy, party platforms, party discipline, agendas, party finance and fundraising, etc. The parties themselves recognized their immaturity and ineffectuality, and told the assessment team that they still require some basic party assistance.

Unfortunately, the team found that this has not significantly changed after the 2010 election, in part, it seems, due to the Special Tribunal distracting party attention. As one party official stated to the assessment team, the recent short-term training sessions from NDI "were useless." A very senior Afghan political figure and leader of a registered political party stated, the program "failed to meet our expectations" and that "policy formulation was needed," to "help the parties be self-sufficient in party strategy." As a result of a failure to assist in these areas, Afghanistan's "young democracy is being damaged." These types of concerns were raised again and again at meetings around the country. Another senior leader, when asked about the validity of USAID program support, categorically stated that if USAID cannot assist parties in building policy, platform, and structure, then "you should not bother doing political party programming at all."

While one NDI trainer stated that political parties "do not know what to do between elections," it is clear that they have learned that they need to find out.

In 2012, NDI seems to have changed its approach to address Afghan concerns, though that was not yet evident during the team's in-country assessment:

> NDI will work with the leadership of political parties and coalitions to develop constituent outreach programs and strategies, conduct targeted outreach events, access needed technical materials, and hold effective party congresses. Involvement and targeting of women in these activities will be stressed. NDI will also continue providing support to women MPs and other women activists in Afghan political communities.[156]

However, perception is critical, and many interlocutors were skeptical of NDIs capacity to deliver on such promises.

VIII. Development Concerns based on Analysis of Political Institutions, Political Entities, and Party System – Recommendations for Interventions

[R]ecommend possible interventions for USAID/Afghanistan, if any, that may be effective in the current environment to foster the development of a pluralistic, democratic, competitive and accountable political party system.[157]

[156] NDI Political Party One Pager, 2012.
[157] Scope of Work, p1.

Transforming the above analysis into programmatic recommendations initially appears to be an overwhelming task. The Pittsburgh methodology attempts to simplify this process by dividing political party development into five interlinked goals:

Organizational and Technical Capacity[158]
Accountability, Representation, and Participation[159]
Governability and Good Governance[160]
Stable and Peaceful Contestation[161]
Rule of Law and Fair and Honest Elections[162]

At this point, Afghan political parties are so under-developed, that nearly every intervention recommended would affect all of these targets. Rather than attempt to force each recommended intervention into one of the categories, the team took a more holistic approach, recognizing that the interventions recommended, *in toto*, should cover all the areas of development.

We believe the problem of political development has been approached by attempting to drive, rather than incentivize change. The team believes that by facilitating, rather than attempting to lead change, political development programs can be more successful, more easily. Given implementation history, a sea change in the mindsets of funders and implementers must happen for a more Afghan led process to be possible.[163]

Support the Rule of Law and Fair Elections

[158] There is a clear tie between building parties' organizational and technical capacity and democratic development. Without proper organization and training programs, for example, parties would not be able to develop outreach programs that are important to participation and accountability. Improper accounting, further, would hinder development of the rule of law. As a result, party assistance programs necessarily focus on these types of issues. These programs, however, are a means to an end, and assessments and programming should maintain a focus on how deficits in the parties' organizational development relate to democracy. This is of particular for program design, since the parties will be more interested in aid that promotes their electoral advantages regardless of its effects on democracy.

[159] These three interlocking and overlapping concepts define the level and quality of a society's democracy. Effective representation cannot exist without broad participation of different groups in the political process. Effective participation and representation, in turn, implies that the representatives—the parties and their leaders—are accountable to citizens (the participants). A developed party, therefore, supports active engagement of the citizenry and represents their interests. Further, citizens will judge such a party based on how well it addresses citizen through policy positions and management of the government.

[160] Democratic governance requires not only majority rule, but also minority participation in the policy process. Sustainable democracy, then, requires that parties cooperate to foster an open and cooperative policy process that supports coalition formation and oversight.

[161] Democracy requires strenuous competition among parties, but exceedingly large swings in support from one election to the next implies that parties have failed to develop deep roots in society. Competition thus should be aggressive but responsible.

[162] Democracy is based on rules shaping the actions of leaders and citizens, and democracy gains credibility when votes are counted fairly and losers graciously accept their defeats. Parties can support this aspect of democracy by supporting a non-partisan electoral authority and acting within the constraints of laws, regulations, and broad democratic norms.

[163] For example, IRI's political caucus program attempted to drive, rather than facilitate the creation of legislative caucuses. IRI's caucuses proved unsustainable without constant support from IRI and have now collapsed. However, at the same time, other legislative groups formed independently and got recognition from the National Assembly leadership, demonstrating that it was not the idea of legislative groups that was the problem, but rather a lack of interest in the groups imposed by the international implementer.

Until Afghan parties believe that the rule of law in Afghanistan is effective enough to guarantee fair elections, they will not devote energy to traditional party development. Thus, in order to incentivize party development, efforts should be made to create a fairer electoral system. Without a fair electoral system, efforts at political party development and other areas of good governance will be wasted, thus these recommendations should be prioritized.

While establishing the rule of law prior to the next election seems like a tall order, there are some basic steps that can be taken that would improve the situation in the electoral realm. Of greatest importance is ensuring that electoral commissions, both administrative and adjudicative, are actually independent and not appointed by the President alone.

Valuing the electoral dispute resolution body (the ECC or CECC) and treating it as a valuable part of the electoral process is essential. While training IEC Commissioners and key staff members has been a regular program goal, no training was ever provided to ECC/CECC Commissioners or high level staff since the first ECC was established in 2005. Since then, Commissioners and staff were put in charge of overseeing nearly a billion dollars of electoral processes without basic training in adjudication, administrative law, judicial processes, etc.

The move away from SNTV in the new draft electoral law would also make election rigging more difficult, though not impossible. As the current President is not eligible for re-election in 2014, there is an opening for significant changes in the structure of the electoral system, especially if the international community again provides significant funding for the electoral process.

- USAID and partners should make electoral funding contingent on the appointment of all electoral bodies, including electoral administrators and the electoral dispute resolution body, in an impartial manner in accordance with international standards.
- USAID and partners should make electoral funding contingent on a permanent electoral dispute resolution body with binding authority over the actions of the election implementation body and a clear legal mandate, in accord with the Constitution.
- USAID and partners should ensure that training is provided for both Commissioners and key staff members of the IEC and the electoral dispute resolution body.
- USAID should encourage broad electoral reforms, including a replacement for SNTV, while keeping in mind that last minute changes to the electoral system can be destructive.
- USAID should help to expand the recruiting networks and the candidate pool for electoral jobs in order to dilute the efforts of political interests who may attempt to fill posts with sympathetic individuals.

Support efforts to increase the effectiveness and accountability of Afghan government

Increasing citizen confidence in the political system by improving the effectiveness and accountability of the government is an essential step in building political organizations, as currently politics, politicians, and political parties are viewed negatively by Afghans. A more responsive government would increase citizen confidence in the political system and provide politicians the opportunity to “bring home the bacon” to supporters in ways that improve the community, rather than lining supporter’s pockets.

Building Afghan oversight institutions, such as the judiciary, the legislatures and the political organizations that inhabit them, as well as CSOs, to demand accountability of their own government, will work much more effectively than demands by donors in meetings with the executive, especially as donor money and influence wanes. Some efforts have already been expended in these areas successfully, such as the APAP budget review process in the National Assembly, however, the scope should be expanded to include more politically oriented training both at the national level and at the provincial level.

The team notes that a FEFA already exists, but has had significant problems in the past, as detailed in the EPP Report of 2011. Rather than rely on only one observer organization, it would be wise to broaden the number of organizations that do this type of work rather than rely on a one-stop shop.

