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FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**AFGHANISTAN**

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# FACT SHEET

## Support for Increased Electoral Participation in Afghanistan

### OVERVIEW

The Support for Increased Electoral Participation (SIEP) project strengthens the ability of Afghan political stakeholders to articulate, organize, and compete in elections. The project also increases public awareness and oversight of the electoral process, while increasing broad-based participation in the electoral process at both the national and sub-national levels.

### ACTIVITIES

- Encourage transparent and accountable elections through increased citizen participation in the electoral process, with an emphasis on outreach to remote areas of the country
- Strengthen political parties' ability to organize for and compete in elections
- Foster issue-based grassroots coalitions and social organizations around the country
- Build the capacity of Afghan organizations to monitor electoral and political processes and advocate on behalf of citizens
- Train party poll watchers and candidate agents to effectively participate in election activities
- Develop a national and local debate series between university students
- Educate citizens on their rights and responsibilities, as well as those of their elected officials
- Implement in-depth, multi-month civic education initiatives for women advocates and youth leaders on the electoral system, good governance, and the importance of political participation
- Support the efforts of Afghan election monitoring groups to advance electoral reforms

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Expanded the participation of women, youth and marginalized groups in elections and political processes through assistance to grass roots civil society organizations
- Strengthened the ability of independent candidates, political parties, and issues-based coalitions to effectively articulate, organize, and participate in the 2009 and 2010 elections through training, which reached more than 200,000 individuals
- Trained more than 31,000 party activists (approximately 20 percent women) on the basics of democracy, campaign planning, and management and party building
- Prepared 1,709 parliamentary candidates through orientation programs on the electoral legal framework and electoral regulations
- Educated 246 female parliamentary candidates on campaign strategies and voter outreach
- Trained over 40,000 party poll watchers and candidate polling agents (27 percent women) to observe and report on election day activities
- Trained over 500 journalists to improve the quality of reporting on elections and politics
- Strengthened the ability of local organizations to monitor the electoral process and helped mobilize thousands of domestic polling monitors
- Trained over 1,100 women advocates to promote issues-based voting and advocate for women's issues in the political sphere; women advocates educated over 103,000 people through 199 face-to-face meetings and reached 11 million through 14 radio roundtables discussion shows
- Trained 698 youth leaders to increase their understanding of democratic principles and the electoral process through two unique initiatives: a future leaders initiative for young women and a broader university debate program