

EQUALITY FOR PEACE AND DEMOCRACY

QUARTERLY UPDATE

PROMOTING A CULTURE OF COEXISTENCE, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND PEACE FOR ALL

In the second quarter of 2014, EQUALITY for Peace and Democracy's Provincial Women's Network (PWN) and Afghans Coalition for Transparency and Accountability (ACTA) networks were very active in undertaking activities to improve good governance, contribute to peace and security, and promote human rights.

EPD's PWN networks in Bamyan, Faryab, Kunduz, Kabul, Kandahar, Herat and Nangarhar provided support in addressing cases of violence against women and domestic violence, met with Provincial Peace Committees, and helped collect signatures for the High Peace Council in a nationwide campaign for increasing women's participation and calling for peace and an end to violence. EPD also conducted training sessions with PWN members in all seven provinces from March to June.

In the first half of 2014, EPD conducted screenings of the documentary film "Pray the Devil Back to Hell" with 4,500 people in six provinces. The documentary shows how Liberian women collectively claimed a role in the peace process and forced the government to negotiate and bring peace to the country.

In June, EPD held a meeting to introduce two new members to the ACTA Advisory Board. ACTA networks in Bamyan, Herat, Nangarhar and Kabul undertook monitoring and advocacy activities to address issues in their communities including construction of a boundary wall for a high school, lack of teachers, establishing literacy courses, construction of a hydroelectric dam, and addressing a lack of electricity in Shahrak-e Sabz in Kabul province. In this project, ACTA successfully helped to expand electricity power to 200 families.

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IN THIS
UPDATE

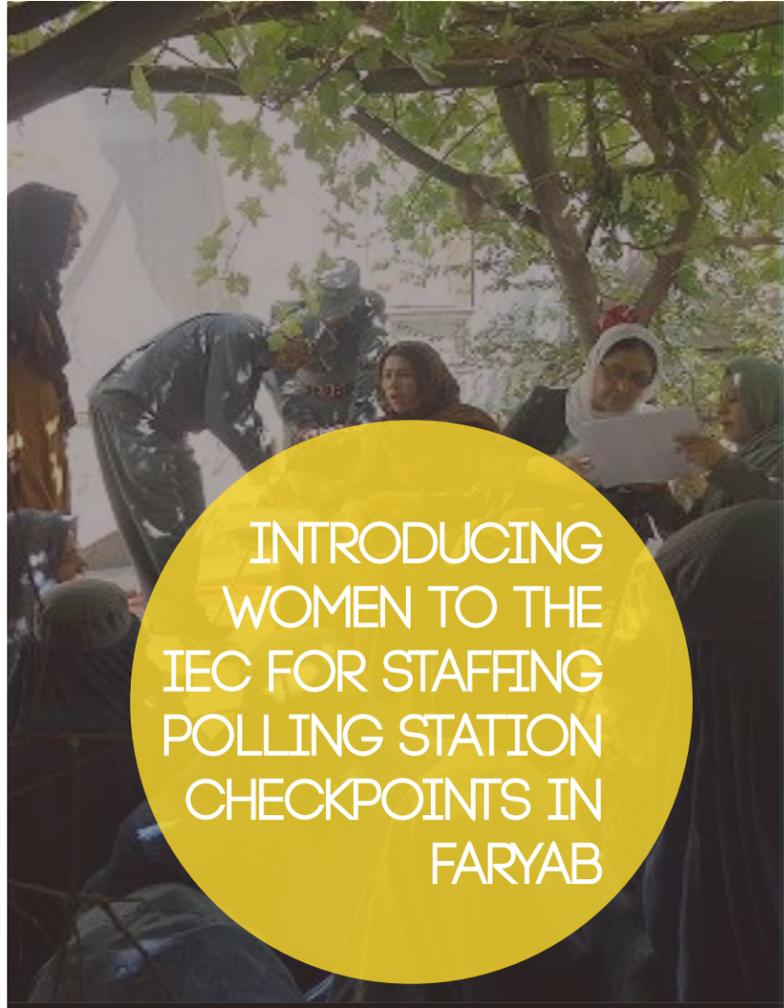
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In the second quarter of 2014, EPD started a new research project on vulnerabilities to corruption in government recruitment and procurement procedures in the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Public Health at the central level and in Herat, Bamyan, and Nangarhar provinces.

The research project will involve four phased approaches: (1) desk review, (2) analysis of legal frameworks and institutional structure, (3) partial subnational Vulnerability to Corruption Assessments (VCAs) focusing on recruitment and procurement procedures, and (4) key informant and focus group interviews with a focus on those who have bid on government contracts and youth studying in the areas of health and education.

Vulnerability to Corruption Assessments (VCAs) are a simple methodology analyzing key government processes. This approach normally entails initial meetings with senior staff members, followed by observations of work places and processes, then return meetings with larger groups of staff to discuss, review, and revise information on those processes. VCAs attempt to understand both formal and informal processes that are in place.

The fieldwork for this research began in April 2014, and in the second quarter data collection was completed in Kabul and Bamyan provinces.



