



The Asia Foundation

**VOTER EDUCATION PLANNING SURVEY:
Afghanistan 2004 National Elections**

A REPORT BASED ON A PUBLIC OPINION POLL

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Report Authors

Craig Charney, Charney Research
Radhika Nanda, Charney Research
Nicole Yakatan, Charney Research

Project Direction and Editing

The Asia Foundation

Research Design

Craig Charney, Charney Research
Radhika Nanda, Charney Research

Project Management

Amy Marsman, Charney Research

Technical Training Assistance

AC Nielsen India ORG-MARG

Research & Fieldwork

Afghan Media Resource Center (AMRC)



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INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings of the most comprehensive public opinion poll conducted in Afghanistan in the post-Taliban era. The survey was undertaken by The Asia Foundation in order to provide detailed, quantified information on the knowledge and attitudes of Afghan citizens regarding their country's forthcoming first national elections, now scheduled for September 2004. The goal was to use the findings to provide the Foundation and other non-governmental organizations conducting voter education with information needed to more accurately plan their work for the election. It follows on from similar surveys conducted by the Foundation in the past few years prior to elections in Indonesia, Cambodia, and East Timor.

The survey was conducted between February 22 and March 13, 2004 and consisted of a random, representative sample of 804 in-person interviews with Afghan citizens 18 or older living in the country. It was conducted in 29 of Afghanistan's 32 provinces¹. Interviewing took place in every region, in both rural and urban areas, and among men and women. The proportion of respondents in all those categories was very close to their shares of the national population. Trained Afghan interviewers conducted all interviews in the language preferred by the respondent, Dari or Pashtu, with men interviewing men and women interviewing women. The margin of sampling error for national-level results is +/-3.5%. Full details on the methodology of the survey are available in Appendix 2 of this report. The survey questions, with percentages of responses by question, can be found in Appendix 3.

The report groups the country's 32 provinces (the survey was before the May 2004 creation of two additional provinces) into the following seven regions:

Northwest: Herat, Badghis, Farah; North: Balkh, Samangan, Jawzjan, Faryab, Sar-e-pul; Northeast: Kunduz, Takhar, Badakhshan, Baghlan; East: Nangarhar, Laghman, Kunar, Nuristan; Central East: Kabul, Parwan, Kapisa, Logar; Central: Bamiyan, Wardak, Ghazni; South: Paktia, Paktika, Khost, Kandahar, Zabul, Helmand.

The survey was commissioned by The Asia Foundation and developed and written up by Charney Research, New York, with fieldwork conducted by the Afghan Media Resource Center in Kabul, and technical assistance provided by AC Nielsen Org-Marg in India. It builds on the findings of an earlier phase of qualitative research conducted by those three organizations for the Foundation. This prior research involved 32 in-depth interviews with Afghan men and women around the country, including individuals of all educational levels and ethnic groups. It was conducted from November 15 to 21, 2003. The results are available in another report, *Voices of Afghanistan: Afghans Speak About their Country, Elections, Gender, and Democracy* (Kabul, The Asia Foundation: 2004).

¹ Interviewers were unable to travel to Ghor, Nimruz and Urozgan due to security concerns.

An executive summary of the major findings of the report follows, with the findings in full after.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Key Findings

- The mood is positive in most of the country, with almost two-thirds of respondents saying that the country is headed in the right direction.
- Afghans identified the major problems facing their country as its weak economy, the security situation, a poor educational system, and shattered infrastructure.
- Nonetheless, a large majority is pleased with the Transitional Government and President Hamid Karzai's job performance.
- Afghans feel somewhat more secure and much freer than they did under the Taliban. However, more say they have lost than gained economically since then.
- There are regional differences in mood, and region plays as great a role as ethnicity in shaping political outlooks. In particular, interviewees the South and Northwest were more negative than respondents in other regions about the direction of the country, job ratings for the government and president, and security and freedom of political expression.
- Most Afghans interviewed view the Taliban unfavorably, with majorities unfavorable to them in every region and even among those dissatisfied with the Transitional Government.
- The UN and foreign aid workers are generally popular with Afghans. The US and American troops are also regarded favorably by the majority, but the South and Northwest again remain exceptions.
- Most Afghan citizens surveyed know of the election and registration requirements and intend to vote as they are hopeful that the election will make a difference.
- However, there is substantial doubt as to whether the election will be free and fair, with potential vote buying and cheating in the count primary among the concerns. Doubts about the fairness of elections are closely related to a lack of knowledge of the process: most voters do not know that the ballot will be secret or that there will be election monitors.
- The problems facing Afghan women are widely recognized by both men and women, chief among them are lack of power and lack of education.

- Most Afghans believe that women will need the permission of husbands or fathers to vote in the coming elections. Between one in five and one in three women may not be allowed to vote.
- Two-thirds of Afghans interviewed can offer a meaning for democracy. The principal meanings they ascribe include freedom, rights and law, elections, and women's rights.
- Political tolerance, regarding parties or between persons, is low among the Afghans interviewed.
- Radio, especially foreign radio (*Azadi/Radio Free Asia, VOA, BBC*) reaches a majority of Afghans and is the preferred medium for voter education. Among those who do not listen to the radio, the preferred sources are village chiefs and religious leaders.
- Only one woman in five, at most, is completely housebound.² Visiting neighbors and doing household chores were the two most frequent answers from women about why they leave the house.

² A "housebound" woman does not leave the house at least once a month for any of the following activities: visiting neighbors, doing household chores, visiting family and friends, visiting a health clinic, shopping, taking children to school, or taking children to a health clinic.

The National Mood

Asked if the country is headed in the right direction, 64% of respondents said that they thought it was. Their reasons include the arrival of peace, the beginnings of disarmament, improved security, reconstruction and freedom. Of those who said the country is headed in the wrong direction (just 11%) the reasons they gave were government performance, the slow start of reconstruction, economic problems, and neighboring countries' interference.³ But it is noteworthy that they did not say that they want the Taliban back or foreign aid workers out. Optimists and pessimists use the same yardsticks to judge the country, measuring in political and economic results.

There were relatively big regional differences in how respondents viewed the direction of the country. While, as previously noted, a large majority (64%) of the respondents across the country thought that the country was headed in a positive direction, residents in the Northwest and South were far more pessimistic. Only 17% of respondents in the Northwest and 39% in the South reported that the country was headed in the right direction, and 35% and 19%, respectively, said that they felt it was headed in the wrong direction. When we take the Northwest and South out of the results, in all other regions, at least 69% of respondents said that they felt the country was moving in the right direction.

At the national level, the security situation was foremost on the minds of many of the Afghans surveyed, with 37% listing it as the country's biggest problem. The economy was the second most frequently mentioned problem, with 29% of those interviewed noting it as the country's biggest problem. These are followed by education (9%) and then a variety of infrastructure issues (electricity 5%, roads 5%, water 2%,) and healthcare 2%). However, peoples' priorities were somewhat different at the local level, with the economy topping security as the prime concern (28% to 15% respectively). Electricity and education were both named by 12% of respondents as the biggest local problem, and various infrastructure issues named by smaller percentages of respondents: roads (9%), reconstruction (8%) and water (5%). Lack of access to healthcare was named by 7% as the biggest problem, and the government was cited by 3%.

Nonetheless, the majority said that President Hamid Karzai is doing a good job: 62% rated his work as good or excellent. They also rate the Transitional Government favorably (57% good or excellent).

There are regional differences in mood, with residents of the South and Northwest out of step with the rest of Afghanistan. Respondents in the South (Jalalabad-Kandahar) and Northwest were negative about Karzai (with only 35% and 20%, respectively, reporting his job performance as excellent or good, while all other regions reported at least 54% excellent or good)⁴. Regarding the Transitional Government, 86% of residents in the Northwest rated its performance as poor or fair, while only 7% rated it as good or excellent, and 52% of

³ Respondents were asked why they thought the country was headed in a positive or negative direction, and were allowed to supply their own answers (open-ended questions).

⁴ Regarding Karzai's job performance: Residents in the Northwest reported his job performance as fair or poor (71%) and in the South (46%) fair or poor.

respondents in the South rated it as poor or fair while 26% rated it as good or excellent. (In all other regions, at least 52% rated the government's performance as good or excellent.)

While 37% of the Afghans we spoke with said that security was their top concern at a national level, only 15% rated security as their top local concern. Indeed, some 53% of Afghans said security in their areas is good or excellent, while 46% rate it as fair or poor. Again, there are regional differences. In the South and Northwest, two-thirds or more reported their security as fair or poor, while just as many rate it positively in all the other regions. Nationally, 35% of Afghans say they fear for their personal safety at present. This compares to 41% who said they were afraid under the Taliban (though 22% of our respondents said they left the country prior to or during the Taliban regime).

Some 52% of Afghans said that people in their areas feel free to express their opinion, more than twice the proportion (23%) that said that people in their areas are reluctant to express their opinions, while 25% are unsure. Only 1% said that people felt free to do so under the Taliban. Once more, the South and Northwest were the only regions where the majorities reported that they do not feel free to express their opinions. In the Northwest, 74% answered 'no' to the question "Do most people feel free to express their political opinions in the area where you live", and only 10% answered 'yes', while in the South, 42% answered 'no' and 21% said 'yes'. Those who were more concerned about security problems or critical of the government also tended to be less likely to feel free to speak their minds.

Most of the Afghans we spoke with reported that their personal economic situation has not improved since the Taliban's fall. Just 10% said they are more prosperous now than in 2001. Some 42% say their families are as prosperous as during the Taliban regime and 37% say they are less prosperous. Given the jumpstarting of the economy, the influx of aid from the international community and the booming poppy trade, it is conceivable that the interviewees might have overstated their economic difficulties in the hopes of receiving increased aid.

Most Afghans reported disliking the Taliban quite strongly. Some three in four (75%) expressed unfavorable opinions of them, and three in five reported very unfavorable opinions, while only 13% said they have a favorable view of the Taliban. Regionally, the Taliban's unfavorable-to-favorable ratio ranged from 50:1 in the North (Mazar-I-Sharif), where their favorability rating was only 2%, to 2:1 in those regions most supportive of the Taliban, the South (27% favorable) and Northeast (Kunduz) (24% favorable). (It should be noted that those in the South and Southeast may be reluctant to share their candid view of the Taliban with strangers given the on-going military operations against the Taliban in those regions.) Significantly, even among those dissatisfied with the country's direction or Transitional Government, only one in four reported feeling favorably towards the Taliban. In general, discontent with the current government has not turned into support for the return of the Taliban.

Foreign assistance and the US both got good marks from Afghans. Foreigners working in Afghanistan were viewed very positively (80% favorable) and interviewees felt favorably towards the United Nations (84% overall favorable and 51% very favorable). Majorities in every region were favorable to both – even in the South and Northwest. Roughly two-thirds of Afghans surveyed were positive towards the US (65% are favorable) and US military

forces in Afghanistan (67%). However, a plurality⁵ was unfavorable to both in the South (US: 46% unfavorable versus 37% favorable; US military: 42% unfavorable versus 39% unfavorable) and the Northwest (US: 58% unfavorable, 30% favorable; US military: 59% unfavorable, 26% favorable).

Attitudes Towards Elections

Almost all (91%) of the respondents had heard about the upcoming elections and, of those, 72% knew they were scheduled for June at the time of the survey. Some 90% said they had heard something about the need to register in order to vote.

The respondents were, in general, very positive about the elections: 81% said they want to vote and 77% thought that voting “will make a difference” (As the interviewer didn’t specify ‘to what’, it was a general question to gauge the relative usefulness of elections to the respondents). Women’s intended participation, though still large (74%), was somewhat lower than men’s (88%). Majorities said that they intend to vote in every region, but expected participation was around two-thirds in the South and Northwest, and 85%+ elsewhere. The major reasons Afghans gave for voting were the desire to choose their leaders, mentioned by 66% and the belief that voting is their right (58%).

Of the Afghans we spoke with who said that they were planning not to vote, 27% said that they would not because of lack of knowledge about the elections, and/or of politics (24%). Next came personal factors including age or illness (22%). Among women, 23% of those who said that they might not vote explained that they thought they would not be given permission (by their husbands or fathers) to vote. Other reasons reported by women for potentially not voting included: not understanding how the elections work (26%), not understanding politics (26%), personal reasons, including illness and age (22%), not knowing enough about parties and candidates (7%), no interest (10%), not supporting any party (5%) and fear of violence or intimidation (3%).

However, uncertainty is widespread as to whether the vote will be free and fair. Only 37% of Afghans think it will be – while 60% say they don’t know. Few – only 4% -- definitely think it will be unfair. The principal concerns are vote buying (60% think it is possible) and cheating in the vote count (50% say it may happen).

Voter Education Needs

More than three-quarters of Afghans (76%) did not know that the balloting will be secret – many (32%) confused it with the Loya Jirga elections, where voting was public. Fully three-fifths (60%) had not heard of plans for election monitors. This lack of knowledge of election procedures and plans is closely related to perceptions of whether or not the elections will be free and fair.

⁵ A plurality refers to the largest proportion of respondents when there are more than three choices and none has a majority (over 50%).

To see what the impact of voter education on these points might be, interviewers conducted a simulated voter education campaign with the respondents. When they were informed that voting will be private and the ballot secret, and thus they can ignore attempts at bribery or intimidation, and that monitors will be present to ensure the sanctity of the process, the respondents' belief that the elections will be free and fair increased. In those conditions, 69% reported that they thought the vote will be free and fair. In other words, effective voter education could substantially increase the proportion of Afghans who have confidence in the electoral process (34% at present).

On whether there would be non-partisan groups to observe and monitor the elections, almost equal numbers said yes and no (40% to 38% respectively, with a large number, 23%, responding "don't know"). When our interviewees were told that independent monitors would observe the elections and report any fraud, confidence in the elections increased among 75%. Asked if they would prefer foreign or Afghan monitors, 31% said that they preferred foreign monitors, 20% preferred Afghan monitors and 39% preferred 'both'. Regarding Afghan monitors, only 14% preferred monitors from their own area, 36% wanted Afghan monitors from another part of the country, and 42% preferred a mix.