The Afghan government's centralized structure hinders effectiveness and accountability, but is, unfortunately, enshrined in the Constitution. However, there are steps which can be taken immediately to create a more local, responsive structure, rather than waiting for a constitutional Loya Jirga that may never happen. Key to this would be to expand the powers of the Provincial Councils to recognize the reality that Afghanistan is a decentralized country. In addition, the election of all constitutional offices, including mayors and district, municipal, and village councils, would provide Afghans with close links to elected government officials and provide them with some recourse if the government is not performing properly. Further, given that the majority of Afghan ministries spend less than 40% of their budget, the money to support these institutions and provide them with a discretionary program budget already exists.

- USAID should support more comprehensive training for the legislatures, especially in the area of politically oriented training.
- USAID should encourage the development of independent observer organizations and encourage their work on governance issues between election cycles.
- USAID should support efforts to amend the Provincial Council and other necessary laws to give Provincial Councils more control over provincial administration, including the right to appoint and dismiss local administrators, impose fees or taxes, control a local budget, and oversee the line ministries operating in the provinces. It is likely that all of this could be done in accordance with the current Constitution.
- USAID should support the election of all constitutional offices, with robust powers over budgets and finance, including mayors and district, municipal, and village councils.
- USAID should support efforts to provide Provincial Councils (and other sub-national governance structures if elected) with technical and political training, including areas such as constituent outreach and services, press and public information, coalition building, etc.

Support knowledge initiatives to increase accountability of government and politicians

Information and effective information analysis is key to democratic development. Education targeted at developing critical thinking skills and encouraging the use of facts, rather than rumor or opinion in decision-making should be encouraged and supported. Key to this effort is effective journalism, transparency in governance, and basic civic education.

- USAID should continue to support programming targeted at building critical thinking skills, such as that being conducted by IFES, in accordance with IFES' controlled plan to continue expanding its programming throughout various provinces.
- USAID should expand the scope of IFES' civic education, most especially its debate program, to high schools, through training and funding selected teachers (opinion leaders in their communities) willing and able to lead such programs on a local level.
- USAID should encourage the Afghan government to include civics education in high school and university curricula.
- USAID should support broad based literacy training for party members and other politically active citizens.
- USAID should continue to support professional journalism through education, political support with the Afghan government, programming, and funding of selected news outlets.
- USAID should provide legislators with media training focusing on understanding how to effectively convey a political message.
- USAID should encourage a move toward roll call voting in all elected councils.
- USAID should consider funding free media for candidates in the upcoming elections, modeled on the 2005 free media program, where all candidates were given a block of free airtime to promote their candidacy.
- USAID should provide both legislators and CSOs with training on how to work together and to be resources for each other.
- USAID should ensure that civic education continues to provide information on the importance of democracy in Islam, including the importance of both male and female participation.

Encourage decentralization in programming

The *de jure* centralization of the Afghan state has not produced an effective government in what is *de facto* a decentralized society; that development structures have modeled themselves so closely on a failed model is unfortunate. A decentralized approach would lead to an increase in more locally oriented training, helping to build political entities from the grassroots level, where people want change, rather than trying to force change from the top, amongst those who are invested in and benefit from the current system. Most importantly, locally based training is what the majority of the political activists the team spoke with said that they want.[164]

- USAID should encourage implementer presence outside Kabul with excess costs funded by reductions in Kabul offices office size and function.
- USAID should encourage implementers to ensure that most, if not all, training events include people from outside Kabul, even if such inclusion is focused on only a few provinces.
- USAID should encourage, rather than discourage, the presence of implementer staff in the provinces; ALL international staff should have experience outside Kabul.

Meet women where they are, rather than trying to put them where they are not

[164] Given the current fiscal environment, it should be considered that moving staff from Kabul to the provinces might produce significant overhead savings, permitting increased staff hire without increasing program costs. For instance, the rent on one implementer's Kabul office was approximately 15 times the rent paid for a similar office in Herat; presence and program delivery outside of Kabul appears extremely cost effective.

At the present time, the team believes that women are not key players in political parties or coalitions. Given the dysfunctional state of Afghanistan's political parties and organizations, the team believes that women are not missing much by not being part of these organizations. As such, the team places a relatively low priority on directly encouraging female participation in political parties and coalitions.

Women are, however, a significant power in Afghanistan's legislatures. Through the support of quotas as well as through their own initiative, women compose more than 25% of the Members of Afghanistan's legislatures, well above the 17% held by women in the Congress of the United States. Given the state of gender in Afghanistan, it seems that unlikely that the number of female legislators will increase significantly anytime in the near future, regardless of the resources put into it.

Therefore, rather than attempt to increase the number of women elected, programming should prioritize improving the effectiveness of those women in the legislatures. Key to their effectiveness is collaboration not only with other women, but with their male colleagues, so conducting training in a mainstreamed environment is important. Effective legislators should be attractive individuals to political parties and coalitions that have a genuine interest in governance. As with DCA, the team believes that effective female legislators will be welcome in parties and coalitions with good governance agendas.

- USAID implementers should work with women to build their political skills within the legislatures.
- USAID implementers should ensure that men and women work together in trainings to assist in building networks and relationships.
- USAID should ensure that implementers provide political, and not merely technical training to legislators.
- USAID should continue supporting civic education targeted at women, using women friendly media, such as radio and SMS, as well as broadly targeted civic education programs emphasizing the importance of female participation in the political process.
- USAID can encourage women's politically oriented NGOs to work with female candidates for election, to provide them with campaign networks, safe spaces to campaign, and volunteer networks.
- To create a long term pipeline of politically oriented women, USAID should encourage implementers to provide political training to female oriented CSOs.

Revise target groups to treat groups functionally, rather than categorically

Programming has been poorly targeted by category rather than functional capability and organizational interest, resulting in politically engaged individuals and groups being turned away after requesting training, and the outright exclusion of politically oriented CSOs and elected officials. In selecting trainee individuals or organizations, implementers need to determine whether the potential trainees have political goals, are capable of achieving at least some of those goals (or will be with assistance), and if their programming can provide the assistance the prospective trainees to achieve those goals. Trainees must be selected through a transparent process and implementers must make it clear that if progress is not made, other organizations will be chosen.

- USAID should encourage implementers to focus on function rather than form when determining what type of training a group or individual requires.
- USAID should require that implementers use USAID's guidelines for participation in political party training unless a waiver is obtained.
- USAID should ensure that program divisions do not result in organizations with similar needs being pushed into two different programs, merely because of their structure.

Think creatively to include effective change agents

USAID should encourage implementers to target political and technical training at organizations and individuals capable of driving change and interested in doing so, rather than targeting trainings exclusively at those invested in the status quo. Provincial level political training has been extremely limited, and there has been a bias toward "national" organizations. Elected party members have not been targeted, nor have political CSOs.

While the team believes that provincial political party members, elected party members, and developing CSOs are most able to drive political party development, there are undoubtedly other prospective agents of change as well. Minorities, for example, have shown a strong desire to be effective political players.

The team believes that targeting individual provinces rather than working nation-wide, would be more effective. Implementers must be willing to change provinces if local partners are not responsive to change.

- USAID should encourage implementers to identify those with an interest in political entity development and the power to make that development occur. The team believes that provincial party members, elected party members, minorities, and politically oriented CSOs are all potentially effective agents of change.

Coordinate

The democracy and governance portfolio has become many small islands of programming, with little coordination and cooperation between, and even within, individual implementers. Some *ad hoc*, voluntary coordination has occurred, but history has shown this type of coordination often does not endure through staff turnovers. Therefore, coordination must be driven by USAID, as was done quite successfully in 2010, when USAID D&G took the initiative.[165] Such coordination needs to happen regularly, both at the tactical and strategic level. Furthermore, coordination must not be limited to Kabul CoPs, but should be required at every level of the organizations, especially at the provincial level.[166] Such coordination can only occur if all implementers have a presence in country.

