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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CBDR	Community-based dispute resolution
RLS-I	Rule of Law Stabilization Program - Informal Component
ILF-A	International Legal Foundation - Afghanistan
IDLG	Independent Directorate Local Governance
CCC	Community Cultural Center
ARoLP	Afghanistan Rule of Law Project
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Committee
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
IPIT	Interagency Planning and Implementation Team

Key Activities

The contract between Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc. (Checchi) and USAID/DCHA/DG for the Rule of Law Stabilization Program – Informal Component (RLS-I) was signed on March 19, 2010 and its implementation began on April 6, 2010. RLS-I supports the Afghanistan Rule of Law: Informal program with assistance in areas of 1) Informal Justice Support in Pilot Districts, 2) Research and activities with community based dispute resolution (CBDR) and the State Justice System, 3) Legal Defense, 4) Public Outreach and Education, and 5) National Policy Development. This report includes RLS-I accomplishments during November 2010.

Following up RLS-I October activities, field teams hosted eleven elder's discussion groups with state justice actors and community based village-level discussions. Additionally, two family law and three inheritance law workshops in Nangarhar and Kandahar provinces were held. Meetings between elders and state officials in Nangarhar produced an agreed-upon procedure for registering village disputes with the formal justice sector. The table below summarizes RLS-I elders' meetings and workshops in November 2010:

Meeting	Meeting Location	Male	Female	Total Participants
Women Elders Network Meeting - Dand	Kandahar City	0	120	120
Men Elders Network Meeting – Dand	Kandahar City	120	0	120
Meeting to increase women's participation in CBDR – men	Kandahar City	36	0	36
Meeting to increase women's participation in CBDR – women	Kandahar City	0	25	25
Follow-up meeting to increase women's participation in CBDR-women	Kandahar City	0	25	25
Conflict resolution discussion – women	Arghandab district	0	30	30
Strengthen links between state actors and CBDR	Arghandab	26	0	26
Total seven meeting took place in Kandahar.		182	200	382
Behsud elders family law workshop - women	Jalalabad City	0	27	27
Surkh Rod elders family law workshop – women	Jalalabad City	0	29	29
Inheritance law workshop for Surkh Rod and Behsud elders	Jalalabad City	21	0	21
Follow-up, Inheritance law workshop for Surkh Rod and Behsud elders	Jalalabad City	25	0	25
Follow-up, Inheritance law workshop for Surkh Rod and	Jalalabad City	21	0	21

Behsud elders				
Village-level discussion group about conflict resolution (women)	Surkh Rod	0	21	21
CBDR/state actors working group meeting (Surkh Rod and Behsud)	Jalalabad City	31	3	34
CBDR/state actors working group meeting (Behsud elders)	Jalalabad City	25	2	27
Village-level discussion group about conflict resolution (women)	Behsud	0	21	21
Total nine meeting took place in Nangarhar.		123	103	226
Grand Total		305	303	608

USAID's RLS-Informal Justice program held a grant writing workshop for both national and international NGO's to discuss grant opportunities available through the RLS-I program. Discussion topics focused on USAID grant rules and regulations, project design, proposal writing, creating appropriate action plans, and potential activities for inclusion in a grant proposal.

Three Community Cultural Centers (CCC) providing public outreach services and materials opened in Jalalabad City, Behsud and Surkh Rod districts. Attendance at the opening ceremony in Jalalabad included the provincial council deputy, Nangarhar university professors, head of the district *shura*, and dozens of young men and women. These centers are staffed by 12 volunteers, including university professors, teachers, elders and local business and government leaders.

International Legal Foundation–Afghanistan (ILF-A) defense attorneys represented new clients in 250 cases throughout Afghanistan. Defense attorneys took on 9 new cases in Kandahar and 40 new cases in Jalalabad.

RLS-I MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1. Pilot Districts

Kandahar

Meeting to increase women participation in CBDR: The RLS-I field team hosted three meetings (two for women and one for men) to increase women participation in CBDR. These meetings drew 50 women and 36 men that focused on gender issues and ways to increase participation of women in the dispute resolution within their communities. Women from different tribes and sub-tribes discussed disputes affecting their villages and ways toward resolving them – focusing on roles women can play. Women elders discussed types of disputes they can resolve through an organized group of women elders in their communities. In a separate meeting male elders discussed women’s rights and their access to CBDR and recommended actions to increase women’s participation in community based dispute resolution.