Gender and Political Participation

Both the male and female Afghans we surveyed identified a variety of problems facing women in their country, including lack of education (mentioned by 47%), of rights (33%), and of health care (27%). Men and women differed little in their assessments on this point

An overwhelming majority (87%) of Afghans we spoke with, including majorities of both men and women, said that women will need their husbands' permission to vote. There was also general agreement that men should advise women on their voting choices (72%), again with majorities of both sexes agreeing.

Almost one man in five (18%) said that they would not let their wife vote, and more than one-third of Afghan women (35%) were not sure if their husbands or male elders would give them permission to do so. The potential for female disfranchisement is most severe in the South (where 24% of men would refuse) and Northwest (32% of men said they would do so). Refusal to allow wives and daughters to vote was voiced most often by illiterate men.

However, many men responded favorably to arguments in favor of women voting. After hearing seven arguments in favor of women voting, almost one-third of the men initially unwilling to give their wives permission to do then said that they would let them vote. Many of those men who continued to refuse to let their wives vote did not intend to vote themselves.

The strongest arguments with those men who initially would not allow their wives to vote were:

- Islamic scholars in other countries have approved voting for women.
- Women will vote separately from men.
- Everyone must vote for themselves

- Women are allowed to vote in other Islamic democracies
- If women in your community don't vote, it will lose half its votes and its candidate may lose the election.

On the other hand, arguments based on appeals to equal rights or the notion that women could vote to support their men did not have as much impact as the ones above did among the men reluctant to let women vote.

Women's participation in voter education programs separately from men was approved by 80% of Afghans. Most of those who were unfavorable were men who would not let their wives vote. To the extent that voter education persuades them to let their wives vote, they will also probably let them participate in voter education.

Civic Education Needs

Most Afghans interviewed were relatively conscious of the meaning of democracy, although some had a weak grasp of it. More than three-fifths of Afghans (63%) were able to suggest a meaning for democracy without any prompting. They defined it most often as freedom, rights and law, or a government of the people. However, there was significant gender gap here, with women, especially rural women, less likely to have had any idea of the meaning of democracy. The same was true for the less educated. There was also broad acceptance by our interviewees of many of the basic values of democracy. Roughly 90% accepted the principle of equal rights for all, irrespective of gender, tribe, or religion, and of the public accountability of officials. Somewhat fewer – just under 80% -- supported the ideas of peaceful opposition, political party involvement in peaceful politics, and the separation of religious and political leadership. Uncertainty on those issues was highest among those unable to define the concept of democracy.

Although a bare majority (52%) of Afghans reported thinking that Islam and democracy need not conflict, many (40%) are not sure, though few (9%) actually think they conflict. Uncertainty was most widespread among women, those with less than primary education, and those unable to respond on the meaning of democracy question.

Political tolerance was a big problem across the country, with only 30% of Afghans willing to allow meetings of unpopular parties in their areas and 49% willing to accept a friend who supported an unpopular party. Interestingly, despite widespread dislike for the Taliban, almost three-fifths (59%) said that the Taliban who forswear violence should be allowed to run for office.

Political efficacy was low and alienation high among Afghans, but they are not apathetic – they want to be heard. Only around one-third of Afghans surveyed said they think they can influence government decisions or are interested in politics; those who felt that they have influence tend to be interested in politics and vice versa. Only around one in six talks often about politics. Most respondents (58%) said they don't think the government cares much about what people like them think. However, almost three in five said that they would be interested in multi-candidate and multi-party forums on radio or in their communities, and a similar proportion of women would like to attend a meeting to discuss their problems.

Information Sources, Media Use, and Language

A majority of our respondents (60%) mentioned radio as their preferred medium for receiving national-level information. It is followed by friends and family (16%), TV, mentioned by 12%, and village chiefs or community leaders (5%). For local affairs, the most important information sources all involve word of mouth – friends and neighbors, local leaders, mullahs, and shopkeepers. Radio was also the overwhelming choice of Afghans (72%) for election information, followed by village chiefs (33%), TV (28%), newspapers (20%), and posters (15%).

Among those who do not listen to the radio, the preferred sources of election information were village chiefs (63%), religious leaders (29%), and Constitutional Loya Jirga delegates (18%).

Radio reaches most of the Afghans we surveyed, with 72% reporting listening three days a week or more. The radio stations with the largest audience were the foreign shortwave stations: BBC Farsi (20%), BBC Pashto (15%), Radio Azadi Dari (16%), Radio Azadi Pashto (10%). VOA Dari 11%, VOA Pashto 9%. Radio Afghanistan has an 18% audience share. Arman FM in Kabul has the largest audience of any local Afghan station (5%). Most of the other local stations have only 1-2% of the listeners nationally but collectively they have a significant listenership (23%). The Afghan stations are important in their regions and particularly among women listeners.

According to the survey results, television in Afghanistan is essentially a medium of the urban areas, where it reaches a majority (52%) of residents. Because of the lack of a national network and the prevalence of foreign broadcast and satellite stations, few Afghan TV stations have a substantial audience share at the national level. However, the leading ones, TV Afghanistan, TV Kandahar, TV Herat, and Baghlan TV do play significant roles in their regions.

Contrary to fears that large proportions of women cannot leave the house, only about one-fifth (22%) of Afghan women, at most, appears to be housebound. Most women leave the home to visit neighbors, family, and friends, and outside the village their most frequent trips are to health clinics, making neighbor-to-neighbor programs and health clinics the best ways to reach them.

Although Afghanistan is a multi-lingual society, most people said that they wanted voter information in their mother tongue. Around half of the respondents (49%) of Afghans wanted to receive election information in Dari, 44% preferred Pashto, and 3% wanted it in Uzbek. Some 83% can speak Dari and 77% can speak Pashto. Some 51% can read Dari, 43% can read Pashto. Some 35% said they are illiterate (mostly women and rural people).

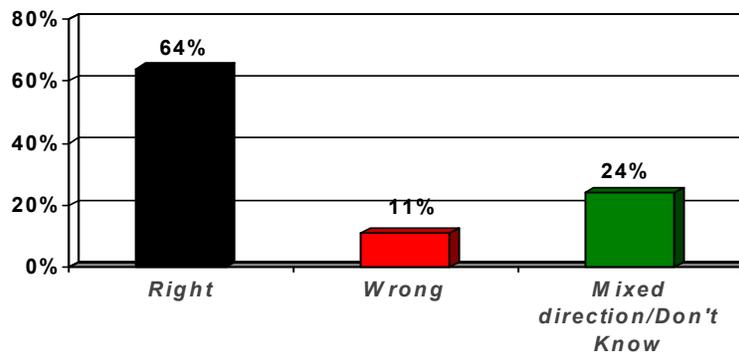
CHAPTER 1: THE NATIONAL MOOD

Direction of the Country

Despite the immense challenges the country faces, the mood of the Afghans we spoke with was optimistic. Nearly two-thirds of them (64%) said that the country is headed in the right direction. Less than a fifth of the voting age population held negative or mixed opinions (11% wrong direction, 8% mixed) and only 16% was uncertain.

Direction of the Country

Generally speaking, do you think things in Afghanistan today are going in the right direction, or do you think they are going in the wrong direction? (Q.25)



Geography and ethnicity are associated with the most substantial differences in opinion on the country's direction. In most regions, the majority or a plurality of Afghans expressed satisfaction with its direction. However, only 39% of the people in the South (Kandahar-Jalalabad) and 17% of those in the Northwest (Herat) agreed. The South was predominantly uncertain on the country's direction, while a majority in the Northwest was negative. Ethnic differences were also evident on this question, although less so than those between regions. Three-quarters of Tajiks were optimistic about the country's direction, compared to a smaller, though still noteworthy, majority among Pashtuns (51%). Almost three-quarters (73%) of city dwellers were pleased with Afghanistan's direction, compared with 62% of rural residents.

Access to information also influenced Afghans' opinions about their country. Nearly seven of ten literate citizens (69%) reported that the country is headed in the right direction, compared to just 55% of those who cannot read or write. Almost a third of illiterate Afghans (31%) are unsure about the direction of the country (as opposed to 7% of literate Afghans), while only 14% have negative or mixed opinions. Almost seven citizens in ten who regularly listen to the radio (69%) were pleased with Afghanistan's path, while fewer than half of those without access to radio agreed (48%).

Right Direction Reasons

There are three main themes around which we can group the respondents' answers to the question "why do you think the country is headed in the right direction": peace and security, reconstruction and rebuilding and freedom and democracy.

More than half of those who said that the country is headed in the right direction cite peace and the end of war (53%). Another 35% mentioned disarmament and 20% referred to good security in their areas. Further down the list, 9% pointed to the return of refugees from abroad, which has mostly occurred in the past three years, while freedom to travel was mentioned by 7%.⁶

The second major factor behind the positive outlook is reconstruction, mentioned by 23%. Economic revival is cited by 5% more.

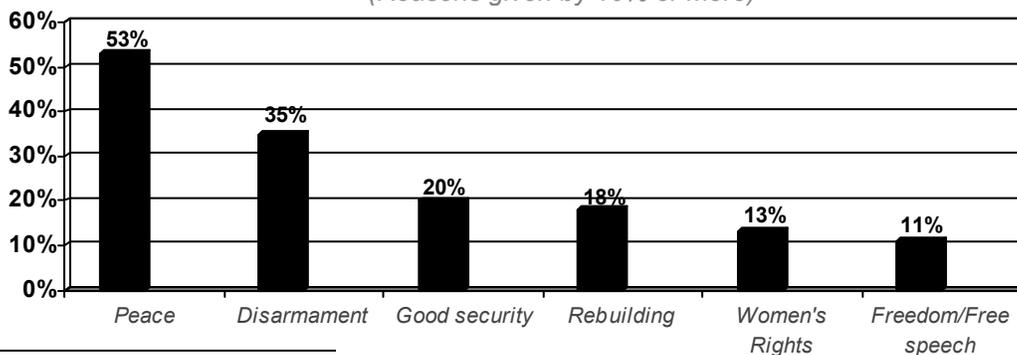
Freedom and democracy were the third most often mentioned improvements noted by Afghans, including references to freedom in general and free speech (18%), women's freedom and education for girls (13%), democracy and elections (9%), and good government (6%).

Citizens in the Central East region (Kabul) and the Central region (Bamiyan) were slightly more influenced by new freedoms and reconstruction, and less focused on peace and security than those elsewhere. In the Center East, 23% cited girls' schools and women's freedom as "right direction" reasons versus 13% nationally, and 22% in that region cited reconstruction versus 18% among all respondents. In the Central region, 22% cited freedom/freedom of speech versus 11% nationally, and 31% cite reconstruction, versus 18% nationally. In the South, those who were optimistic tended to cite reconstruction and the return of refugees rather than peace and security.

In general, the reasons for hope cited by Afghan citizens involve the beginnings of peace, security and reconstruction. Although Afghanistan still has many problems, the onset of normalcy was a reason for hope in a land that has known little of it for decades.

Right Direction Reasons

*Why do you say that? (Q. 26)
(Reasons given by 10% or more)*



⁶ "Right" and "wrong" direction questions were open-ended: if interviewees responded that they thought the country was going in the right direction, they were asked why, and could volunteer a maximum of two answers. Likewise, if they said the country was headed in the wrong direction, they were asked why, and allowed to respond with up to two reasons.

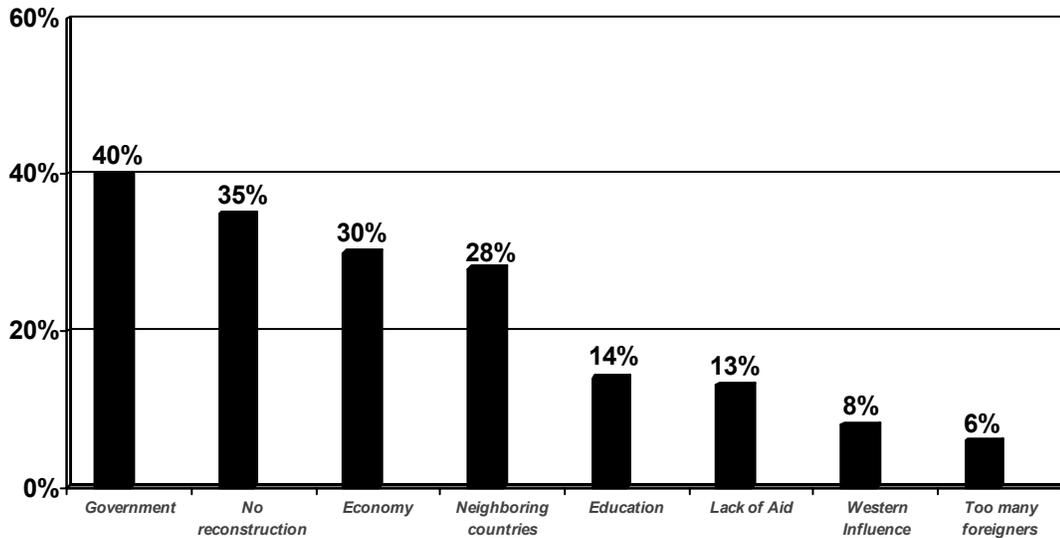
Wrong Direction Reasons

Pessimism among the Afghans we spoke with about the direction of the country was primarily due to dissatisfaction with the performance of the Transitional Government (40%), slow reconstruction (35%) and the state of the economy (30%). More than a quarter of the discontented mentioned problems caused by neighboring countries (28%) as a reason for Afghanistan's troubles, while 14% mention disappointment with the state of education.

It is noteworthy how few of those who feel that the country is headed in the wrong direction complain of Western influence and foreigners (14%). Indeed, about the same number (13%) demand more foreign development assistance. Despite the considerable attention paid to security issues by both Afghans and foreigners concerned with the country, it is also notable that only 2% cite security-related issues as reasons for the country being headed in the wrong direction.

Wrong Direction Reasons

Why do you say that? (Q. 2, Base 92)
(Reasons given by 5% or more)



Afghanistan's Biggest Problems: National

The two greatest concerns at the national level expressed by the respondents were the security situation and the economy. When asked about the biggest problem facing the country, security was the most frequent answer, noted by 37%, with 29% listing the economy. Respondents were then asked to name the 'second biggest problem facing Afghanistan'. When taken together, the economy became the top problem, with a combined total of 51% of the respondents listing it as either their first or second biggest problem at the national level. Security was again near the top of the list, with more than four citizens in ten (for a combined total of 43%) listing it as either their first or second problems.