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[165] Military commanders in Afghanistan have recognized the challenge of achieving coordination or "unity of effort" amongst all the implementing bodies in Afghanistan. Based upon his own experience in Afghanistan, one US Colonel writes of the weakness of such good will relationships and argues that to have effective coordination it is necessary to "scrap all joint command relationships that… rely solely upon the good will and cooperation of commanders." http://smallwarsjournal.com/sites/default/files/825-forsyth.pdf .

[166] NDI maintains provincial offices in Herat, Balkh, Kandahar, Jalalabad, Kunduz, Khost, and a regional office for the central region based in Kabul. However, these offices are not used for political party building; their primary role is to support the sub-national governance program. IFES has offices in Herat, Balkh, Kandahar, Bamiyam, and Nangarhar provinces. IRI has left the country.

- USAID take the lead in coordinating monthly meetings with key actors in the wider democracy and governance portfolio, both in Kabul and in the provinces where implementers have offices.
- USAID, with IRI and NDI, should end the decade old "gentlemen's agreement" that illogically divided programming between the organizations. Any replacements for that agreement will depend on implementer staff expertise, but could include divisions of responsibility along regional, subject matter, or other lines.
- USAID should ensure that future agreements on the division of work are re-examined regularly to ensure that they do not hamper effective program delivery.
- USAID should encourage implementers to build upon other implementers' programs.
- USAID must require implementers to have a physical office and expatriate presence in Afghanistan should they seek to implement Afghan programming. Implementers with programs outside of Kabul should be encouraged to have international staff based outside Kabul or regularly visit such programs.

Build, *then* train parties

Political parties require assistance in party building, not merely campaigning. To ensure that this happens, parties should not receive campaign methodology training until 9-12 months before the elections in 2014. Campaign training should be used as a reward, and only parties that make effective progress on structural reform should be included in campaign training. Key assistance in structural reform should focus on internal communication, party structure, and it should be used as a reward to prod parties and coalitions to develop internal structures, most importantly internal democracy and communication.

- USAID should initiate a party building program based upon individualized assessments as soon as possible, with campaign assistance withheld for the next year.

IX. Annexes

VII.a. Scope of Work

Scope of Work
Assessment of the State of Political Entities in Afghanistan

I. Introduction

The purpose of this assessment is to assess the current state of political entities in Afghanistan in the lead up to the 2014 elections and make recommendations on how best to target limited USG resources to support greater political participation. This scope of work (SOW) requires the completion of two tasks: (1) assess the nature of Afghanistan's political party system and associated political parties, political movements and coalitions, and issue-based coalitions to identify what has prevented them from developing further, and; (2) recommend possible interventions for USAID/Afghanistan, if any, that may be effective in the current environment to foster the development of a pluralistic, democratic, competitive and accountable political party system.

II. Background

The USG political participation program supported political party strengthening, facilitated civil society's increased political participation, encouraged broader citizen participation in political processes, and provided direct support to independent candidates. The USG program has achieved mixed results. Given the importance of the 2014 political transition set against declining USG resources to support political processes in Afghanistan, USAID must make some challenging decisions.

Over the past decade, political parties have emerged to compete in the post-Taliban political environment; some emerged out of previously warring factions while others formed from civil society organizations. Groups that had operated earlier as military factions had established extensive management, organizational and communication structures – allowing them to command resources and public recognition in the post-Taliban era. Some of these parties maintained militias and ruled local areas through intimidation. Given this history, the Afghan public has exhibited suspicion toward parties, especially those aligned with former *mujahideen* commanders. In addition, parties active since the overthrow of the Taliban have often failed to develop clear, issue-based platforms or take broad constituent concerns into consideration in forming policy.

In recent years, political parties have made strides in an environment wary of such political groupings and where the electoral system favors independent candidates. Since 2009, parties have demonstrated improvements in electoral performance and found ways to engage in the country's political processes. Parties mobilized candidates for the 2010 parliamentary polls and at least 21 parties have representatives in the current *Wolesi Jirga* (lower house of the National Assembly) and provincial councils. Women and young people, who comprise a minority of the membership of parties, continue to strive for opportunities to participate meaningfully in political life.

Parties continue to face considerable challenges that hinder their development as participants in the political process. They are still widely seen as appealing to limited constituencies and lacking in organizational capacity. Parties have difficulty crafting policies relevant to citizen concerns, and some are reluctant to involve women and youth in decision-making positions.

Analysts suggest that some political parties like Jumbesh, Hezb-i- Islami, and the newly-formed alliance between MP Mohaqqeq, General Dostum and former Vice President Zia Massoud that includes Jumbesh have not taken significant steps to transform themselves from their history as regional and ethnic-based political leaders and parties. While Jamiat's new interim leader Salahuddin Rabbani has expressed a willingness to re-define the party and move it beyond its traditional northern base. Nonetheless, the majority of Afghans view Jamiat as, a Tajik party and until a permanent head is confirmed, it is too early to say whether it will be able to expand beyond its regional base. At the same time, new parties and coalitions like the Rights and Justice Party are emerging and could offer a new vision for Afghanistan.

Findings from The Asia Foundation's (TAF) 2011 Survey of the Afghan People reveal that a quarter (25%) of respondents say political parties serve the interest of the country as a whole, and 19% say they represent broad layers of society. Eighteen percent say political parties serve regional interest, 14% say group/personal interests, 13% say ethnic interests, 5% say corporate interests (like those of farmers, workers, businessmen, etc.) and 4% say political parties serve local interests.

Despite external challenges and internal capacity limitations, many political parties have progressed over the past few years, and some analysts have noted gradual but increasing sophistication in organizational structure, membership and campaign approaches. More than 100 political parties were registered to compete in the 2009 election, and 30 fielded candidates. While only five managed to re-register under a new political party law in time for the 2010 election, 21 out of the 41 parties registered-to-date nonetheless claim representatives in the *Wolesi Jirga.* Participation in the 2010 election showed an increased use of party agents and attempts to strategize their candidate fielding and campaigning for greater effectiveness. A few parties have developed formal national and provincial level structures, and parties have initiated congresses to clarify internal regulations and formalize constitutions. Coalitions have also emerged, with two seeking technical assistance in developing policy platforms and widening their support bases.

NDI's 2011 review of the state of Afghan political parties after the 2009 and 2010 elections noted several contextual factors that are limiting parties' abilities to gain footing within Afghanistan's current political framework. These include a lack of formal mechanisms through which parties may cooperate, an electoral system that favors independent candidates and marginalizes smaller parties, and few opportunities for meaningful participation between election periods. Findings from this review also indicate rudimentary party constitutions, a limited number of women playing official roles, little party focus on non-electoral activities, few parliamentary linkages, capacity weaknesses within parties for policy research, and the need for parties to develop internal regulations and clear membership guidelines.

The 2014 will mark an important political transition for Afghanistan. Some analysts suggest that without some prior agreement on a consensus candidate or candidates, the 2014 elections could be a real free-for-all. There is the possibility that fraud and violence could be worse than what was experienced in the 2009 Presidential elections. A number of candidates have already emerged. This includes Balkh Governor Mohammed Atta, Education Minister Farooq Wardak, and Nangarhar Governor Gul Aga Sherzai. However, none of these look like real unifying, consensus candidates.

In planning for the 2014 political transition, there is recognition that political parties will remain powerful forces for better or worse, and not maintaining some sort of engagement could lead to negative outcomes. Nonetheless, some suggest that USG resources should focus more on issue-based civil society, coalitions, and political movements rather than political parties.

Within Parliament, several coalitions and groups have emerged in the past few years. The most recent being the Rule of Law group that mobilized up to 180 MPs to protest against the finding of the Special Court. There is also the pro-government Sabah coalition, a new reformist group, the Peace Caravan coalition, and the Voice of Justice coalition among others. It is unclear exactly how many members each have, what ability they have to retain members, and what staying power any of these groups/coalitions have. Currently, there are no requirements that MPs report their membership in a coalition, caucus, or any other grouping. Some analysts suggest that some MPs are members of multiple coalitions/parties and float between them as is convenient. For the most part, these coalitions seem to emerge more as groupings that MPs join once elected and don not seem to be used as vehicles to support ones election campaign. It is unclear whether this could change.