Women elders discussing their roles in resolving community based disputes in their communities.

CBDR and state justice actors meeting: A follow-up meeting between state justice and CBDR actors drew 26 elders with a focus on strengthening and legitimizing the links between CBDR and state actors in the district. Participants discussed different types of disputes, and the importance of dispute registration with state actors and CBDR officials in the district. Interaction and meetings have increased between state and CBDR actors, resulting in better understanding of their respective role.



Elders discuss linking CBDR with state justice in Arghandab.

Conflict Resolution Discussion – Women: Participation in this meeting drew 30 women elders during this discussion in Arghandab. Since many tribal and inter-tribal disputes exist in the district, women elders and *Jirgamaran* agreed to form an inter-tribal committee (with both men and women elders) to follow-up problems and tribal conflicts in Arghandab district.



Women recommending tribal and inter-tribal conflict resolution in Arghandab district.

Dand: The RLS-I field team continued to conduct field research. In addition, the elders from Dand district held their initial meeting in Kandahar City with 240 men and women attending. The meeting was also attended by agriculture and women affairs directors. Men and women elders met

separately to discuss CBDR issues in their respective villages. These meetings provide elders with a forum to talk about both CBDR and potential RLS-I activities focusing on strengthening rule of law and improving CBDR in their villages. Elders also discussed common disputes and conflicts such as land and other related disputes in Dand. Government officials also participated and stressed the importance of *Jirga* and CBDR mechanisms to help the district's address long standing disputes.

Nangarhar:

Inheritance law for CBDR actors: Three inheritance law workshops (two female and one male) with participants from both Surkh Rod and Behsud were conducted by Nangarhar law faculty to increase participants' knowledge and understanding of inheritance laws, regulations and rights, as well as to develop practical ways *Jirgamaran* and CBDR elders can deal effectively with inheritance disputes. These workshops drew 67 men and women elders with a focus on inheritance rights and practical dealings in inheritance disputes resolution.



Elders and *Jirgamaran* are learning inheritance law for better community based disputes resolution.

Family law workshop: RLS-I team also facilitated two family law workshops in Jalalabad for 56 women from Behsud and Surkh Rod districts. Influential women elders from both pilot districts discussed marriage law,

guardianship issues, violence, divorce and women roles and rights. Participants also discussed family law and women's rights under Islam. The participants thought very

highly of the comprehensive nature of the training, remarking positively about the topics and the quality of training materials. The workshops were conducted by a Nangarhar University professor.

CBDR and state actor discussion groups: These two discussion groups drew 61 participants from Behsud and Surkh Rod districts. Elders discussed the existence of corruption within the formal justice and CBDR systems as well as the differing types of corruption and their impact both. It was also discussed what steps community elders and leaders can take to address corruption issues in their communities.



Nangarhar communities' elders and *Jirgamaran* fights corruption in their villages.

In a separate CBDR and state actor discussion group, Behsud elders discussed CBDR decisions that are forbidden by Islam and are flagrant human rights violations, particularly the practice of *Baad* (exchanging women and girls to settle disputes). In addition, the group discussed *Machalgha* (similar to a bond - money taken by the *Jirga* to ensure acceptance of the decision).

Village-level discussion groups in Surkh Rod and Behsud: As a follow-up to October women's village level meeting where participants agreed to form a group of women elders to resolve village disputes – women from the district met and selected six women who will conduct dispute resolution meetings each week. The group requested training so they would be better informed and able to carry out their dispute resolution duties in their community.

In Behsud, 21 women met to discuss and eventually create, similar to Surkh Rod, another group of six women who will be working on dispute resolution in their villages. The group also developed a set meeting schedule, named a group leader and began working on the process to identify support mechanisms that will help them make better decisions, including participation in wedding parties and funeral ceremonies to build stronger relationships within the community.

2. Expansion of District Activities:

In the south, the following districts we approved as expansion districts: Khuz Kunar in Nangarhar and Qarghayi in Laghman. RLS-I's hired and trained a six-person field team (four men and two women) that began work at the end of November. In the south, the approved expansion districts are Spin Boldak and Daman, both in

Kandahar Province. RLS-I hired four research staff (two men and two women) who received in-depth training in Kabul and will begin their field work in early December.