The third great concern of the Afghans surveyed was education and literacy. These problems are mentioned by more than one-fourth (26%) as one of the country's two biggest problems, though just 9% cite it as their top concern.

A variety of infrastructure issues came next on the public agenda. These included electricity (cited by 16% as one of their top two concerns), reconstruction in general (mentioned by 15%), roads (12%), and water supply (5%). These problems, requisites for economic revitalization, represented another broadly-shared set of concerns. If they are taken collectively, infrastructure issues were mentioned by some 46% of our respondents as among Afghanistan's two top problems, which would place rebuilding the shattered infrastructure just behind the economy and ahead of security as a concern.

Political complaints ranked relatively low on the list of key problems. Only 13% mention poor or weak government as one of the country's two top problems (although weak government is a greater concern in the South and Northwest), while only 3% cite the Taliban as a problem.

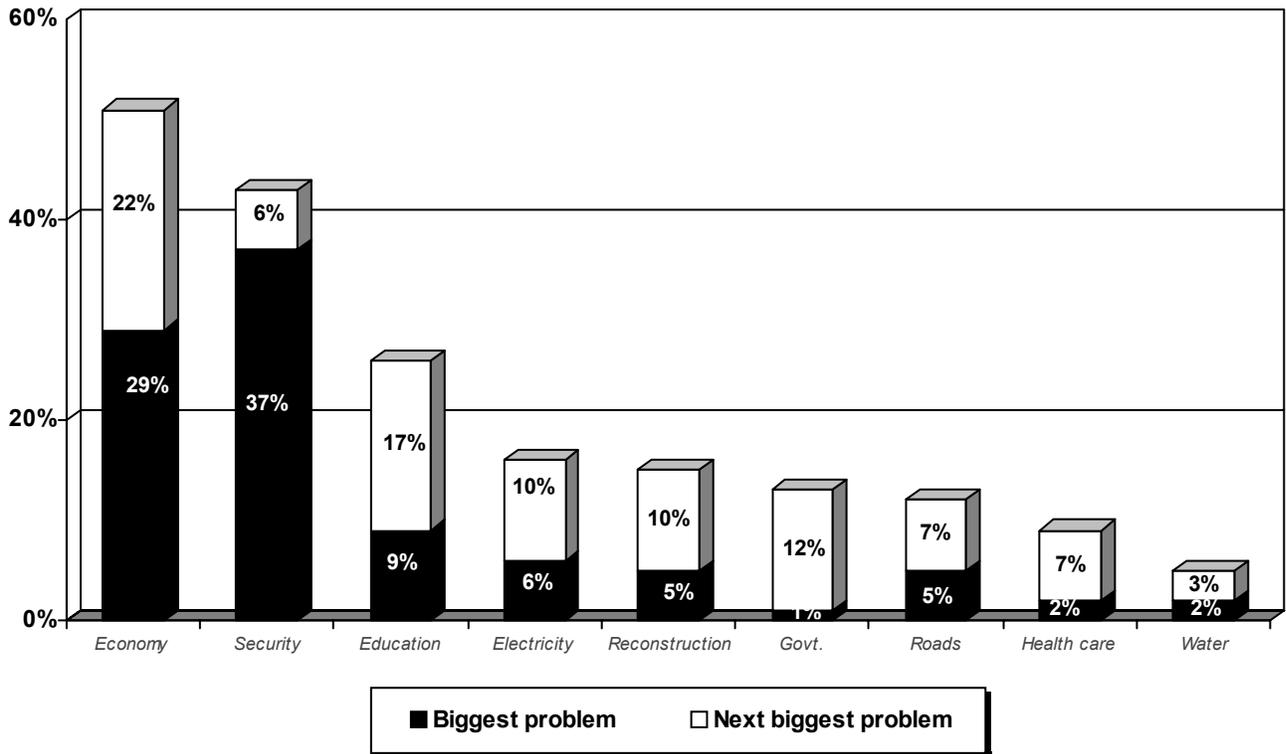
Some 9% cited health care as one of their two top concerns.

Regional and social differences were also evident in perceptions of the country's problems. Security concerns were cited most often by residents of the South and Northwest, the two regions where the mood is negative, as well as by Pashtuns, men and older people. Among women, younger citizens, Tadjiks and those in the North and Central East/Kabul regions, worries about the economy outweighed security concerns, followed closely by education and infrastructure. In the East, the lack of reliable electricity pushed the level of concern about infrastructure equal to that of economic concerns and above that of security concerns.

Security was thus the most intensely felt problem among Afghans interviewed for this survey, but this is principally the case in the specific regions where it tends to be lacking (see below on the security situation in the regions). In most of the country, however, economic concerns predominated, along with the needs for education and infrastructure.

Afghanistan's Biggest Problems: National

*In your view, what is the biggest problem facing Afghanistan?
And after that, what is the next biggest problem?
(Responses combined, all those cited by 5% or more)*



Afghanistan's Biggest Problems: Local

At the local level, Afghans said they are much more concerned about the economy, education, and infrastructure than they are about security. Four Afghans in ten (39%) mentioned economic issues as one of their top two local concerns. Some 28% cited the economy, jobs, or poverty as the biggest local problem, a larger proportion than any other issue.

The second great local concern was education. It was cited by nearly one-third (32%) as one of the top two local issues and as the biggest local concern by 12%.

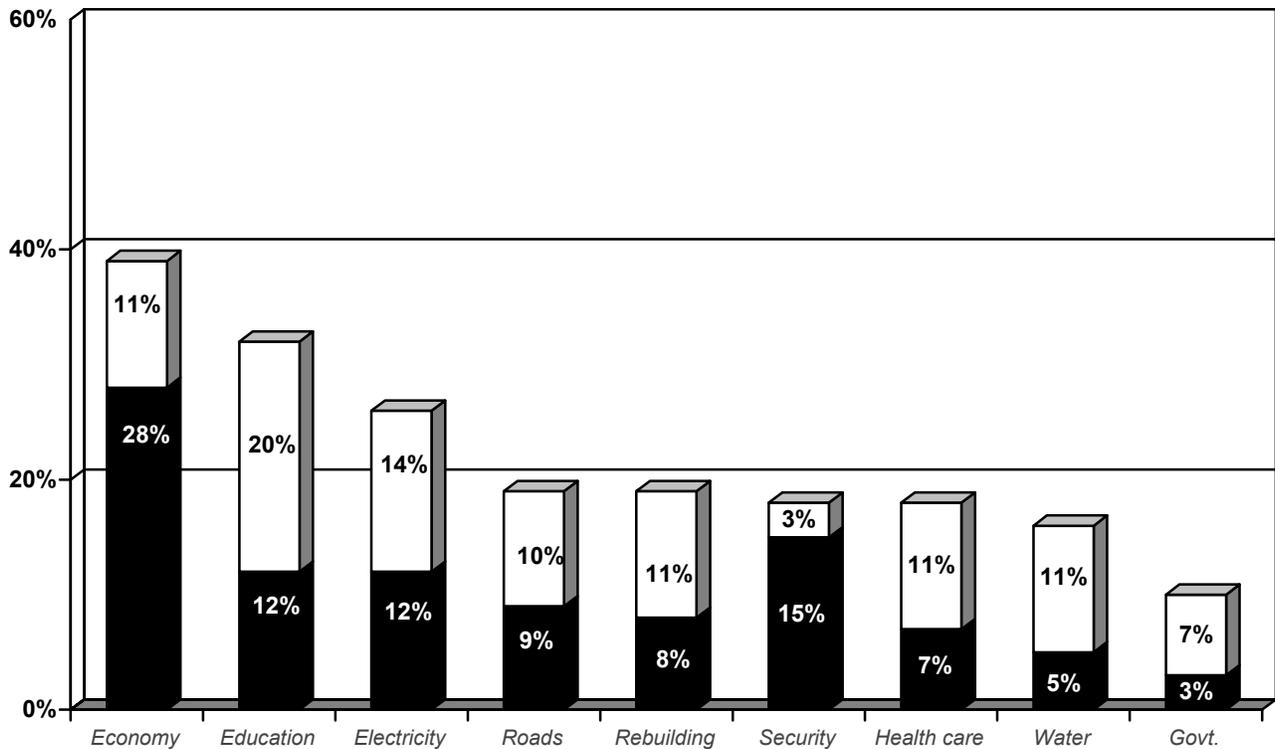
At the local level, infrastructure issues loomed even larger than they do nationally. Some 26% mentioned a need for electricity as among their area's top two problems; 20% more roads; 19% rebuilding in general, and 16% water. Taken together, infrastructure issues were cited as among the two top local concerns by four-fifths of the country's citizens, making them principal issues on the local agenda in most of the country. (Among infrastructure issues, electricity took precedence in the Northeast (Kunduz), East (Nangarhar), and Center-East (Kabul), while water lead in the Center.) Political concerns about the government or the Taliban occupied an even lower priority at the local level than in Afghans' thinking about national affairs. Afghans clearly regarded a rebuilt infrastructure as essential for reviving the economy and improving their lives.

Health care was cited as a major local concern by 18%.

Security was also cited as one of the top local concerns by 18%. Where security was a worry, it was preoccupying one -- 15% cited it as their top local concern, while only 3% cited it as their second. However, it is a local worry chiefly in two regions, the South and Northwest, where it was also seen as a concern at the national level.

Afghanistan's Biggest Problems: Local

*In your view, what is the biggest problem facing Afghanistan?
And after that, what is the next biggest problem ? (Q.30/31, Base 804)
(Responses combined, all those cited by 5% or more)*



The Transitional Government and Hamid Karzai

Overall, the Afghans we interviewed were pleased with the performance of their current leader, Hamid Karzai, and the Transitional Government that he leads. More than six in ten (62%) rated his work as good or excellent, including more than a third (34%) who felt he is doing an excellent job. Some 57% percent of citizens rated the present government positively, including 28% who believed its performance has been excellent.

Residents of the East, Central East and Central regions were the most satisfied with the work of Karzai and the Transitional Government. North (Mazar-i-Sharif) and Northeast region residents also gave strongly positive assessments, though with less intensity. Clear majorities of all these regions assessed Karzai and his government positively, just as they do for the direction of the country.

The South and Northwest regions were the only ones which had predominantly negative views about Karzai and the Transitional Government, as well as the only regions with a pessimistic outlook on the state of the nation. In the South, 46% were dissatisfied with Karzai's performance, while just 35% were satisfied. There, over half (52%) rated the government's job performance negatively, including 36% who said it was poor. Seven out of ten Northwest residents (71%) rated Karzai negatively (and 54% rated his performance as poor), while more than eight in ten Northwest residents (86%) were unhappy with the Transitional Government's performance (69% consider it poor).

President Karzai enjoyed solid support across the country's major ethnic groups. More than two-thirds of Tadjiks (68%) rated his job performance positively, along with 71% of Uzbeks and 78% of Hazaras. Although his own Pashtun tribe was the most critical, nonetheless over half (54%) were satisfied with him. It is important to note, however, that residents of the East region, which is 77% Pashtun, were among Karzai's strongest backers – 91% rated him positively there. Geography had a greater influence on Afghans' opinions of their leaders and government than tribal differences do.

Ethnic appraisals of the Transitional Government followed a similar pattern, but the government did not fare quite as well as Karzai. Two-thirds of Tadjiks (65%) held positive opinions of the government, along with 71% of Hazaras and 59% of Uzbeks. Only 46% of Pashtuns rated the Transitional Government favorably, while 42% said it is doing a fair or poor job. Once again, negative opinions in the South and Northwest regions affected the overall score: nine of ten Eastern region residents rated the government positively (including 40% excellent), but only 26% in the South and 7% in the Northwest agreed.

Women, especially educated women, and older citizens were among Karzai's strongest supporters. Two-thirds of female respondents (65%) were pleased with Karzai's job performance, including almost four in ten (39%) who stated that he is doing an excellent job. Men are also satisfied with Karzai, but their support was somewhat less intense than women's (59% positive, 29% excellent).

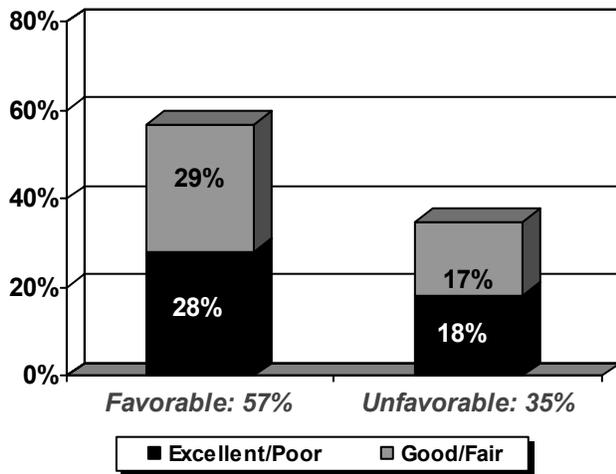
Not surprisingly, there was a strong relationship between approval of the country's direction and of the president and government. More than eight Afghans in ten who believed the country is headed in the right direction (83%) rated Hamid Karzai positively, including

almost half (47%) who believed he is doing an excellent job as President. These supporters were also pleased with the Transitional Government highly (79% positive, 42% excellent). Karzai and the Transitional Government clearly get some of the credit for the country's movement toward peace, reconstruction and democracy.

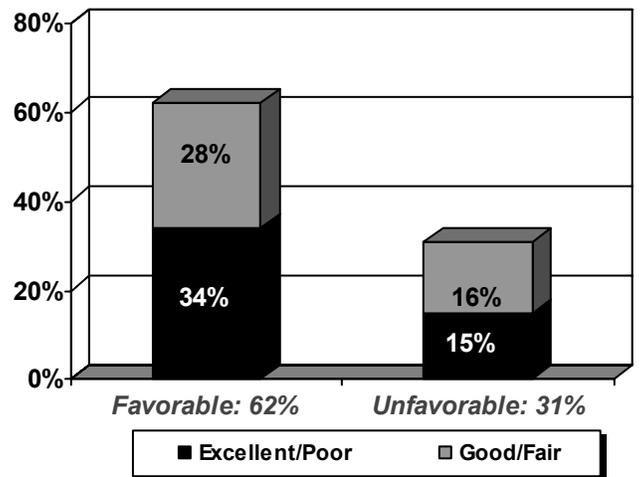
President Karzai's personal popularity was very high amongst our respondents – even higher than his job performance numbers. Some 85% of Afghans reported liking him and nearly half of the respondents (48%) were very favorable towards him. He was particularly admired in the North, East, Central and Central East regions, where his popularity approaches 100% and over half of all the respondents were very favorable toward him. Even in the regions where the job done by Karzai and his government is rated poorly, Karzai received favorable personal ratings; his favorability was 66% in his native region, the South (he comes from Kandahar), and 42% in the Northwest. This is compared to 46% and 71% of those who rated his job performance negatively in the South and Northwest, respectively. In other words, Karzai has a national personal appeal that extends even to many of those who are not his political supporters.