At the same time, Youth and gender-driven civil society offer a bright future for Afghanistan, raising questions whether they could offer an alternative to political parties. The generation of twenty and thirty year-olds have come of age in the post-Taliban era, experienced a free media, have access to the internet, and had opportunities for education abroad. They see things differently than prior generations, recognizing that their parents and grandparents contributed as much to Afghanistan's decline as the Taliban has. Nonetheless, Afghan civil society organizations have no shared agreement of how the political transition should proceed. Civil-society organizations lack linkages, and they are far from being able to form viable political parties, or even viable agenda-based coalitions. This raises question on how the USG can facilitate their growth and on what organizations USG efforts should focus.

III. Purpose of the Assessment

This assessment will provide the necessary information to the USAID to better understand the current state of political entities and the environment in which they operate. The results of the assessment will guide USG contributions to future political entity strengthening efforts in Afghanistan as the USG develops its strategy to support the 2014 political transition, providing recommendations on what types of political entities the USG should work to strengthen and propose strategies on how to best engage them.

The USG is developing a new political entity strengthening program that should begin around September 2012 and run through December 2015. This program will include pre-election capacity building as well as election-specific support. This program will be complemented with activities focused on building the capacity of the Independent Election Commission (IEC) to manage the 2014 and 2015 elections. This assessment is intended to provide key recommendations that will inform the design of the new political entity strengthening program, making recommendations that address political participation needs from 2012 through 2015.

Given various political party shortcomings, this assessment seeks to determine whether Afghanistan's political development can be best supported through support targeting existing political parties, groupings of independent candidates, political movements and coalitions, or issue-based civil society coalitions. Groups like the IRI-supported Movement for Afghan Sisters (MAS) show great potential. Nonetheless, women's groups express fear regarding the uncertainties of the 2014 political transition.

The USG's declining resources will impact greatly what the USG is able to support in the broader elections and political processes field. USAID may be required to make hard decisions in the future.

To date, the USG has worked to build the capacity of political parties and independent candidates, attempted to foster coalitions of independent candidates, and facilitated the emergence of issue-based civil-society coalitions. USAID feels that it has yet to find a combination that works well in Afghanistan and would like to use this assessment to assess these approaches and to make concrete recommendations on how to move forward. The fundamental question is how should USAID best channel its resources to foster political consolidation and encourage the emergence of political entities that are able to move beyond ethnic, religious, and regional lines and support a credible political transition in 2014.

IV. Scope of Work and Methodology

The assessment team must conduct initial pre-departure planning and research that will enable them to decide what aspects of political entity development to study, how many parties, coalitions, movements, and civil society groups are feasible to study, and which ones the team will analyze. In addition to these research design issues, the assessment team must collect much contextual information about the country prior to departure and should collect reports from USAID and its partners about previous programs and work from them to develop development indicators

In country, the team will meet with key actors in the political parties, implementing partners, and others they deem necessary, (e.g., civic and political activists, academicians or think tank experts, civil society organizations, government officials, local government leaders, and citizens), to determine the levels of opportunities for political party development that may be possible within the current context. The assessment should take into consideration the activities already in process, or soon to be in process, with USAID funding, such as the SIEP program implemented though the CEPPs mechanism IPACS,

implemented by Counterpart International, NDI's sub-national governance program, and RAMP-UP.

The assessment team should use and adapt the methodology developed by the University of Pittsburgh and USAID (attached to this SOW) to develop a methodology for this assessment. The scope of the assessment should extend beyond political parties to encompass the possible political entities that exist in Afghanistan, and the methodology must indicate how the assessment team will determine on which groups the assessment will focus and balance time in Kabul with time outside Kabul – in four different provinces - to provide a balanced picture.

V. Assessment Questions

The fundamental question that the assessment is trying to answer is:

- How should USAID best channel its resources to foster political consolidation and encourage the emergence of political entities that are able to move beyond ethnic, religious, and regional lines and support a credible political transition in 2014 and beyond?

In answering this question, the assessment team should explore the following questions[167]:

- How the USG can best facilitate the growth of political entities?
- On which organizations should USG efforts focus?
- How should USG efforts handle political parties?
- Which political parties does the assessment team consider to be significant?
- What potential do civil society organizations and coalitions have to organize and represent Afghans politically? What challenges do they face and what are their limitations?
- If the single non-transferrable vote system (SNTV) remains the election system used, should the USG invest resources in training independent candidates? If so, what strategy is recommended?
- What potential do political groups and coalitions in Parliament have in becoming vehicles for candidates to compete in elections? Or are they limited to being vehicles for organizing MPs once they are elected?
- Should the USG invest resources in supporting political groups and coalitions in Parliament? If so, what should be the objective of such support?
- What elements of USG's current efforts should be continued and what should be added, modified, and/or dropped?
- What types of programming is recommended for the pre-election periods and what is recommended during the election period?
- Does the approach to support targeted political entities differ as one looks at the presidential versus the parliamentary elections?
- Should future programming include elements of public opinion research?

[167] These questions should be used as a guide. The U Pitt Assessment has additional questions which should be used as a guide too.

- In exploring how to strengthen political entities, what is in the USG's manageable interest and what is beyond the USG's manageable interest? How does this influence recommended programming options?
- What are the critical assumptions being made for each recommendation?
- What are critical factors that would cause the team to make different recommendations?
- Does the assessment team recommend different types of programming depending on different possible scenarios? If so, what are the different scenarios, and what are the different recommendations?
- In proposing how to strengthen Afghanistan's political system, how much time is required to move Afghanistan towards more issue-based politics?
- What is required to attract voter interest and involvement in the political system? If significant legal or constitutional changes are needed, what should USG support in the absence of those changes?

VI. Deliverables

The evaluative report shall provide USAID/Afghanistan with a clear analysis of achievements, challenges, and realistic opportunities for future political development assistance to Afghanistan.

In addition to an executive summary, we recommend three main sections structured around 1) an analysis of the political context, 2) development concerns based on the analysis of the political institutions, political entities, and the party system, and 3) recommendations for development programming based on opportunities and constraints.

For each political entity type that the assessment team recommends USG should support, the assessment team should indicate the type and scale of support recommended. Here, the team may want to propose a percentage of effort devoted to different areas to aid in efforts to prioritize. The team should also distinguish how the strategies may vary for different types of groups and speak provide analysis of current and past strategies employed in Afghanistan. To the extent possible, the team should draw from lessons learned and best practices from other countries, pointing to what can be learned from other country experiences and what is unique about Afghanistan that prevents drawing from other country experiences.

The report may address:

1) Political entities' organizational structure and technical capacity, for example the effectiveness of various entities' policy analysis, candidate training processes, outreach programs, and systems for fund raising.
2) The accountability of political entities for policy, namely the degree to which political entities focus on policy issues in their campaigns, and, in turn, whether voters judge political entities for these policy stances.
3) Governability and good governance, the ways in which parties contribute to effective democratic decision-making, regardless of election results.

4) Stable and peaceful contestation, the progress made so far in developing a healthy competition among parties and explore how different parties collaborate and interact with each other and the role such collaboration could play.
5) Responsiveness to constituents and representative of the party's membership and voter base in promoting policies.

The report should include general observations and specific recommendations including maximizing results from existing programs, exploiting possible synergies with other USG and donor programs where appropriate, and suggestions for new, complementary programs. The recommendations will focus on the Democracy and Governance portfolio but also identify areas for synergy and coordination with the other USG and donor programs where appropriate, as well as ways to leverage political and diplomatic resources to affect change.

