



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**AFGHANISTAN**



USAID works with Afghan stakeholders to increase transparency and legitimacy, build institutional capacity, and empower the Afghan people through democratic processes:

- USAID has supported the steady emergence of Afghanistan's independent media, by training more than 8,600 media professionals, including more than 2,100 women. USAID is also supporting increasing journalist security while strengthening access to information by assisting in media advocacy efforts.
- USAID supported the development of the first Afghanistan National Youth Policy

Photo credit: USAID/Afghanistan

## Democracy and Governance

Afghanistan has made significant progress towards rebuilding its political system and institutions. Political participation – especially among women – is growing. These accomplishments are the result of work and investments by Afghans and international partners. Since 2001, Afghanistan has adopted a new constitution; organized presidential, parliamentary, and provincial council elections; established Ministries to deliver services to the Afghan people; and, developed a vibrant media and committed civil society.

### OUR WORK

Since 2002, USAID has supported participatory, democratic processes that empower Afghan citizens, promote accountability and transparent governance, encourage national unity, and serve the needs of the Afghan people. Promoting gender equality and women's civic and political leadership is a priority for USAID. By developing the capacity of key electoral, representative, judicial, and executive branch institutions, USAID supports Afghan-led development and the capacity of institutions to advocate for and implement society-led reforms.

### GOVERNANCE

USAID governance programs support improvements in the effectiveness, responsiveness and transparency of government institutions and management processes; increase opportunities for meaningful client engagement; and promote initiatives to improve service delivery and economic development. USAID supports Afghan-led development that builds government systems, improves public outreach, enhances financial management, and strengthens linkages and information exchange among central and sub-national levels of government. These programs are helping local government institutions to deliver essential services, increase community engagement and establish well-governed, fiscally sustainable Afghan institutions capable of meeting the needs of a growing urban population. In addition, a critical program is in place to support key government institutions on land tenure issues that will provide occupancy certificates to more than 400,000 citizens while creating more than 10,000 jobs.

USAID also provides technical assistance and training to civilians impacted by continued fighting in Afghanistan. In the last twelve months, USAID assisted more than 518 victims with economic reintegration packages, provided immediate assistance of food and non-food items to more than 30,000 individuals, provided physical rehabilitation services to 12,692 individuals, and trained 2,138 government employees on landmines and remnants of war issues.

## RULE OF LAW

With the Afghan government, USAID is building the capacity of judges and court officials, and strengthening the judicial branch. By July 2016, USAID had trained more than 650 judges and 650 court administrators on management, leadership, and court administration. USAID has also worked directly with elders and religious leaders to link the formal and traditional justice systems, increase access to justice, and bolster stability through conflict resolution.

## ANTI-CORRUPTION

USAID in conjunction with the Afghan Government, has developed Provincial Anti-Corruption Working Groups in Herat and Balk, and will create them in Kandahar, Helmand, Nimroz, Samangan, Logar, and others in order to tackle the problem of corruption through the cooperation of multiple stakeholders. USAID supports the lead anti-corruption body in Afghanistan to conduct vulnerability to corruption assessments, make recommendations for reform and monitor the implementation of recommendations. The project recently completed an assessment with the Ministry of Public Health and in the next generation of programming, USAID will support the implementation of these reforms. Our latest project works to identify vulnerabilities to corruption in service delivery systems to streamline the processes required for Afghan citizens to access common services such as driver licenses and vehicle registration.

## SUPPORTING ELECTORAL PROCESSES

Afghanistan's 2014 elections saw record voter participation, including the highest female turnout in Afghanistan's history – with over 38 percent of the vote coming from women. Despite threats of violence, Afghans turned out in courageous and historic numbers to cast ballots in presidential and provincial council elections. Since 2004, USAID has supported Afghan electoral institutions (the Independent Election Commission, the Independent Electoral Complaints Commission, and the Media Commission) to conduct inclusive and transparent elections, building confidence in democracy and strengthening political participation. Further, USAID has supported civic and voter education programs and Afghan-led electoral reform through technical and logistical support to the Special Electoral Reform Committee and facilitating political party and civil society partners participation in the formulation of reform recommendations.

## CIVIL SOCIETY AND MEDIA

A vibrant and independent media is critical to a healthy democracy, and according to The Asia Foundation's 2014 Survey of the Afghan People, Afghans have strong confidence in their media. Afghan civil society organizations have also emerged as vocal, persistent, and influential stakeholders. During the 2014 elections, Afghan organizations fielded twice as many observers as they did in the 2009 elections, providing independent oversight of the entire election process. Further, several organizations collected pledges from presidential candidates on issues including anti-corruption and women's rights.

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Journalism training

Photo Credit: USAID/Afghanistan



A community improvement project in Pashtun Zarghun

Photo Credit: USAID/Afghanistan