The Transitional Government and President Karzai

How would you rate the work of the present government (Afghanistan's Transitional Government) – excellent, good, fair, or poor



How would you rate the work of Hamid Karzai as President of Afghanistan – excellent, good, fair, or poor? (Q. 32/33)



Regional Differences in Mood

There were noticeable differences in mood among regions.⁷

- **Central East/Kabul** (65% Tadjik, 23% Pashtun): 80% stated that the country is headed in the right direction; more than eight in ten citizens rated the job done by Karzai (83%) and the Transitional Government (84%) positively.
- **North** (38% Tadjik, 33% Uzbek, 16% Pashtun): 69% stated that they were optimistic about Afghanistan's direction; 71% were satisfied with Karzai's performance and 63% believed the Transitional Government is doing a good job.
- **East** (77% Pashtun, 6% Tadjik, 5% Nuristani, 5% Pashae): 86% reported that the country is headed in the right direction, more than nine in ten citizens were pleased with the performance of Karzai (92%) and the Transitional Government (91%).
- **Northeast** (83% Tadjik, 10% Pashtun, 5% Uzbek, 2% Hazara): 84% said that Afghanistan is on the right track; over half of citizens were satisfied with Karzai (54%) and the Transitional Government (52%).
- **Central** (45% Pashtun, 33% Hazara, 22% Tadjik); 75% were optimistic about the country's direction; 84% were pleased with Karzai and 77% were happy with the Transitional Government.
- **South** (99% Pashtun): Less than four in ten (39%) reported that they thought Afghanistan is headed in the right direction, while 37% thought it is off on the wrong track or had mixed opinions and 24% didn't know. Only 35% approved of Karzai's job performance and just a quarter (26%) were satisfied with the Transitional Government.
- **Northwest** (58% Pashtun, 36% Tadjik, 7% Hazara): Just 17% were optimistic about the country's direction, while two-thirds (67%) had a negative or mixed outlook and 15% didn't know. Just a fifth of Northwest residents (20%) approved of the job Karzai is doing and a mere 7% were satisfied with the Transitional Government.

Ethnicity and Region

In our survey results, region appeared to trump ethnicity in shaping the political mood of Afghans. If we look at the views of different ethnic groups within the regions in this survey, they have more in common with other residents of their region than they do with member of the same ethnic group in other regions.

To look at the differences by ethnicity between the regions, we combined the seven regions in our poll into five, since some of the regional samples were too small to break down by ethnic group. We thus looked at ethnic differences in the North+Central, Northeast+East, Center East, South, and Northwest regions. There were enough Pashtuns in each region for

⁷ The regions are as follows: Northwest: Herat, Badghis, Farah; North: Balkh, Samangan, Jawzjan, Faryab, Sar-e-pul; Northeast: Kunduz, Takhar, Badakhshan, Baghlan; East: Nangarhar, Laghman, Kunar, Nuristan; Central East: Kabul, Parwan, Kapisa, Logar; Central: Bamiyan, Wardak, Ghazni; South: Paktia, Paktika, Khost, Kandahar, Zabol, Helmand.

analysis, enough Tadjiks in every region but the South, and enough Uzbeks to do so in the North+Central region.

When we did this for the country’s direction and the president’s job performance, we found that the views of members of ethnic groups resembled those of other ethnic groups in their same region much more than they resembled those of their own ethnic group elsewhere. Thus Pashtuns, Tadjiks, and Uzbeks were all highly positive in their views of the country’s direction in the North+Central, Northeast+East, and Center East regions. On the other hand, only a minority of Pashtuns thought that the country is headed in the right direction in the South, where they make up almost the entire population. In the Northwest, both Pashtuns and Tadjiks tended not to think the country is headed in the right direction. The same pattern prevailed in evaluations of the job performance of President Karzai, which is closely correlated with approval of the country’s direction.

Country Direction by Region & Ethnicity

Those who say country is moving in right direction (Q.25)

	Pashtun	Tadjik	Uzbek
North, Central	64%	76%	60%
Northeast, East	82%	85%	NA
Center East	71%	82%	NA
South	39%	NA	NA
Northwest	13%	22%	NA

Karzai Job by Region & Ethnicity

Those who say Karzai is doing good or excellent job (Q.33)

	Pashtun	Tadjik	Uzbek
North, Central	81%	71%	73%
Northeast, East	86%	62%	NA
Center East	76%	87%	NA
South	35%	NA	NA
Northwest	38%	37%	NA

The Security Situation

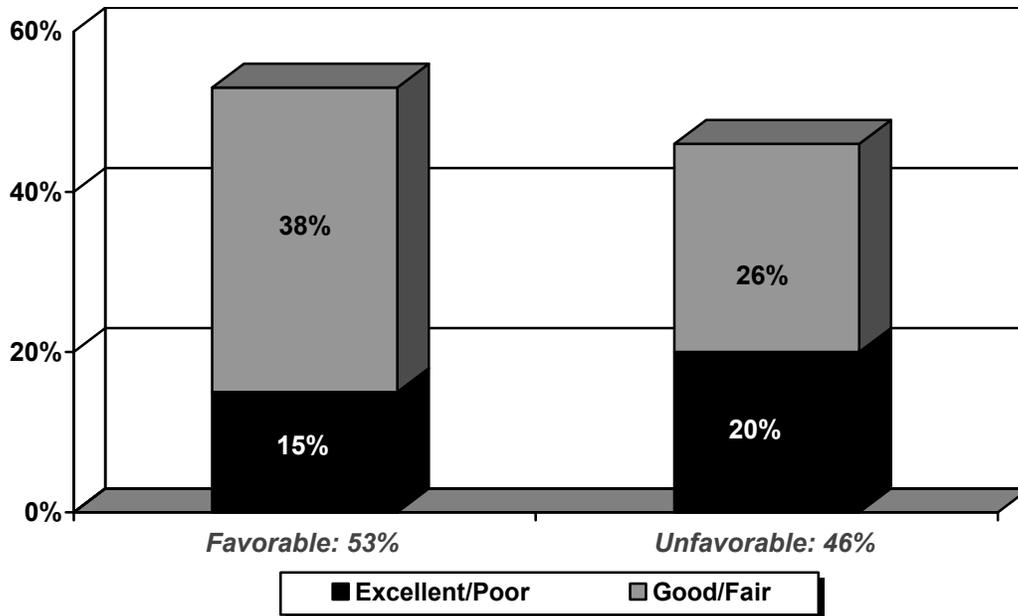
The Afghans we interviewed were divided in their perceptions of the security situation – but on this issue, as already noted, there are major regional differences. A narrow majority of Afghan citizens (53%) reported that the security in their area is good (38%) or excellent (15%). However, almost half (46%) were dissatisfied with security: 26% described security as fair, while a fifth (20%) called it poor.

In five of the seven regions, three-fifths or more of the citizens rated security as good or excellent. In the East, 74% rated the local security situation good or excellent, including a fifth (21%) who stated that it is excellent. In the Center-East, 67% assessed the security situation positively, and almost three in ten (28%) found it to be excellent. In the North and Central regions, 65% were satisfied with local security (15% good and 9% excellent, respectively). Three in five (60%) Northeast residents were satisfied with local security (8% excellent)

The perception of security problems was highest in the South and the Northwest. In the South, two-thirds of citizens (67%) rated the security situation as fair or poor, including 45% who said it was “poor.” In the Northwest, more than eight citizens in ten interviewed (86%) said that security was fair or poor, including 64% who felt that local security is “poor.” A higher proportion of citizens in these two regions were forced to leave the country because of conflict during the war years than in any other regions.

The Security Situation

*How would you rate the security situation in your area:
Excellent, Good, Fair, or Poor? (Q. 35)*



Criminal Victimization

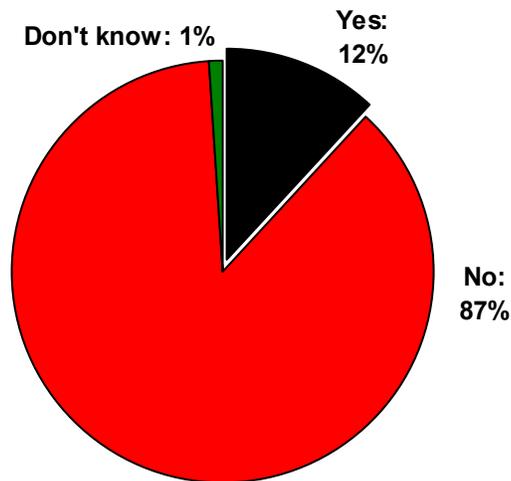
Given the situation of insecurity prevalent in parts of the country, it is not surprising that people reported a high amount of criminal victimization. One citizen in eight (12%) surveyed said that a member of their family was been a victim of physical aggression or crime in the past year.

According to our respondents, residents of the Northwest region (29%) and the Central East (Kabul) region (19%) are the most likely to have experienced crime. The other groups who are the most likely to become crime victims include Shiites (27%), lower income citizens (25%), Hazaras (21%) and less-than-primary educated women (16%).

To put it into international perspective, the reported crime rate in Afghanistan today is considerably higher than we found in Indonesia (5%) and comparable to the level our research found in East Timor after a lawless period there following the independence referendum of 2000 (12%).⁸

Criminal Victimization

Have you or has anyone in your family been a victim of physical aggression or of some criminal act in the home or community in the past year? (Q 38)



⁸ Data for Indonesia and the US come from *Democracy in Indonesia: A Survey of the Indonesian Electorate in 2003*, (Jakarta, The Asia Foundation: 2003), p.148. The East Timor finding is based on unpublished data from our national voter education survey there.

Concern for Personal Security

Although security is a substantial issue in the country, Afghans we spoke with reported feeling considerably safer now than they did under Taliban rule. Now, almost two-thirds of citizens (64%) reported rarely or never worrying about their personal safety, while only 36% said they felt that way under the Taliban. (Some 42% feared for their safety under the Taliban, while more than one-fifth (22%) said they fled the country altogether.)

The most dramatic change has taken place in the situation of urban residents. Most residents said lived in fear under the Taliban, when 55% were often or sometimes afraid for their personal safety, compared to just 35% of them today. Among rural residents, the proportion who reported feeling at the time of the survey, 35%, is just slightly below the corresponding percentage under the Taliban, 37%. However, almost one-fourth of rural residents, 23%, said they left the country altogether under the Taliban, and most of this group said that they do not fear for their safety now.

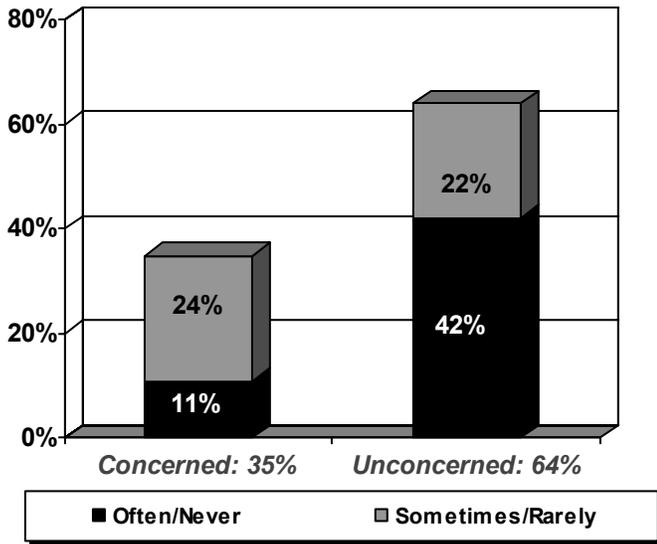
The regional differences in perceptions of security today were reflected in views of how it has changed. Residents of the North (of whom 9% are fearful now), Northeast (6% now) and Central East (30% now) reported feeling far safer now than they did under the Taliban. They reported feeling afraid much more often under the Taliban (57%, 69% and 67% respectively). Citizens of the East reported feeling marginally safer now (24% are often or sometimes afraid, compared to 33% under the Taliban), although a third of the East's population had fled the country under Taliban rule.

Perceptions of the security situation seem to have worsened in three regions in particular compared to conditions under the Taliban. Current fears were particularly strong in the South (65%) and Northwest (76%) regions. This stands in contrast to the situation under the Taliban, when only 7% and 10% of their residents respectively feared for their safety (although a quarter of citizens in both regions were out of the country under the Taliban). Safety fears among Central region residents have also increased slightly; from 23% under the Taliban to 37% now; however, more than a third of Central residents were absent from the country during the Taliban period.

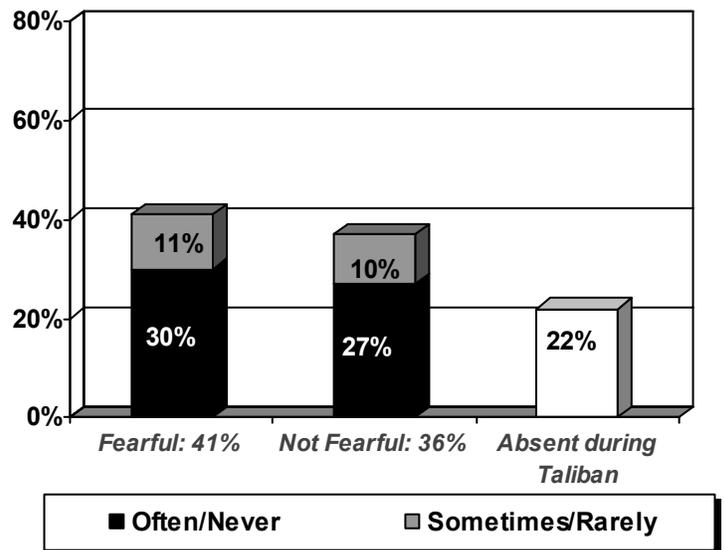
In short, perceptions of personal security remain worrisome, but most respondents report feeling safer than they did under the Taliban.