Specific Deliverables and timetable for delivery are:

1. Work plan: A draft work plan will be submitted two days before arrival in Afghanistan to be approved by USAID/Afghanistan, in which the methodology and activities of the evaluation are clearly stated. Within two days of arrival in Afghanistan, the team will submit a detailed work plan incorporating USAID/Afghanistan feedback along with the schedule of field work specifying tentative appointments and how the information will be collected, organized and analyzed to meet the information need specified in the SOW
2. In-Brief: Initial briefing with Front Office, ODG, and OPPD within one day after the team's arrival in country in Afghanistan.
3. Mid-term briefing: Interim briefings and feedback on the team's findings as requested by USAID or proposed by the assessment team. The team will present the proposed outline of a draft report for discussion and approval.
4. Presentation: Presentation of a briefing to key USAID staff and other stakeholders
5. Draft Report: A written draft report, with an executive summary and body of not more than 30 pages to USAID/Afghanistan to be submitted two days before presentation. The draft report and its executive summary shall describe the team's methodology, and contain its findings and conclusions. The Mission will have 5 working days to provide comments on the draft report.
6. Final Assessment Report: The final report is due 5 working days after receipt of USAID's comments on the draft report. The main body of the final report, which shall include a table of contents, executive summary, and findings and recommendations, etc., shall not exceed 30 pages. The list of interviewees, acronyms, annexes, and other related documents will not be counted against 30 pages.

VII. Assessment Team

Two expatriate senior-level political analysts and one senior-level Afghan political analyst are required along with one Afghan admin support to coordinate meetings and to make other logistical arrangements. An ODG staff member may be identified to participate in a portion of the evaluation, but the Team Leader is responsible for the overall completion of the evaluation and final, written products. Specifically, the team would consist of:

- **Team Leader:** The candidate filling this senior level position will serve as Team Leader. They should have a professional background in international development work and a strong background in development program impact evaluations. In addition, the Team Leader will have experience evaluating projects/programs and a good track record of producing high quality products. He/she should possess work experience in political party building, elections and political processes and related fields, as well as relevant academic credentials. Previous Afghanistan experience and background knowledge of the country or region is preferable. Regional experience is preferred and experience in the evaluation of organizations and political/democracy activities is required. Ability to conduct interviews and discussions and to write in English is required.

- **Senior Political Scientist:** The candidate filling this senior level position will serve as Team Member (International). This persons work experience should include substantial demonstrated experience in providing analysis, advice and guidance based on education in and/or practical knowledge of elections and political processes and political party building. In addition, the team member should have international experience with political parties and political development, including program implementation experience. Regional experience and/or country knowledge in the evaluation of organizations and political/democracy activities is required. Ability to write in English is required.

- **Senior Afghan Political Scientist/Political Economist:** The candidate filling this senior-level position will serve as a Team Member. This person should have experience in political processes and political party development, possessing strong background knowledge of Afghanistan politics and experience in the design, implementation and/or evaluation of foreign assistance programs. Strong writing and word processing skills are a requirement. Knowledge of Dari is required. Knowledge of Pashto is desirable.

VII. Proposed Level of Effort

The evaluation will require approximately 48 working days (including international travel days) of combined preparation time and interviews in Washington D.C., Afghanistan-based field research, travel, and preparation of the final evaluation report. The assessment start date is expected on/about February 15

A six-day workweek is authorized while in Afghanistan. No premium pay is authorized. The contractor will be responsible for providing any interpretation and making all logistical arrangements (housing, transportation, etc.) for the duration of the evaluation.

Prior to departure for in country field assessment, the Team Leader and Team Member (International) shall review background documents, supplied by USAID, over a period of five days which will include:

- USAID's political processes programming and strategy;
- Relevant materials on Afghanistan's political environment.
- USAID program documents, program descriptions, and reports.

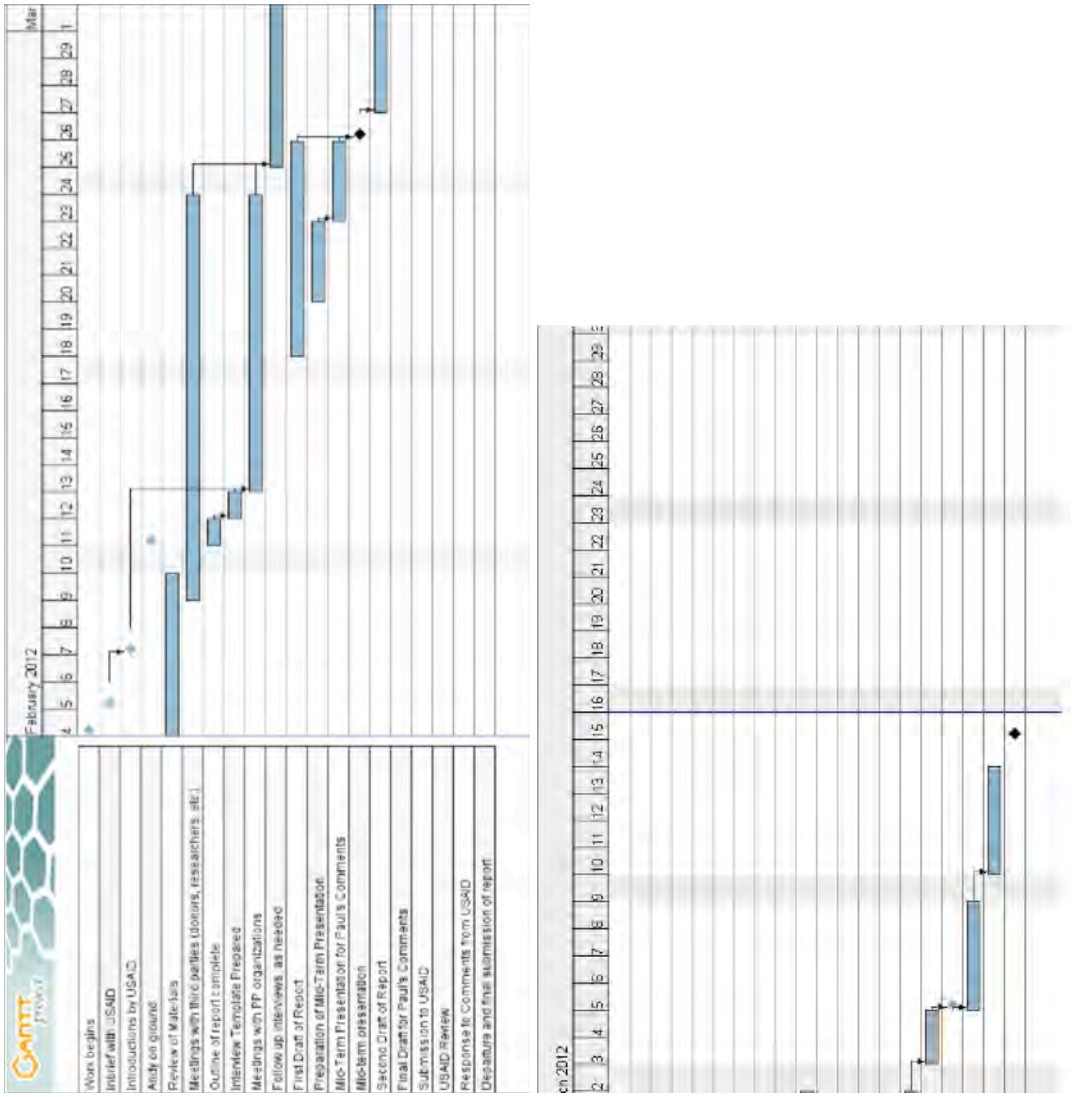
The team shall consult with appropriate USAID and relevant implementing partner staff prior to departure for Afghanistan.[168] The team will also communicate before departure for in country field assessment with USAID/Afghanistan for advice on whom to interview in Afghanistan.). Five workdays are being proposed for the Team Leader and Team Member (International) in the United States to consult with USAID and to review relevant background materials as determined by the staff of those organizations and the assessment team

The following level of effort is required for the evaluation:

Tasks	**Estimated Timeline for Completion**	**Team Member's Responsible**
Preparation and Research (prior to arrival in country, includes draft of an initial work plan, review of background materials and discussions[169] with USAID/OAPA and others	5 days	Team leader and Senior Political Analyst (International)
Round trip travel (US-Afghanistan)	4 days	Team leader and Senior Political Analyst (International)
In-Country Evaluation and Out-brief	29 days	Entire team
Draft Report (Full draft report, including executive summary)	5 days	Team leader and Senior Political Analyst (International)
Final Report due	5 days	Team leader and Senior Political Analyst (International)
Total Days	**48 days**	

[168] The USAID point of contact for this project is Brett Jones, brjones@usaid.gov.
[169] ODG will provide the names/email/telephone numbers for relevant OAPA contacts.