INTRODUCING WOMEN TO THE IEC FOR STAFFING POLLING STATION CHECKPOINTS IN FARYAB



DEBATE ON LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE ELECTIONS

Fahima is a member of the Faryab Women's Network. She lives in Meymanah city, and has graduated from 14th grade. Fahima is currently working with the Department of Women's Affairs in Faryab province. As a member of the Faryab Women's Network, she is working to coordinate projects with the Department of Women's Affairs on human rights.

"I am proud to work with the Department of Women's Affairs on women's rights as an active member of PWN."

- Fahima



NEW RESEARCH ON GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT AND RECRUITMENT PROCESSES

On 14th June 2014 Faryab Women's Network introduced 200 women to the IEC in order for them to staff the polling station checkpoints on election day. The procedure helped women to take part in elections, and they were motivated as participants in the election process. This act showed sense of empowerment as well as helping them financially through the salary provided by MoI for their work.

The IEC selected 400 women for polling station checkpoints in Faryab province. After selecting 200 women, the IEC asked the PWN network to introduce 200 women for the polling station checkpoints. The IEC provided a 3-day training to the 400 women for the first round of the election, which was held on 5th April

2014. For the second round of the election they were asked to participate again. For the second round one day of training was provided.

After the second round of election, MoI claimed that they did not do their job and refused to pay the women their salary for one day as they were promised. The Faryab Women's Network talked to the women, and found out that they had proof of undertaking their work at the polling station checkpoints, and had the attendance list. The Faryab Women's Network discussed the issue with MoI officials, and provided the proof of the women's work and successfully convinced MoI to pay the salaries of the female election workers as they were promised.

With the support of the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), EPD and Salah Consortium held a debate titled 'Lessons Learned from the Elections' on 26th June 2014 in Kabul to reflect on lessons learned in the 2014 presidential elections. A total of 68 participants attended, which included social activists and community leaders from 30 provinces of Afghanistan. Participants included women and men who had previously attended the National Conference in December 2013.

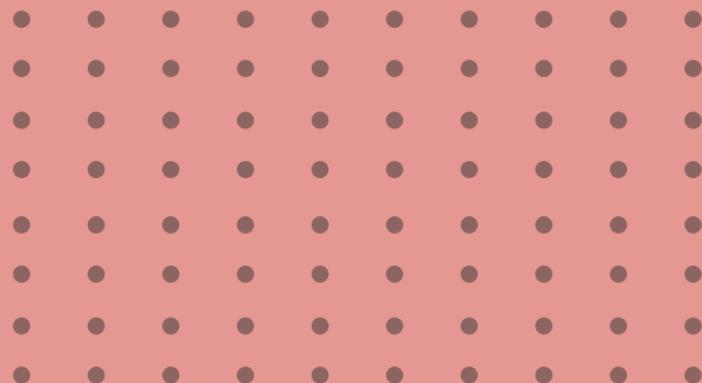
Participants divided into three working groups by region to discuss: (1) the performance of the government, the IEC, the IECC, candidates, and the Afghan people in the elections process; (2) overall impressions from Election Day; (3) lessons learned for future elections. The

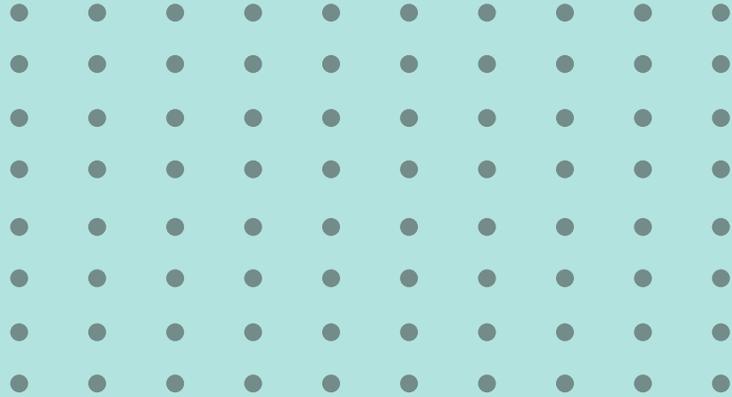
one-day event also included a presentation from Mr. Fahim Naimi, spokesman of the Free and Fair Election Foundation of Afghanistan (FEFA).

Two main questions were put forward for discussion: (1) what are the causes of the post-election crisis and what strategies could be implemented to reduce political tensions; (2) what could electoral commissions, candidates and the government do to solve the political dispute? Suggestions included:

- Laws and national interests should be respected.
- The election issues should be handled through legal channels.
- Civil society should actively take part to prevent crisis.
- The Electoral Commissions should be impartial in all elections processes.

PWN MEMBER PROFILE: FAHIMA - FARYAB WOMEN'S NETWORK





DONORS AND SUPPORTERS

United States Institute of Peace (USIP)

Creative Associates

Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Tawanmandi

WHERE WE WORK



HOW TO GET INVOLVED

To learn more about our work and organization, email us at admin@epd-afg.org or visit our website at www.epd-afg.org.

Currently, EPD offers two platforms, Afghan's Coalition for Transparency and Accountability (ACTA) and Provincial Women's Network (PWN), under which the college/university

students or fresh graduates can volunteer in different positions and be a part of the dynamic EPD team and gain on the ground experience of project management, event management, and operations.

To learn more go to: <http://www.epd-afg.org/working-with-us.html>