Concern for Personal Security

How often do you fear for your own personal safety or security or for that of your family these days? (Q.36)



How often did you fear for your personal safety or security or for that of your family under Taliban rule? (Q.37)



Freedom of Expression

Perception of freedom of expression was widespread among our respondents and has increased dramatically since the fall of the Taliban. Over half of Afghanistan’s citizens (52%) said that people in the area where they live feel free to express their political opinions, while 23% said people have reservations about expressing their opinions, and another quarter (25%) ‘did not know’. When asked whether people in their area felt free to express their political views under the Taliban, only 1% of our respondents that they did.

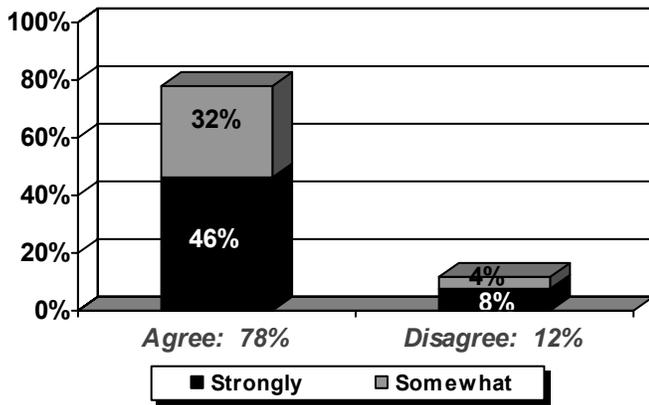
While residents of some regions said that they feel freer to speak than those in other regions, freedom of expression was vastly improved throughout the country since the Taliban regime, when no more than three percent (3%) of residents of any region felt free. The largest proportions reported freedom of expression in the Central East (87%) and the Northeast (72%). Majorities of residents of the Central (57%) and East (51%), as well as a plurality of those in the North (49%) said they can speak their minds, but substantial proportions (38-46%) were unsure in those regions. On the other hand, in the South, a plurality felt unfree to speak (43% to 21%), as did a majority in the Northwest, where 74% felt unfree to speak and only 10% free to speak.

It is no accident that people in the South and Northwest did not feel free to speak. There was a direct connection between insecurity, which prevails in those two regions, and a low sense of freedom. Of those who rated local security as excellent or good, 63% said that they

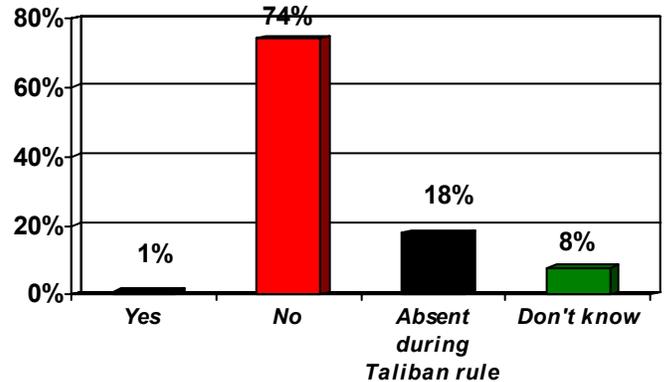
can speak their minds, while of those who rated it as fair or poor, only 41% did so. There may have also be an element of fear among opponents of the government, who are concentrated in those provinces. While two-thirds (67%) of those who approve of President Karzai's job performance said they feel free to speak, only 31% of those who rate him as fair or poor said the same.

Freedom of Expression

Do most people feel free to express their political opinions in the area where you live?



Did most people feel free to express their opinions under the Taliban government? (Q. 39/40)



Economic Prosperity

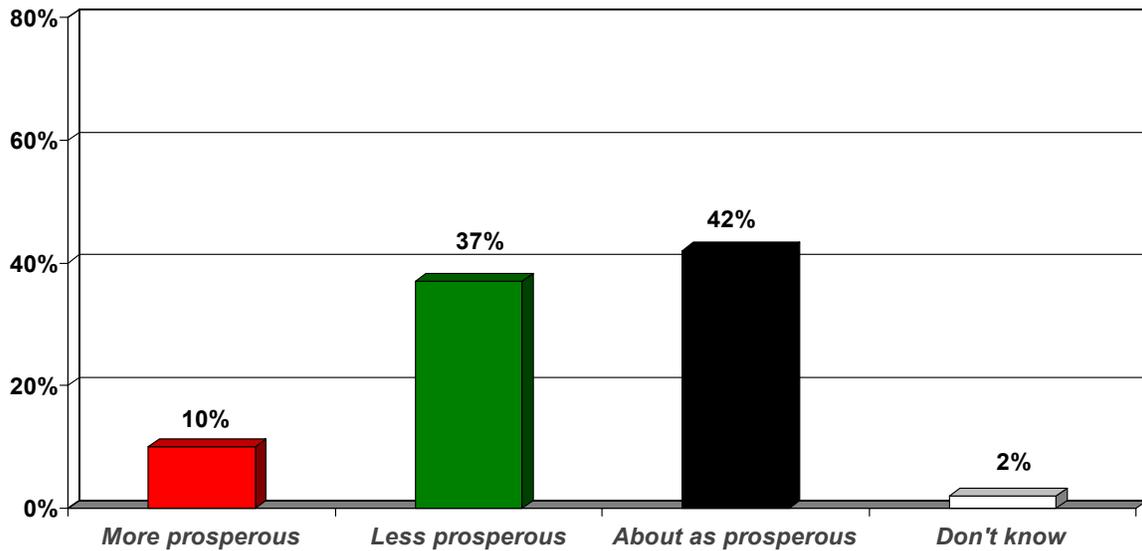
Many of the Afghans we spoke with stated perceived that their economic prosperity had taken a downturn since the fall of the Taliban. Some 37% of citizens reported that their family was less prosperous now than under the Taliban, while only 10% believed that they were more prosperous. However, the largest group, more than four in ten Afghans (42%), sensed no change in their economic status.

The Afghans who were likeliest to feel a dip in their economic fortunes included older urban women (68%), educated women (51%) and Uzbeks (55%), as well as many in the North (46%), Northeast (72%) and the Central East/Kabul region (43%).

Only a few Afghans reported having benefited economically since the fall of the Taliban. The groups with the largest percentages of those who reported gaining economically – educated women (17% reported feeling more prosperous) and residents of the Central East/Kabul region (22%) – also report some of the highest proportions of those who reported losing economically (as noted above). These results seem to suggest a growing inequality among educated women and around Kabul since the fall of the Taliban.

Economic Prosperity

If you think about your family, would you say that today your family is more prosperous, less prosperous, or about as prosperous as under the Taliban government? (Q. 41)



Favorability Towards Leaders & Organizations

The vast majority of Afghans reported disliking the Taliban, and most quite strongly: 75% were unfavorable (62% very unfavorable). Only 13% nationwide were favorable. The poll findings quite clearly show that the Taliban have little public support in Afghanistan today. It should be noted, however, that in the context of an on-going offensive against Taliban elements in the South and Southeast of Afghanistan by Coalition Forces, it is conceivable that some respondents there did not feel comfortable giving their true opinions about them.

Regionally, the Taliban was most unpopular in the North (96% unfavorable, 90% very unfavorable) and the Central East (89% unfavorable, 81% very). In the East region, nearly eight in ten (78%) reported disliking the Taliban and over half were very unfavorable. In the Central region, 62% reported unfavorable feelings towards the group (48% very unfavorable). The Taliban enjoyed slightly more support in the Northeast (24%) and Northwest (16%), but more than two-thirds of citizens in these regions felt unfavorably towards them, including six in ten who were very unfavorable. The South is the region where the hostility to the Taliban was least intense, but even there only 27% were favorable, while over half (51%) are unfavorable (and 25% very unfavorable).

Even among those dissatisfied with the Transitional Government, only 24% felt favorably towards the Taliban, while 65% were unfavorable (52% very unfavorable). In other words, discontent with the Transitional Government has not translated into support for the Taliban. This is not surprising when it is remembered that the major complaints about the current government involve a desire for more reconstruction, greater foreign aid, and more efficient government services, areas where the Taliban is not a serious alternative.

Indeed, foreigners working in Afghanistan were rated highly (80% of citizens reported feeling favorably towards them, 29% very favorable). The United Nations was even more highly regarded (84% favorable, 51% very favorable). Majorities in every region – including even the South and Northwest – held positive opinions toward both.

Almost two-thirds of the Afghans interviewed were favorable toward the U.S. (65%) and the U.S. military forces in Afghanistan (67%). However, while this popularity runs over most of the country, it did not extend to South and Northwest regions. In the South, a plurality⁹ was unfavorable to both: 46% unfavorable to 37% favorable for America; and 42% unfavorable to 39% favorable for the US military. In the Northwest, nearly six in ten were unfavorable toward the U.S. and the U.S. military (58% to 30% for the US, 59% to 26% for its troops (again, unfavorable to favorable, respectively.)

Former king Zahir Shah was popular with more than three-quarters of the respondents (77% favorable, 38% very favorable). He was especially well-liked by older citizens and those in the North, Central and South regions. His favorability was fairly even among all major ethnic groups – running between 70% and 80% among Pashtuns, Tadjiks, Uzbeks, and Hazaras – although it was a bit more intense among the Pashtuns.

⁹ Plurality is defined as the largest proportion of respondents when there are three or more choices and none has a majority.

Jihadi leaders, in contrast, were almost as unpopular amongst the respondents as the Taliban. They were viewed favorably by fewer than three in ten citizens (29%) nationally, while 64% were unfavorable to them, and 44% very unfavorable. Majorities on the order of three-fifths to three-fourths were unfavorable to them in every region of the country but one. Some two-thirds (66%) of the residents held favorable opinions of Jihadi leaders in the Northeast, where the martyred Mujahedeen leader Ahmed Shah Massoud fought the Russians and the Taliban for many years. But, elsewhere, there was little positive sentiment towards these figures.

Favorability Towards Leaders & Organizations

What is your opinion on the following: (Q. 43-50)

	Favorable	Unfavorable
Hamid Karzai	85%	10%
The United Nations	84%	7%
Foreign aid workers	80%	13%
Zahir Shah	77%	13%
US military forces in Afghanistan	67%	22%
The United States	65%	24%
Jihadi leaders	29%	64%
The Taliban	13%	75%

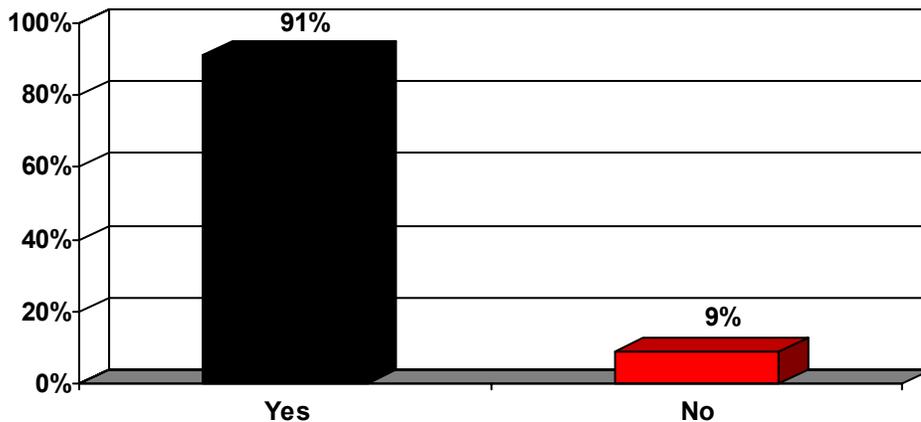
**CHAPTER 2:
ATTITUDES TOWARDS ELECTIONS**

Knowledge of Upcoming Elections

When this survey was fielded (February-March 2004), Afghanistan's citizenry was well-informed about existing plans for the upcoming national elections. Over nine in ten respondents (91%) had heard that elections were coming and almost three-quarters (72%) knew that the date for voting had been set for June 2004.¹⁰ Just over a quarter of those citizens (27%) could not identify the election month as it was originally set. Thus, it is clear that large majorities of Afghan citizens are getting at least basic election information.

Knowledge of Upcoming Elections

*Have you heard anything about elections coming up in Afghanistan?
(Q. 51)*



The most knowledgeable Afghans include men (81% named the correct election month), people under 35 (76%), literate citizens (87%), and residents of the Northeast (93%), East (77%) and Central East/Kabul (94%) regions.

¹⁰ The vote has since been postponed to September 2004 due to the lack of time to complete the necessary arrangements by the original June date.

Those most likely to lack basic information about the 2004 elections were rural women over 35 (47 % did not know when elections were scheduled or gave the wrong month), illiterate citizens (52% were unaware of the correct month), less than primary-educated women (50% unaware), those who do not listen to radio regularly (59% unaware), and residents of the North (48% unaware), Central (46% unaware) or South (43%) regions.

Awareness of Election Date

If yes heard of the upcoming elections, do you happen to know for which month and year the elections are scheduled? (Q.52, Base 735)

	<u>Total</u>
• June 2004	72%
• Other	7%
• Don't Know	20%

Intention to Vote

Eight eligible Afghan citizens in ten (81%) interviewed intended to exercise their right to participate in the election. Only 10% reported that they didn't think they would vote, and another 9% were not sure.

Those most likely to participate in the election were men (88%), the literate (91%), and residents of the Northeast (90%), East (89%), Central East/Kabul (92%) and Center (87%).

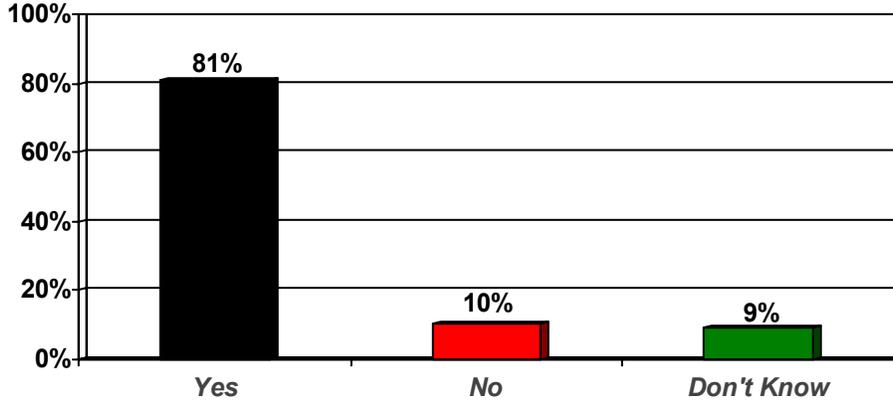
Afghans who were less likely to participate (or were unsure they will do so) included women (26% will not vote or unsure if they will), especially less than primary-educated women (34%), illiterate people (34%), radio non-listeners (41%), and residents of the South (35%) and Northwest (32%).