VII.b. Workplan



VII.c. List of Interlocutors

Kabul

Name	Title	Organization
Fiona Grant	Political Section	UK Embassy
Hafeez Monsef	Political Advisor	UK Embassy
Farshid Ghyasi	President	Netlinks and Wakhan
Farkhunda Zahra Nadery	Member of Wolesi Jirga	Wolesi Jirga
Terry Hoverter	Acting Chief of Party	Democracy International
Greg Minjack	Advisor	Democracy International
Joseph Derdzinski	Consultant	Democracy International
Ted Lawrence	ODG	USAID
Brett Jones	ODG	USAID
Idress Ilham	ODG	USAID
Hatem Bamehriz	Country Director	National Democratic Institute – CEPPS
J Brian O'Day	Political Party Expert	National Democratic Institute – CEPPS
Diane Bowen	Chief of Party	Afghanistan Parliamentary Assistance Project
Neerav Patel	Head of Internal Affairs	UK Embassy
Joanna Nathan	Political Affairs Officer	UNAMA
Augustine Sowa	Political Affairs Officer	UNAMA
Marco Montanari	Elections Advisor	European Union Special Representative Office
Joef Ahlberg	Political Advisor	European Union Special Representative Office
Iselin Hebbert Larsen	Second Secretary	Royal Norwegian Embassy
Jennifer Holmborg	Project Assistant	Embassy of Finland
Laura Lopez Garcia	Counselor	Embassy of Spain
Benjamin G. Barry	Political Officer	Embassy of USA
Dr Abdullah Abdullah	Head of Hope and Change Movement	National Coalition Afghanistan
Dr Davood Moradian	Professor	American University of Afghanistan
Nasima Zeerak	Young Women for Change Member	Young Women for Change
Dr Bruce Tolentino	Country Representative	The Asia Foundation
Abdul Ghafoor Asheq	Program Manager	The Asia Foundation
Mr. Waqif Hakimy	Spokesperson	Jamiat Islami
Faizullah Zaki	Spokesperson	*Hezb-e-Junbish Milli Islami Afghanistan*
Mohammad Karim Khalily	Vice President and Leader of Hizb Wahdat	GIRoA
Dr Wadir Safi	Professor Law Faculty	Kabul University
M. Yaqub Mohmand	Political Activist	*Afghan Millat*
Dr. Anwar	Head of Political Affairs	*Hezb-e-Islami Afghanistan*
Fahim Hakim	Former Deputy	Afghanistan Independent Human

		Rights Commission
Sayyed Mansoor Naderi	Head of Paywand-e-Millie PP	*Hezb-e-Paiwand Milli*
Zaher Razmju	Deputy Paywan-e-Millie PP	*Hezb-e-Paiwand Mill*
Nurollah Ulumi	Head of Muttahed-e-Millie PP	*Hezb-e-Mutahid Mill*
Zekria Barakzai	Deputy Chief Electoral Officer	Independent Election Commission
Jandad Spinghar	Executive Director	Free and Fair Elections Foundation of Afghanistan
Eng Naim Asghari	Program Manager	Free and Fair Elections Foundation of Afghanistan
Kristen Haffert	Gender Consultant	Democracy International
Peter Maniaks	Regional Director	National Democratic Institute – CEPPS
Raissa Tatad-Hazzel	Director of Programs - Afghanistan and Pakistan	National Democratic Institute – CEPPS
Sabir Daqiqi	Senior Program Officer	National Democratic Institute – CEPPS
Neik Kabuli	Senior Program Officer	National Democratic Institute – CEPPS
Vildan Pelpi	Program Manager	National Democratic Institute – CEPPS
Munira Aziz	Programmer Officer	National Democratic Institute – CEPPS
Jennifer Crall	Acting Chief of Party	International Republican Institute – CEPPS
Alysson Oakley	M&E Officer	International Republican Institute – CEPPS
Arash Barak	Director of Communication	Afghanistan Youth National and Social Organization/International Republican Institute - CEPPS
Ambassador Mahmoud Saikal	Head of International Affairs	National Coalition Afghanistan
Sayed Arif Alemi	Head of Political Affairs of Harakat PP	*Hezb-e-Harakat Islami*
Latif Pedram	Head of Congress PP	*Hezb-e-Kongara Milli Afghanistan*
Ambassador Paul Foley	Ambassador	Australian Embassy
Lauren Henschke	Political Officer	Australian Embassy
Fauzia Koofi	MP/ former Deputy speaker of the Wolesi Jirga	Wolesi Jirga
Ciarán CAREY	ISAF SCR Political Affairs	ISAF SCR
Malissa Tucker	ISAF SCR Political Affairs	ISAF SCR
Mary Lou Schramm	CEPPS Chief of Party	IFES - CEPPS Afghanistan
Kawa Aahangar	Project Program Coordinator	IFES - CEPPS Afghanistan
Zabihullah Barakzai	Civic Education Consultant	IFES - CEPPS Afghanistan
Ghulam Rasool Darwish	Monitoring and Evaluation Associate	IFES - CEPPS Afghanistan
Adam LeClair	Civil Society Coordinator	IFES - CEPPS Afghanistan

Christopher L. Green	First Secretary, Government Unit Chief	US Embassy - Kabul
Geoff Gartshore	Counselor and Head of Political Affairs	Canadian Embassy
Alan Hampson	First Secretary, Political	Canadian Embassy
Rasta Daei	Political Military Officer	Canadian Embassy
Ahmad Fawad Sediqi	Senior Political Officer	Canadian Embassy
Benjamin G. Garrett	Democracy and Governance Office, West Region	USAID
Mohammad Hanif Atmar	Former Minister of Interior	Justice and Right Party
John Carey	Professor	Dartmouth College
Joe Brinker	Senior Advisor	USAID
Kelley Jones	Chief of Party	Counterpart International
Maiwand Rahyab	Deputy Chief of Party	Counterpart International
Jeff Fisher	Electoral Consultant	Creative Associates International
Patrick Quirk	Electoral Consultant	Creative Associates International
Hekmat Karzai	Director	Centre for Conflict and Peace Studies

Herat Meetings

Abdul Aziz Samim	Program Manager of NDI in Herat	National Democratic Institute – CEPPS
Mustafa Haqjo	Head of Jamiat Islami in Herat	*Jamiat Islami*
Mr. Wahidi	Head of Executive Committee of Jamiat Islami in Herat	Jamiat Islami
Junbish Islami	Head of Junbish Millie in Herat	*Hezb-e-Junbish Milli Islami Afghanistan*
Abdul Qader Akbari	Senior Municipal Area Director in Herat	Ramp Up West
Mohammad Reza	Public Outreach Director	Ramp Up West
Abdual Basir Rahimi	Deputy Head of Republican Party	*Hezb-e-Jumhorikhahan*
Mr. Nawroozi	Provincial Council (P.C) Adviser	Herat Provincial Council
Hussain Hussaini	PC member	Herat Provincial Council
Mrs Fatima Jafari	PC member	Herat Provincial Council
Ms. Taheri	PC member	Herat Provincial Council
Qari Sayyed Ali Ghor Darwazi	Founder and Head of Hezbollah Afghanistan	*Hezbollah Afghanistan*
Mr. Movahhed	Head of Wahdat Mardom PP in Herat	*Hezb-e-Wahdat Islami Mardum Afghanistan*
Ms. Latifa Jafari	Head of Women's Committee	*Hezb-e-Wahdat Islami Mardum Afghanistan*
Mr. Modabber		*Hezb-e-Wahdat Islami Mardum Afghanistan*
Sharif Wasim	Former Head of IRI - Herat	International Republican Institute – CEPPS