RLS-I will develop program activities into the expansion districts in a more rapid and systematic approach vis-a-vis the pilot districts. Much of the research completed in the pilot districts is applicable, particularly as it applies to planned activities, to the expansion districts due to their close proximity and similar CBDR dynamics. In addition, RLS-I will be able to build upon the trust gained by our extended presence in the neighboring pilot districts. There is growing demand from communities outside our working areas that have requested we also work with their CBDR mechanisms.

3. Legal Defense:

ILF-A lawyers provided defense counsel in over 200 trials during of the first three weeks of November, including 24 trials in Nangarhar and 18 trials in Kandahar. Nearly 40% of the defendants with ILF-A counsel had their sentences either reduced or dismissed. In addition to defendants at trial, ILF-A took on an additional 250 cases throughout Afghanistan, including 9 new cases in Kandahar and 40 new cases in Nangarhar in November. Cases included assault, theft, kidnapping, smuggling, terrorism and vehicular manslaughter.

Currently, ILF-A has engaged 75 defense attorneys country-wide, including 17 women. Efforts are underway to recruit more women law and Sharia graduates into clinical programs.

4. Public Outreach

Following several months of work with government and community leaders RLS-I staff opened three community cultural centers. The centers are located in Nangarhar City, Behsud and Surkh Rod districts. The centers will provide an outlet for public outreach messages, with twelve volunteer staff trained by RLS-I staff to deliver and present messages to the community as well as conduct basic classes in computer and English language. The centers were furnished and equipped with computers, printers, tables, file cabinets and basic outreach and legal materials for the public. RLS-I staff worked with the new volunteers on a variety of skills, from running computers and projectors to delivering presentations. Volunteers will introduce their communities to public outreach materials with messaging via comic books, pamphlets and multi-media DVD presentations. These materials address basic citizen's rights under the Afghan Constitution, including education, forced labor and defendants' rights to legal representation. These centers will work toward strengthening citizens' access to variety of public outreach materials including comic books, pamphlets, and multimedia DVD's.

During this period, Behsud community cultural center's volunteers participated in celebration of Children's International Day by, in part, distributing pamphlets and comic books to the participants of the ceremony. The event was organized by International Human Right Commission (IHRC).

The RLS-I outreach team hosted a 30-minute radio panel discussion (one CBDR elder, one Islamic cleric and one lawyer) which focused on Dand and Arghandab districts. The elder's radio panel discussed CBDR and disputes in general within Kandahar. Elders also discussed participation of women in CBDR and an overview of the *Jirga* system within an Islamic perspective. Listeners were invited to call with their questions and comments.



Elders during a panel discussion in radio free Afghanistan in Kandahar City.

The following public outreach radio and TV outreach programs were broadcast by RLS-I:

Public Outreach: TV and Radio Spots				
Radio/TV Spot Name	No. of times broadcast	Total Duration	Location	Message
Citizens' Rights	8 x 4	32 minutes	Kandahar	Constitutional rights of citizens
Criminal Prosecution process	8 x 3' 34"	28 minutes	Kandahar	Prosecution process and defendants
Defendants' Rights	8 x 4' 30"	36 minutes	Kandahar	Right of the defendant to defense attorney
Education Rights	8 x 4' 54"	39 minutes	Kandahar	Constitutional right to education for both men and women
Forced Labor	8 x 4' 33"	36 minutes	Kandahar	Children's rights and forced labor
Preserving Public order	8 x 4' 13"	33 minutes	Kandahar	Afghan citizens' obligations to observe law to preserve public safety and order
Government Officials' Duties	8 x 4' 10"	33 minutes	Kandahar	Discusses government officials' responsibilities to avoid misuse of authority to pursue personal, ethnic, religious or partisan agendas
Role of the National Assembly	8 x 6' 6"	48 minutes	Kandahar	Role of national assembly, the highest legislative body in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
Women's Rights	10 x 4'	40 minutes	Kandahar	Discusses why forcing juvenile daughters to marry in exchange for money runs contrary to Islamic teaching
Education Rights	8 x 12'	1:36 minutes	Kandahar	Describes girls' right to an education
Total	90 times	6:36		

5. Support National Policy Development

The Ministry of Justice committee to review legislation regarding CBDR did not meet in November. The committee, headed by Sayed Yosuf Halim, Administrative Deputy Minister, will hopefully meet in December and RLS-I will attend. The committee is reviewing the Law on Dispute Resolution, *Jirgas* and *Shuras*. After the committee's review and comment, the proposed legislation will be sent to the MoJ's council of ministers, then on to the Afghan Parliament for approval.