Interestingly, contrary to the fears of some, the results showed that house-bound women were just as likely to participate in the election as those who are not house-bound (74% of both expect to vote). The equal participation rate suggests that the major issue for women is whether or not their husbands permit them to vote, not how frequently they leave the house for ordinary tasks.

In general, motivating people to vote does not appear to be a major need for voter education. However, some targeted education efforts to build turnout that address the reasons for not participating mentioned by specific groups (see below) may be desirable.

Intention to Vote

Do you think you will vote in this election? (Q. 53)



Reasons to Participate in Presidential Elections

The respondents expressed a desire to participate in the upcoming elections primarily because they want to choose their leaders (66% mention this reason), and because they believe voting is a right (58% mention this). Many citizens also reported wanting to participate to bring peace (30%), promote prosperity and reconstruction (27%), and help the country (27%). Other reasons mentioned include citizen duty (21%) and to express their views (14%).

Reasons to Participate in Presidential Elections

What are the most important reasons why you want to vote? (Q. 54, Base 652)

	Total
To choose my leaders	65%
It is my right	58%
To bring peace	30%
To bring prosperity/Reconstruction	27%
It will help the country	27%
It is my obligation as a citizen to vote	21%
I want to express my views	14%

Reasons for Not Participating in Presidential Elections

Afghans who were not certain they will participate were most likely to cite reasons indicating a lack of knowledge about elections and democracy. These reasons included not knowing how elections work (27%), not understanding politics (24%), and not being familiar with the parties or candidates (7%). Those not sure what democracy meant (who could not offer any characteristics of a democratic country) were also among the least likely to vote, with 42% not voting or unsure if they will.

Some of the women who said that they may not vote (23% of them) were concerned they would not get permission to participate or are not allowed to leave the house. Some respondents (including 18% of men) reported being afraid of intimidation or violence (8% mention this overall).

Indifference or illness were not the major reasons for non-participation. Only 22% of potential non-voters cited a personal reason such as age or sickness. Just 10% said that they were not interested. Another 7% did not support any party or believed the new government would be established before the vote (2%).

The fact that the most frequent reasons for non-participation included ignorance of the electoral process and fears that men will refuse to let women vote underlines the need for effective voter education to address these problems. Well-designed efforts to inform people about the process and to encourage men to let women vote will do more to boost participation than will mere exhortations to vote.

Reasons Not to Participate in Presidential Elections

What are the most important reasons why you may not want to vote? (Q. 55, Base 151)

	Total
Don't know how elections work	27%
Don't understand politics	24%
Personal reasons: too old, sick, etc.	22%
Will not have permission to vote / women not allowed to vote / Cannot leave house	16%
Not Interested	10%
Fear of intimidation / violence/ insecurity	8%
Don't know enough about the parties / candidates	7%
Don't support any party	7%
Other/Don't Know	20%

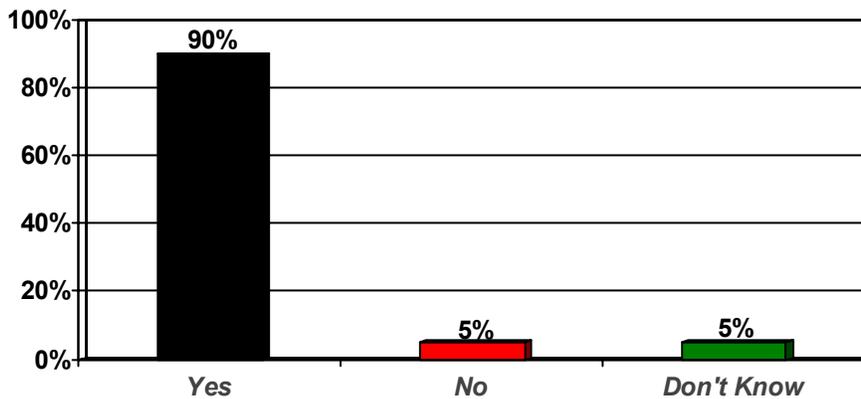
Awareness of Registration Requirements

Nine in ten Afghans interviewed (90%) said they had heard something about people being required to register in order to be eligible for the upcoming elections. The youngest citizens (94%) and North region residents (96%) were the most aware of registration requirements.

The groups of citizens who were least aware of registration requirements were still relatively well-informed, and the numbers of those unaware of the registration requirements were small. They tended to be less than primary-educated women (18% unaware), East (15% unaware), Central (18% unaware) and Northwest (15% unaware) residents and those without regular radio exposure (27% unaware). Only 15% of illiterate respondents were unaware of registration requirements.

Awareness of Registration Requirements

Have you heard anything about people being required to register themselves to vote in the coming elections? (Q. 60)



Free and Fair Elections

There was widespread uncertainty among those surveyed about whether the elections will be free and fair.

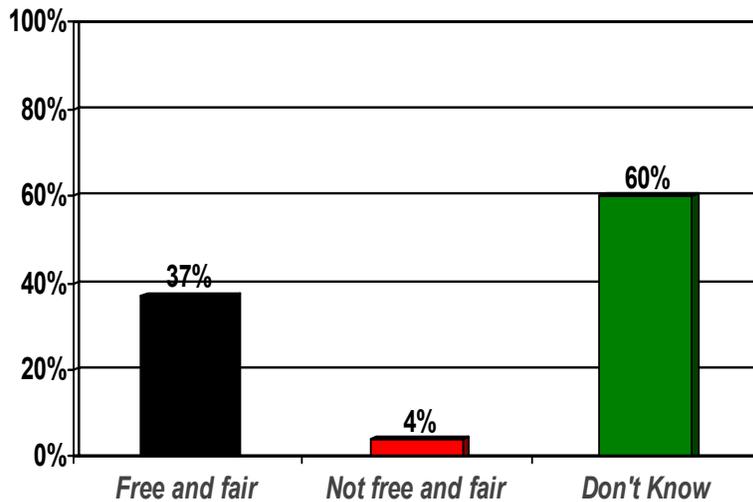
Three-fifths of those surveyed (60%) said they are not sure whether the coming elections will be free and fair. 37% thought the elections will be fair, while just 4% were sure they will not be.

The respondents who said that they didn't know whether or not elections would be free and fair tended to be men with less than primary school education (69%), the illiterate (77%), and those without radio exposure (80%). "Don't know" was also a common response among residents of the Central (76%), South (79%) and Northwest (88%) regions.

While these concerns do not seem to be deterring participation, the scale of doubt makes it important to address them in order to ensure the legitimacy of the process and its results.

Free & Fair Elections?

Do you think the elections will be free and fair or do you think they will not be free and fair? (Q. 61)



Election Concerns

In terms of voting irregularities, the Afghans we surveyed selected the buying of votes (60%) and cheating in the vote count (50%) most frequently when presented with a list of potential problems that might occur in the upcoming elections. Other worries included husbands not letting wives vote (24%), intimidation (8%) and doubts about secrecy (6%).

Buying of votes	60%
Cheating in the vote count	50%
Husbands not letting wives vote	24%
Intimidation against voters or party activists	8%
Finding out for whom people voted without their saying	6%
None of these possible	5%

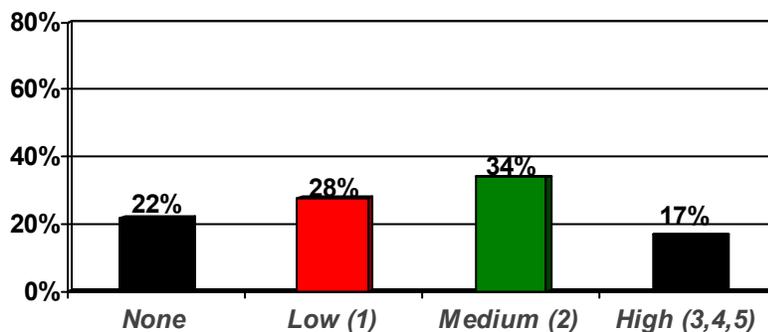
Number of Election Concerns

In order to measure how many of these issues worried Afghan citizens, we counted the number of election concerns that each respondent expressed. Just over half of the Afghans surveyed (51%) had two or more of the following concerns about the upcoming elections: intimidation, count cheating, vote buying, ballot secrecy, and husbands preventing their wives from voting.

Two-thirds of men surveyed (67%), along with six in ten older citizens (58%), Central region respondents (59%), and three-quarters of East region interviewees (77%) and educated men (75%) had two or more concerns about the election.

Number of Election Concerns

Number of election worries voters expressed (Q. 61)



Difference Elections Make

Almost eight in ten (77%) reported believing that voting will make a difference, including 44% who felt the election would make a big difference in Afghanistan. Only 6% thought the elections will make little or no difference, while 17% are not sure.

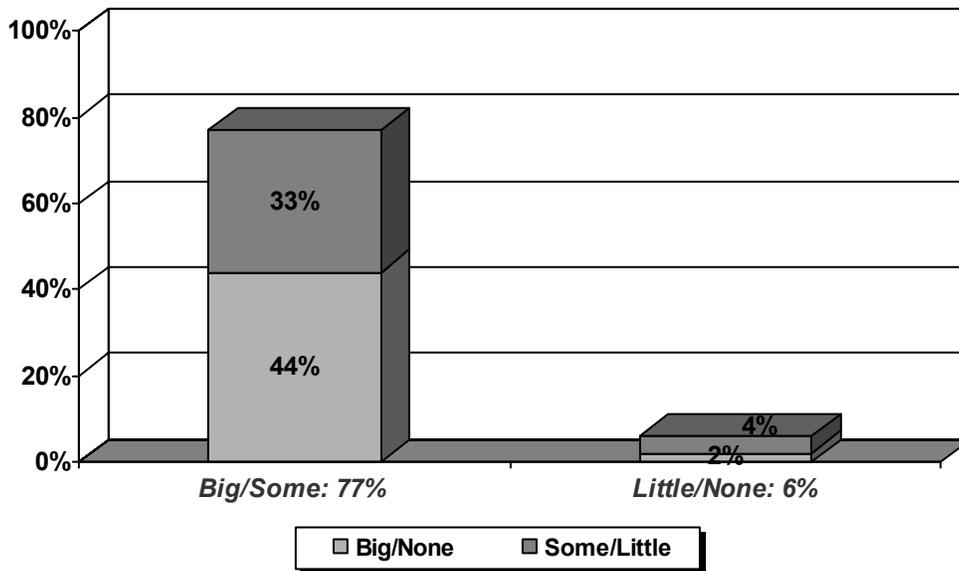
Those with the most intense feelings of hope were found among literate citizens (49% feel the election will make a big difference), especially educated women (64% big difference), Central East citizens (54%) and Central residents (59%).

Doubts about the impact of the elections were most common among the illiterate (38%), radio non-listeners (45%), and residents of the South (38%) and Northwest (36%).

Confidence in the election directly affects how much difference citizens believe it will make. Among voters who believed that the election will be free and fair, 96% felt it would make a difference. Among those who didn't know whether the election will be free and fair, only 66% thought it would make a difference.

Difference Elections Make

Do you think that voting in the election will make a big difference, some difference, little difference, or no difference at all? (Q. 56, Base 804)



CHAPTER 3: VOTER EDUCATION NEEDS

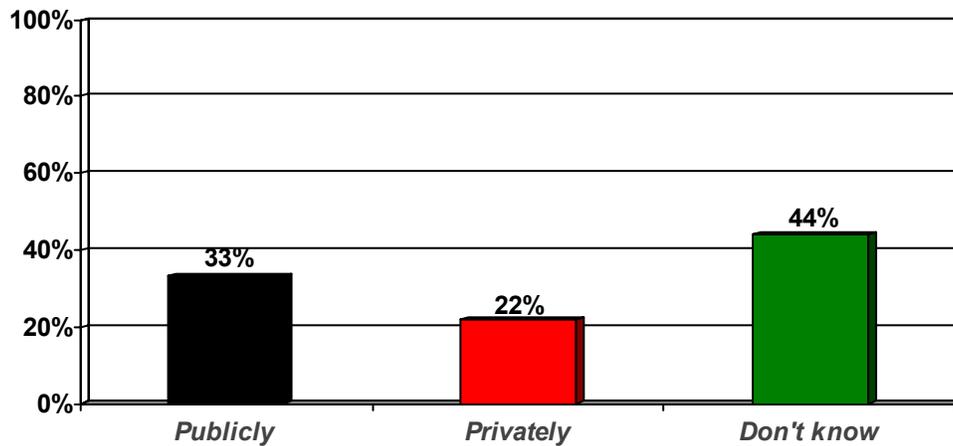
Ballot Secrecy

Although the Afghans surveyed knew that elections are coming, most did not know how they would work. Less than a quarter of the electorate (24%) was aware that citizens will vote in private and that their choice will be secret. A third of the respondents (32%) believed that voting will take place publicly, as was the case in the Loya Jirga elections. The largest proportion – 44% – didn't know if the ballot would be secret. This means that three-quarters of the electorate is unaware that the upcoming elections will be by secret ballot.

This lack of awareness has a massive impact on perceptions of election fairness. Among those who didn't know if the elections will be held in public or in private, fully 87% also didn't know if the elections will be free and fair.