Nangarhar (Jalalabad) Meetings

Waslee Khan Malek Kheil	Nangarhar Head of Afghan Millet PP	*Afghan Millat*
Mohammad Alkozai	Program Manager of NDI in Nangarhar	National Democratic Institute – CEPPS
Abdul Razzaq Padcha	Nangarhar Head of Mahaz-e-Millie PP	*Hezb-e-Muhaz Milli Islami*
Mavlavi Salaar	Nangarhar Head of Hizb-i-Islami PP	*Hezb-e-Islami Afghanistan*
Mavlavi Sor	Nangarhar Secretary to Hizb-i-Islami PP	*Hezb-e-Islami Afghanistan*
Zainuddin Hottak	Nangarhar Head of Muttahid-i-Millie PP	*Hezb-e-Ismai Muttahid Afghanistan*

Balkh (Mazar) Meetings

Abdullah Aziz	Balkh Project Manager	National Democratic Institute – CEPPS
Hiedo Ikebe	Political Affairs Officer	UNAMA
M. Yaqub Ayubi	Political Affairs Officer	UNAMA
Malai Roshandil Osmani	Director	ADWRO/Counterpart
Dr Khalil Hemat	Founder and Director	A Better Afghanistan
Hamidullah Muazzam	Program Manager	ADWRO/ Counterpart

Samangan Meetings

Hanifa Aminpoor	Deputy	Provincial Council
Masuma Hassani	Member	Provincial Council
Mohammad Hussain Ziaee	Member	Provincial Council
Saadat Hamidi	Member	Provincial Council
Sayed Agha Hussain Hashimi	Member	Provincial Council
Alhaj Gulam Sakhi	Deputy Governor	Governor's Office
Najibullah Khurram	President of both organizations	Samangan Journalist Union / Samangan Council of Civil Understanding
Ustad Sadat	Member	Samangan Council of Civil Understanding
Palwaja Jami	Member	Samangan Council of Civil Understanding
Foona Sharifi	Member	Samangan Council of Solidarity, Education, and Culture
Dawood Khaleqyar	President	Commission of Defense for Youth Rights
Ms Ustad Habiba	Head of Gender (Former WJ Candidate)	Commission of Defense for Youth Rights
Ms Ubaida	Head of Girls and Youth	Commission of Defense for Youth Rights

Ruhollah Habib	Trainer	Commission of Defence for Youth Rights
Abdul Qayom Sharwal	Member	Provincial Council

VII.d. Political Parties Law 2003

In the Name of Allah, the most gracious, the most merciful

Political Parties Law

Chapter one
General Provisions

Article 1

This law is adopted pursuant to article 32 of the 1964 Constitution on the establishment, functions, rights, obligations and dissolution of political parties in Afghanistan.

Article 2

In this law, "political party" means an organized society consisting of individuals which undertakes activities for attaining its political objectives, locally and/or nationwide, based on the provisions of this law and its own constitution;

Article 3

The political system of the State of Afghanistan is based on the principles of democracy and pluralism of political parties.

Chapter two
Establishment and registration of political parties

Article 4

Afghan citizens of voting age can freely establish a political party, irrespective of their ethnicity, race, language, tribe, sex, religion, education, occupation, lineage, assets and place of residence.

Article 5

Political parties can function freely on the basis of the provisions of this law, and have equal rights and obligations before the law.

Article 6

Political parties shall not:

(1) pursue objectives that are opposed to the principles of the holy religion Islam;
(2) use force, or threaten with, or propagate, the use of force;
(3) incite to ethnic racial, religious or sectional violence;
(4) create a real danger to the rights and freedom of individuals or intentionally disrupt public order and security
(5) have military organizations or affiliations with armed forces
(6) receive funds from foreign sources.

Article 7

The headquarters and any regional offices of a political party shall be located in Afghanistan. The government shall ensure the security and safety of the political party's offices.

Article 8

(1) All political parties shall be registered with the Ministry of Justice.
(2) The procedure for registering shall be regulated by separate regulation.

Article 9

The Ministry of Justice shall refuse the registration of political parties which:

(a) do not fulfill the requirement of Article 6
(b) have fewer than 700 members at the time of registration
(c) wish to register under the name of a political party that has already been registered.

Article 10

If the Ministry of Justice rejects an application of a political party, the applicant shall have the right to appeal to the relevant court

Article 11

A political party may officially start its activities after being registered by the Ministry of Justice.

Article 12

A registered political party shall enjoy the following rights:

(a) Independent political activity;

(d) Permanent or temporary political alliance or coalition with other political parties;
(e) Open and free expression of opinions, both in writing and verbally, on political, social, economical and cultural issues, and peaceful assembly;
(f) Establishing an independent publication organ;
(g) Access to the media at the expense of the political party;
(h) Introducing candidates at all elections;
(i) Other rights in accordance with the aims and duties of a political party as indicated in its constitution.

Article 13

(1) Afghan citizens who have completed the age of 18 and have the right to vote can acquire membership of a political party.
(2) A person shall not be member of more than one political party at a time.
(3) Judges, prosecutors, leading cadres of the armed forces, officers, non-commissioned officers, other military personnel, police officers, and personnel of national security, shall not be members of a political party during their tenure of office.

Chapter three
Financial matters

Article 14

The funds and expenses of political parties shall be public and transparent.

Article 15

(1) Political parties may receive income from the following sources:

(a) Membership contributions
(b) Donations by legal persons up to two million Afghani per year
(c) Income from a party's movable and immovable property
(d) Subsidies by the government in connection with elections
(e) Other contributions by members

(2) Political parties shall register all its income and deposit it in a bank account.

Article 16

(1) The leadership of the political party shall bear financial responsibility during its tenure.
(2) In order to carry out its financial affairs, the leadership of the political party shall appoint one or more authorized representatives and introduce their signatures to the relevant bank.

(3) The movable and immovable property of political parties shall be registered in the office of the party and in the Ministry of Finance through legalized documents.

Chapter four
Dissolution of a political party

Article 17

The dissolution of a political party shall not be ordered unless:

(1) the party uses force, or threatens with the use of force or uses force to overthrow the legal order of the country, or the party has a military organization or affiliations with armed forces,
(2) the measures mentioned in sub-item 1 of this Article are not effective,
(3) the party acts against the articles of the Constitution or this law.

Article 18

The Supreme Court shall, upon the request of the Minister of Justice, dissolve a political party according to the articles of this law.

Article 19

The Supreme Court shall consider a request for dissolution of the political party as a priority matter and in the shortest possible time. The hearings of the Supreme Court shall be open to the public.

Article 20

The leader or the authorized representative of the political party shall have the right to request the Council of the Supreme Court to replace the presiding officer or one or more of the judges. If the Council of the Supreme Court considers the request justified, it shall appoint another presiding officer or judge from the members of the Supreme Court.

Article 21

The leader or authorized representative of the political party shall have the right to be heard and to participate in the hearings of the Supreme Court.

Article 22

The Supreme Court shall fully state its reasons when ordering the dissolution of a political party. The order by the court for the dissolution of the political party shall be definite and final, and shall be published by mass media.

Chapter five
Final provisions

Article 23

All political parties and political organizations shall register in accordance with the provisions of this law. Political parties shall not enjoy the rights in this law unless they are registered.

Article 24

Financial and commercial governmental organs, and the responsible officials heading those organs, shall not use their position to favour or to disadvantage any political party.