Ballot Secrecy

Do you think the election will be like the Loya Jirga election, where people voted publicly and others could see their choices, or do you think they will vote privately, where no one can see for who they vote? (Q. 64)



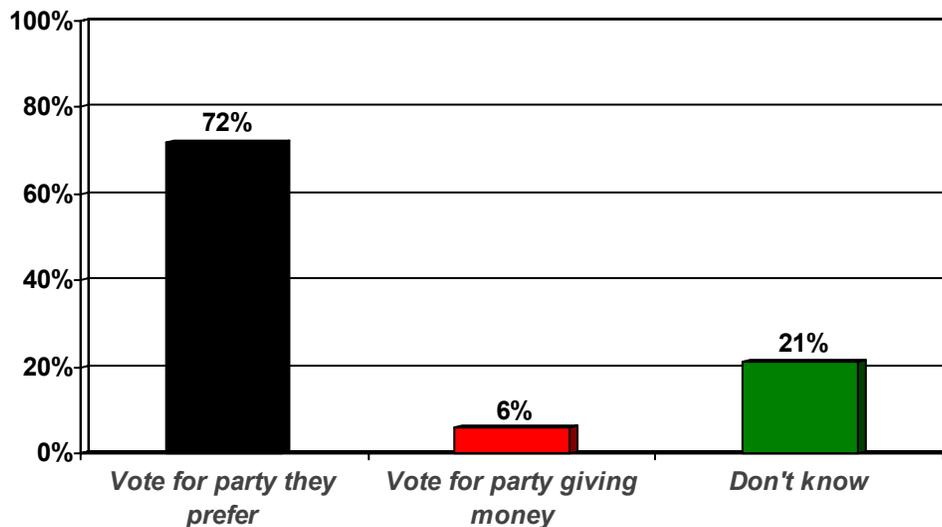
Vote Buying

Almost three-quarters of Afghans (73%) believed that, if a voter accepts money from someone trying to buy their vote, it is acceptable for them to still pick their preferred candidate or party. Only 6% reported that they would feel obligated to vote for the party giving the money, but another fifth (21%) answered “don’t know.”

Citizens who felt obligated or were unsure if money compels someone to vote a certain way were likely to be illiterate (42%), to not have finished primary school (38%), to not have regular exposure to radio (38%), and to live in the East (32%), Central region (39%) or Northwest (52%). These citizens need voter education assuring them that they are not obligated to vote for someone who offers them money, and that the secrecy of the ballot ensures that vote buyers cannot find out who they choose.

Vote Buying

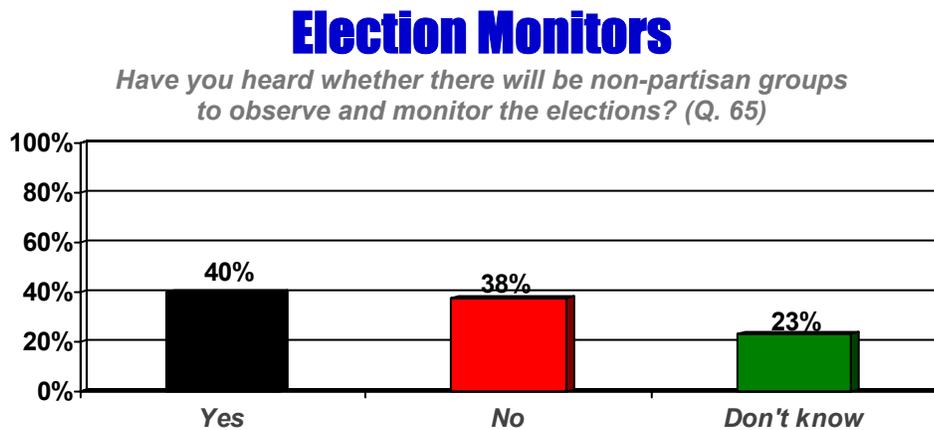
If a party gives someone money and they accept it, do you think the correct action is to vote for that party, or is it right for them to vote for whatever party they prefer? (Q. 63)



Knowledge of Election Monitors

Relatively few of those surveyed knew if there were plans for election monitors. Only four citizens in ten (40%) had heard that there will be non-partisan groups to observe and monitor the elections. Another 37% were unaware of any plans for election monitors, and 22% were unsure.

There is a relationship between awareness of monitoring and perceptions of election fairness. Among those who had not heard of monitors or don't know if there will be any, over 70% didn't know if the elections will be fair either.

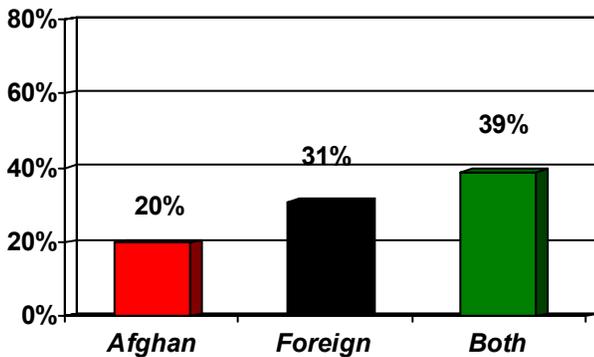


Preferences for Monitors

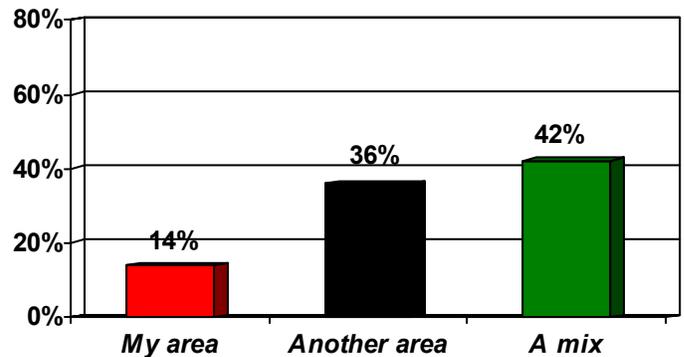
Rather than wanting monitors who are primarily Afghan and from their own region, the majority of respondents surveyed expressed a preference for foreign monitors (32%) or both (Afghan and international) equally (39%). Only one-fifth preferred Afghan monitors. Citizens also preferred that either all (36%) or at least some (42%) of the Afghan monitors come from another area. Only one in seven (14%) would prefer just to have monitors from their own area.

Preference of Monitors

Would you prefer Afghan monitors, foreign monitors, or are both equally acceptable?



If the monitors are Afghans, would you prefer ones from your area or from another area? (Q. 70/71)



Response to Voter Education Messages

To see if information about the elections would convince potential voters that they would be free and fair, interviewers gave the respondents information about the elections; that their ballots would be secret, that there would be election monitors, etc., and then asked them if this made them more confident that the election would be free and fair. This led to a dramatic increase in confidence about the elections. In order to be polite, some Afghans surveyed may have simply agreed with the interviewer. However, this test shows that it may be possible to increase confidence in the elections by explaining the process to people.

Telling Afghans that ballots will be cast in private, folded, and put in a box so that no one can see it gave two-thirds (67%) more confidence in the fairness of the electoral process. Some 37% were much more confident as a result. Informing respondents that there will be election monitors who will report cheating made three-quarters (75%) more confident and almost half (46%) much more confident in the elections.

Of respondents who were told that since voting is secret, even if people are given money, they can still vote for the party they like, 65% reported being more confident (and 33% much more confident) in the fairness of the elections. Similarly, a message that since the vote is secret, even if voters are threatened they can vote for their preferred party made almost three in five (58%) more confident, and three in ten (29%) much more confident that the vote will be free and fair.

Responses to Voter Education Messages

(Q. 66-69)

	Much more confident	Total More confident
Groups of monitors independent of the parties will observe every step of the elections and inform the people (authorities) of any cheating.	46%	75%
Everyone will mark their vote on a paper in private, fold it up, and put it in a box, so no one will see for whom you vote. Your vote will be your secret.	37%	67%
Because voting will be secret, even if political parties give people money for their votes, people will still be able to vote for the party they like.	33%	66%
Because voting will be secret, even if political parties make threats to get people to vote for their candidates, people will still be able to vote for the party they like.	29%	58%

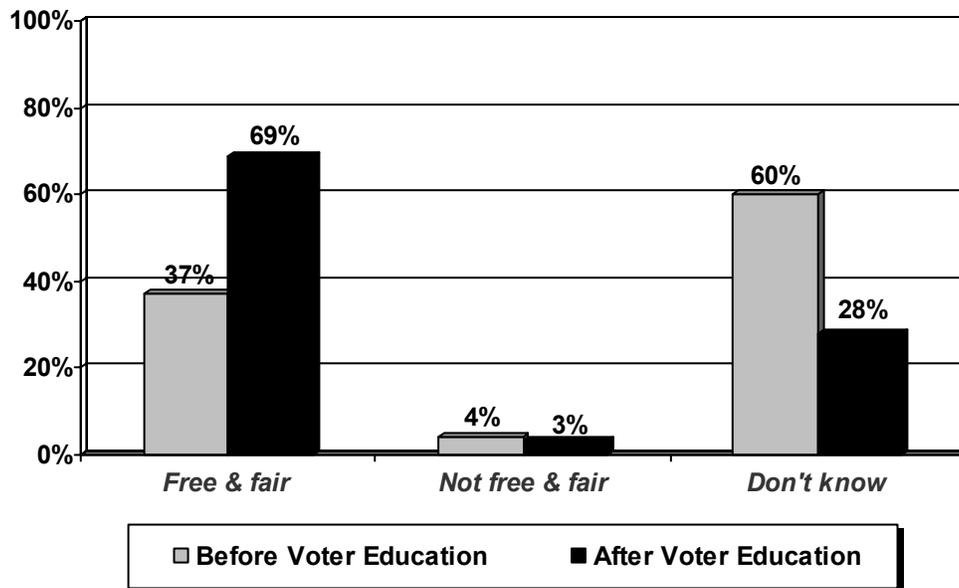
Impact of Information

We revisited the question of election fairness after providing the voter education messages noted above to respondents. After the voter education messages, nearly seven in ten respondents (69%) felt the elections will be free and fair, compared to just 37% prior to this simulated educational campaign. Fewer than three in ten (28%) remained uncertain whether the elections will be free and fair. This is a gain in confidence in the elections of 32 points – in other words, one third of those interviewed felt more confident that the elections would be free and fair.

Citizens who reported an increased confidence after receiving basic voter information tended to be men, especially older rural men, rural residents, those in the North and Central regions, those who never attended school, especially those who do not listen regularly to radio. These citizens reported vote buying and cheating in the count most frequently as possible problems occurring in the election, and two-thirds of them were unaware of election monitors or secret ballots. These may be important target groups for voter education.

Impact of Voter Education

Do you think the elections will be free and fair or do you think they will not be free and fair? (Q. 61/72)



CHAPTER 4: WOMEN AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Women's Major Problems

To understand how people in Afghanistan perceive the situation of women, we asked them to choose from a list of options what they considered to be the two biggest problems facing women in their areas.

Both men and women interviewed selected lack of education and literacy (47%), women's rights (33%) and health care (32%) as the greatest problems confronting women in their country. Other problems mentioned include control by men (noted by 21%), poverty (18%), forced marriages or dowry abuses (17%), and lack of permission to leave their homes (12%). Only 6% referred to security as a major problem for women, perhaps because insecurity is a general issue that concerns both sexes where it prevails. Domestic violence was mentioned by 4%.

Looking at the responses regarding the single top problem facing Afghan women, the themes that emerge are women's lack of power and lack of access to services and income.

A general lack of rights received the most mentions (26%). When those responses are taken together with those mentioning male power, homebound women, and forced marriages, fully half of the respondents (49%) chose one aspect or another of lack of power as women's greatest single problem in Afghanistan.

The second broad theme – obviously connected to the first – is exclusion from opportunities to receive services or earn money. Issues related to this theme – education, health care, and poverty – were mentioned by 41% as the single most important problem for Afghan women.

There was a consensus between men and women in Afghanistan on the biggest problems facing women, despite the fact that many of these same problems involve the role of men. The responses of both sexes on every item regarding the status of women were similar within two or three points. Only 1% of Afghan men claimed that women have no problems in their society.

On this question, as on many others in the survey, there were regional differences in the responses. Lack of women's rights was perceived as more of a problem in the Northwest (where 54% cited it as one of women's top two problems) and Center-east (50% mentioned it) than in the North (31%), Northeast (30%), East (29%) or Southern (26%) regions. Women's rights were only mentioned as a problem by 5% of respondents in the Central region.

The principal problem for women cited by respondents in the Central region was poor health care (77%), followed by women’s lack of education (73%). In the South, illiteracy (64%) was perceived as the biggest problem followed by health care (37%). Similarly, health care ranked below women’s education in the North (health 17%, education 33%), Northeast (health 9%, education 42%) and East (health 29%, education 41%).

Problems Facing Women

What do you think is the biggest problem facing women in this area today?

And the next biggest? (Q. 91/92, Base 802)

(Top two responses combined, those answering 5% or more)

Education/illiteracy	47%
Lack of rights	33%
Health care	32%
Under control of men	21%
Poverty	18%
Forced marriages/dowry	17%
Can't leave homes	11%
Security	6%
Don't know	5%

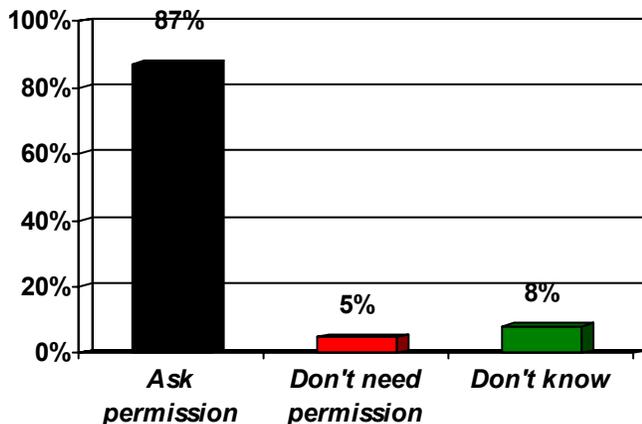
Women's Voting Decisions

Among our respondents, there was a consensus that Afghan women's participation in the upcoming elections will be heavily influenced by men. Fully 87% of Afghans surveyed said that women will need to get permission from their husband or the head of the family to be able to vote in the upcoming elections, while only 5% said women would not need to do so. Moreover, 72% of Afghans we interviewed said that men should advise women on their voting choice, versus 21% who said that women should choose for themselves. The proportion who feel that men should advise women in Afghanistan are far higher than we have found in the other Asian countries (Indonesia, Cambodia and East Timor) where we have conducted similar surveys.¹¹

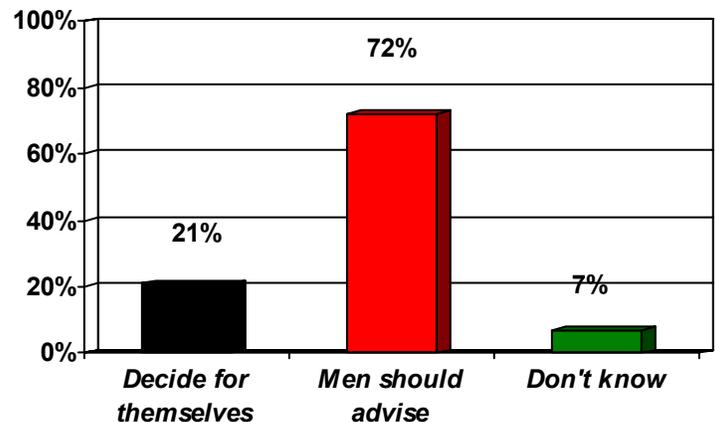
There was a large degree of agreement among women and men on these issues. Some 88% of men and 85% of women agreed that women will need their husband's permission to vote. Similarly, over four-fifths (85%) of the men said they think that women will need their advice to decide their vote. So do more than two-thirds (69%) of the women, although a significant proportion (31%) said they would decide for themselves without advice from their male family members. While women's agreement may reflect pragmatism rather than principle, it remains a striking fact that underlines the reality of men's influence over whether and how women will be able to participate in the elections.