Article 25

This law shall be in effect from the date it is published in the Official Gazette. This law shall abolish the political parties' law published in the Official Gazette No. (733), dated 29/10/1369.

VIII.e. Political Parties Law 2009

Afghanistan's Political Parties Law
In the Name of Allah, the most gracious, the most merciful

Political Parties Law

Chapter One
General Provisions

Article 1
This law is adopted pursuant to article 35 of the 2004 Constitution on the establishment, functions, rights, obligations and dissolution of political parties in Afghanistan.

Article 2
In this law "political party" means an organized society consisting of individuals which undertakes activities for attaining its political objectives, locally and/or nationwide, based on the provisions of this law and its own constitution.

Article 3
The political system of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan is based on the principles of democracy and
pluralism of political parties.

Chapter Two
Establishment and registration of political parties

Article 4
The citizens of Afghanistan who have attained the age of 25, in accordance with the provisions of law, can freely establish a political party.

Article 5
Political parties can function freely on the basis of the provisions of this law, and have equal rights and obligations before the law.

Article 6
Political parties shall not:
(1) Pursue the goals which are against the provisions of Islamic religion and the Constitution of Afghanistan
(2) Use force, or threaten with, or propagate the use of force.
(3) Incite to ethnic racial, religious or sectional violence.
(4) Create a real danger to the rights and freedom of individuals or internationally disrupt public order and security.
(5) Have military organizations or witnessed affiliations with armed forces.
(6) Receive funds from foreign sources.

Article 7
A political party shall open its office only inside the country, but is allowed to conduct its activities both inside and outside the country. The government shall ensure the security and safety of the political party's office in the capital and districts.

Article 8
(1) All political parties shall be registered with the Ministry of Justice.
(2) The procedure for registering shall be regulated by separate regulation.

Article 9
The Ministry of Justice shall refuse the registration of political parties which: (a) do not fulfill the requirement of Article 6
(b) have fewer than 10.000 members at the time of registration.
(c) Wish to register under the name of a political party that has already been registered.
(d) Those political parties which have previously been registered with Ministry of Justice are bound to be registered within six months from the publication of this law in the Official Gazette.

Article 10
If the Ministry of Justice rejects an application of a political party, the applicant shall have the right to appeal to the relevant court.

Article 11
(1) A political party may officially starts its activities after being registered by the Ministry of Justice.
(2) The license of activity of a political party is a legal document; content and format of which are designed by Ministry of Justice, and is given to the political party.

Article 12
A registered political party shall enjoy the following rights:
(a) Independent political activity.
(b) Permanent or temporary political alliance or coalition with other political parties.
(c) Open and free expression of opinions, both in writing and verbally, on political, social, economical and cultural issues, and peaceful assembly.
(d) Establishing an independent publication organ.
(e) Access to the media at the expense of the political party. (f) Introducing candidates at all elections.
(g) Other rights in accordance with the aims and duties of a political party as indicated in its constitution.

Article 13
(1) Afghan citizens who have completed the age of 18 and have the right to vote can acquire membership of a political party.
(2) A person shall not be member of more than one political party at a time.
(3) Members of the Supreme Court, the judges, prosecutors, leading cadres of the armed forces, officers, non-commissioned officers, other military personnel, police officers and personnel of national security, members of Independent Commission of Monitoring the Application of the Constitution, Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, Independent Election Commission and Civil Service Commission shall not be member of a political party during their tenure of office.

Chapter three
Financial matters

Article 14
The funds and expenses of political parties shall be public and transparent.

Article 15
(1) Political parties may receive income from the following sources: (a) Membership contributions.
(b) Donations by legal persons up to five million Afghanis per yea

(c) Income from a party's movable and immovable property. (d) Subsidies by the government in connection with elections. (e) Other contributions by members.

(2) Political parties shall register all its income and deposit it in a bank account.

Article 16
(1) The leadership of the political party shall bear financial responsibility during its tenure.
(2) In order to carry out its financial affairs, the leadership of the political party shall appoint one or more authorized representatives and introduce their signatures to the relevant bank.
(3) The movable and immovable property of political parties shall be registered in the office of the party and in the Ministry of Finance through legalized documents.

Chapter Four
Dissolution of a political party

Article 17
The dissolution of a political party shall not be ordered unless:
(1) The party uses forces, or threatens with the use of force or uses force to overthrow the legal order of
the country, or the party has a military organization or affiliations with armed forces.
(2) The measures mentioned in sub-item 1 of this article are not effective. (3) The party acts against the articles of the Constitution or this law.

Article 18
Based on the formal request of the Minister of Justice, the Supreme Court refers the dissolution of a political party to a competent court which, in accordance with provisions of the law, issues the verdict of dissolution of the political party.

Article 19
The Supreme Court shall consider a request for dissolution of the political party as a priority matter and in the shortest possible time. The hearings of the Supreme Court shall be open to the public.

Article 20
The leader or the authorized representative of the political party shall have the right to request the Council of the Supreme Court to replace the presiding officer or one or more of the judges. If the Council of the Supreme Court considers the request justified, it shall appoint another presiding officer or judge from the members of the Supreme Court.

Article 21
The leader or authorized representative of the political party shall have the right to be heard and to participate in the hearings of the Supreme Court.

Article 22
The court shall fully state its reasons when ordering the dissolution of a political party. The order by the final court for the dissolution of the political party shall be definite and final, and shall be published by mass media.

Chapter five
Final provisions

Article 23
All political parties and political organizations shall register in accordance with the provisions of this law. Political parties shall not enjoy the rights in this law unless they are registered.

Article 24
Financial and commercial governmental organs, and the responsible officials heading those organs, shall not use their position to favor or to disadvantage any political party.

Article 25

This law shall be in effect from the date it is published in the Official Gazette. This law shall abolish the political parties law published in the Official Gazette No. **(812),** dated **26/07/1382**

VIII.f. List of the Political Parties NDI worked with during 2009-2012

1. **Afghanistan Islamic Association Party** (Hezb-e-Jamiat Islami Afghanistan): led by Salahuddin Rabani son of late Ustad Rabani. (not registered under the 2009 law)

2. **Afghanistan Islamic Invitation Party** (Hezb-e- Tanzim Dawat Islami Afghanistan): led by Sayaf.

3. **Afghan National Party** (Hezb-e- Afghan Millat): led by Anwarull Haq Ahadi.

4. **Afghanistan National United party** (Hezb-e- Mutahid Milli Afghanistan): led by Olumi.

5. **Afghanistan National Islamic Movement party** (Hezb-e- Junbish Milli Islami Afghanistan): led by Sayed Noorullah Sadat.

6. **Afghanistan Islamic Unity Party** (Hezb-e- Wahdat Islami Afghanistan): led by Karim Khalili.

7. **Afghanistan Islamic Party** (Hezb-e- Islami Afghanistan): led by Argandiwal.

8. **Afghanistan People's Islamic Unity Party** (Hezb-e-Wahdat Mardom Afghanistan): led by Muhaqiq.

9. **Afghanistan National Islamic Front Party** (Hezb-e- Muhaz Milli Islami Afghanistan): led by Sayed Gailani.

10. **Afghanistan Republican Party** (Hezb-e- Jumhorikhahan Afghanistan): led by Sebgatullah Sangar.

11. **Republic Party** (Hezb-e-Jomhuri Afghanistan): led by Eng. Habib.

Additional Parties added in 2010

12. **Afghanistan Islamic Movement Party** (Hezb-e- Harakat Islami Afghanistan): led by Sayed Hussaind Anwari.

13. **Afghanistan National Congress Party** (Hezb-e-Kongara Milli Afghanistan): led by Latif Pedram.

Additional Parties added 2011-2012

14. **National Solidarity Movement Party** (Hezb-e-Nuhzat Hambastagi Milli): led by Sayed Ishaq Gailani.

15. **Afghanistan National Linkage Party** (Hezb-e- Paiwand Milli Afghanistan): led by Sayed Mansor Nadery.

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