Women's Voting Decisions

Do you think women need to ask their husband's permission to vote in the elections, or do you think they do not need to ask permission to vote?



If women vote, do you think that women should decide for themselves or should they receive advice from men?



¹¹ Data for Indonesia can be found in *Democracy in Indonesia: A Survey of the Indonesian Electorate in 2003*, (Jakarta, The Asia Foundation: 2003); Cambodian data in *Democracy in Cambodia 2003* (Phnom Penh, The Asia Foundation: 2003); also see *East Timor National Survey of Voter Knowledge* (Dili, The Asia Foundation: 2001).

Women's Political Participation

Our findings suggest that most women will be allowed to vote, but that a significant minority may not be, particularly in certain regions.

Almost one-fifth (18%) of the men interviewed said they would not allow their wives to vote. However, twice as large a proportion of women (35%) either thought they would not get permission from their husband or family head to vote, or did not know if they would get such permission. The women who did not know whether their male family members would let them vote came from the same regions and social groups as the men who indicated a reluctance to do so.

The true percentage of men reluctant to let women vote may lie somewhere between these two figures. Some men who do not intend to let their wives vote may be reluctant to admit as much, while some wives who think their husbands will not let them vote may be mistaken.

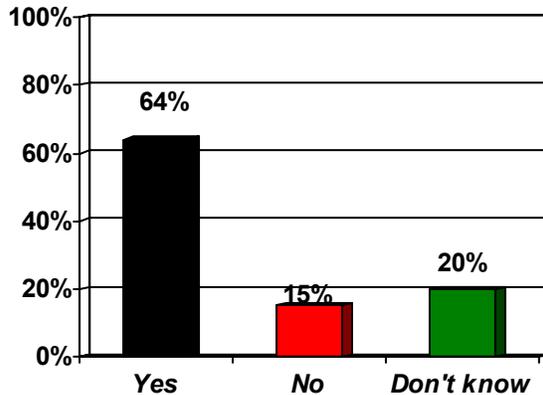
The strongest influence on men's willingness to let their wives vote is whether they themselves intend to do so. Two-thirds (67%) of the fairly small minority of men who said that they do not intend to vote also said they would not let their wives vote. One in nine (11%) of the large majority of men who said that they do intend to vote said that they would not allow their wives to vote.

The proportions of men who do not intend to let their wives vote was highest in the two regions where the political mood is generally negative, the Northwest (32%) and the South (24%). However, the proportion unwilling to do so remained significant elsewhere, ranging from 16% to 18% in the North, Northeast, East, and Center. Only in the Center-East was the proportion of men unwilling to let their wives vote less than one in ten (9%).

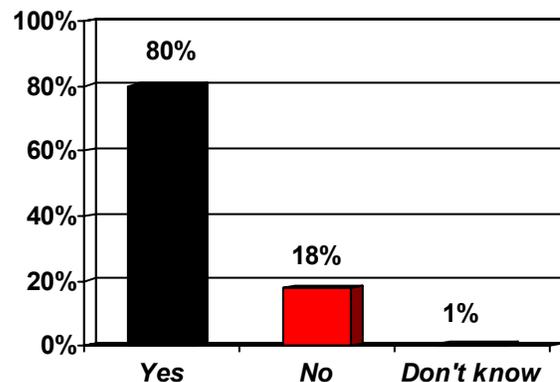
Reluctance to let women vote was above average among rural men (21%), those with less than primary education (30%) and Shia men (29%). On the other hand, there was almost no relationship between different ethnicity's willingness to let women vote: the proportions of reluctant men among Pashtuns, Tadjiks, Uzbeks, and Hazaras were similar.

Women's Political Participation

Do you think that your husband/male elder would give you permission to vote if you ask? (Q. 94. Base 404)



Do you think you would give your wife (if not married: your future wife) permission to vote if she asks? (Q. 95. Base 400)



Arguments for Women Voting

In order to see how voter education might approach the issue of persuading men to let women vote, interviewers tested a set of seven possible messages that might be used in favor of women voting.

The strongest arguments on why women should vote in the elections among men who initially would not allow their wives to vote were:

- Islamic scholars have said women should vote (57% agree, 26% agree strongly¹²)
- Everyone must vote for themselves (53% agree, 23% strongly)
- Women are allowed to vote in Islamic democracies (52% agree, 22% strongly)
- If women in your community don't vote, it loses half its votes (52% agree, 14% strongly).
- Women will vote separately from men (46% agree, 25% strongly)

One theme running through these arguments has to do with Islamic concerns: Islamic scholars rejecting religious objections to the vote and the practice of women voting in

¹² This indicated the agreement of 'reluctant men' with the statement.

Islamic democracies.¹³ A second involves the mechanics of women voting; women will vote separately, but they must vote for themselves – their husbands cannot vote for them.

Arguments for Women Voting

Agreement with the following statements among men who said they would not let their wives vote or were not sure if they would (Q. 98- 104)

	Agree	Agree Strongly
Many Islamic scholars have approved that women have the right to vote. So women should be allowed to vote.	57%	26%
In the election, everyone must vote for themselves. Men cannot vote in place of women. Women must vote for themselves.	53%	23%
Women are allowed to vote in Islamic democracies like Pakistan, Iran, Egypt, Bangladesh, Malaysia and Indonesia and so they should vote in Afghanistan too.	52%	22%
If the women in your community don't vote, your community loses half its votes, and your candidate may lose the election because of that. So women should vote.	52%	14%
Women will vote separately from men. They will not mix. So they should be allowed to vote.	46%	25%

¹³ While people may argue whether some of the countries referred to in the message, such as Iran, Pakistan, and Egypt really are democracies, previous research has shown that Afghans regard them as such. See “A Society in Transition, Focus Group Discussions in Afghanistan,” Focus Group Report, National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, 2003, p.18

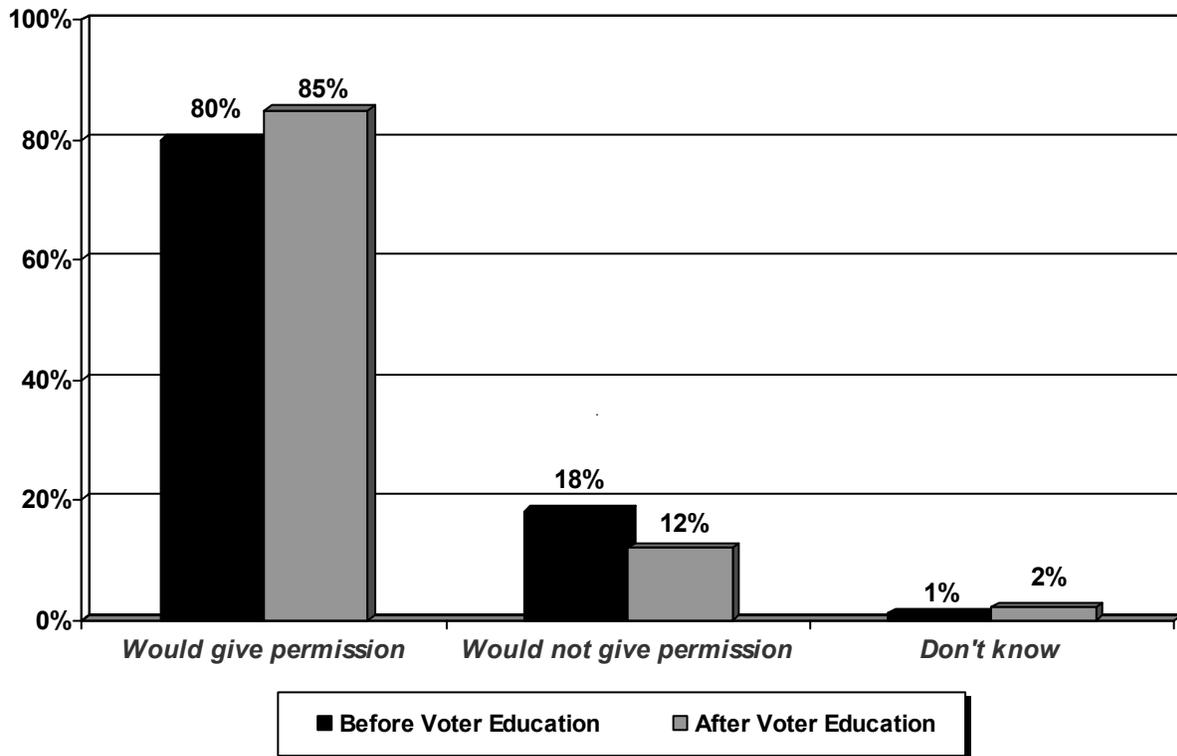
Impact of Arguments for Women Voting

Roughly one-third of the men who were initially unwilling to allow their wives to vote said they had changed their mind on whether or not they would let their wives vote after hearing these arguments.

The majority of the men (56%) who continued to refuse permission for their wives to vote after hearing these messages did not, in fact, plan to vote in the elections themselves.

Impact of Arguments for Women Voting

*Do you think you would give your wife permission to vote if she asks?
(Before and after voter education) (Q. 95/105, Base 400)*



Voter Education for Women

The overwhelming majority (79%) of Afghans interviewed supported women attending voter education programs conducted separately from those for men. There is approval by the vast majority of men (87%) for separate women's voter education programs, and a still large but slightly smaller majority of women (74%) favors the same. (Some 5% of women volunteered a preference for programs bringing the sexes together, which none of the male respondents did.)

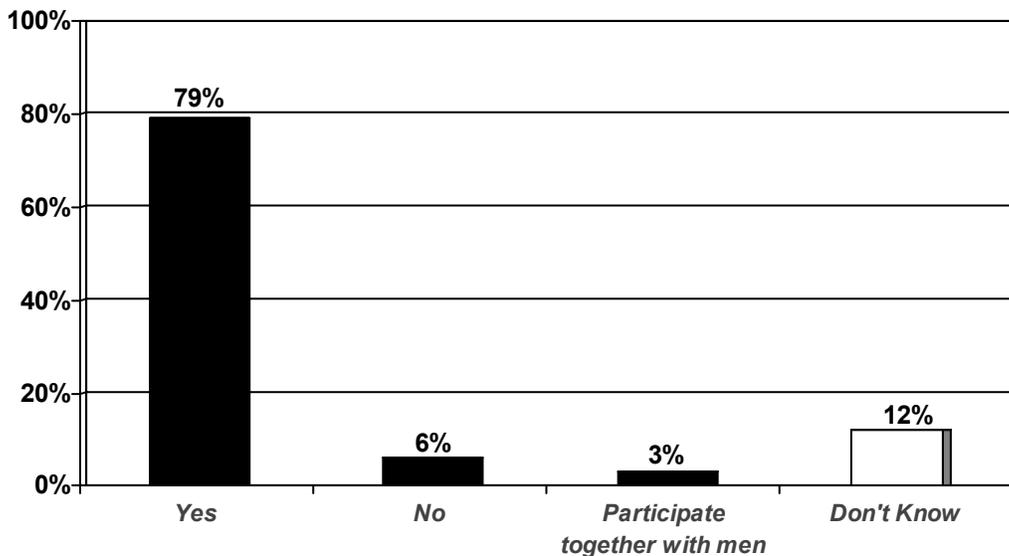
The principal determinant of whether men favor voter education for women is whether they would allow women in their families to vote. Of those who would do so, 97% would let women participate in voter education programs; of those men would not let women vote, only 41% would let women attend voter education. Similarly, the strongest influence on women's support for female participation in voter education was whether they expect the men in their families to let them vote. Among those women who think their men will do so, 87% favored women's involvement in voter education programs, while among those who did not think they will be allowed to vote, only 49% would do so.

Not surprisingly, then, support for women's voter education ran along the same lines as support for women voting, running stronger among urban and better educated citizens, and outside the South, Northwest, and East.

Thus, from the viewpoint of voter education planning, it appears that if men can be persuaded to let women vote, they will also let them participate in voter education. This not only heightens the importance of such persuasion, it increases its urgency. Messages in favor of women's voting should begin early enough so that women will be permitted to register and receive voter education, not just to vote on Election Day.

Voter Education for Women

If there are separate educational programs for men and women, should women participate in programs to learn about the elections? (Q. 97, Base 804)



CHAPTER 5: CIVIC EDUCATION NEEDS

Characteristics of a Democratic Country

A clear majority of Afghans could offer an idea of what democracy means when asked. More than three of every five respondents (64%) were able, unaided, to name at least one characteristic of a democratic country. This is one of the highest proportions able to do so that we have found in the voter education studies we have conducted in other Asian countries¹⁴.

The most frequent associations of democracy among Afghans related to political rights. Above all, they referred to freedom, mentioned by 39%, followed by rights and the rule of law (21%), a government of the people (20%), women's rights (12%), and Islamic democracy (8%). Examples of their comments include:

- "It will bring me freedom of speech, so I can defend my rights."
- "In democracy I can defend my rights."
- Freedom should be given to women according to the Islamic framework."
- "I want to be free in my religion."

Understanding of a Democracy

If a country is called a democracy, what does that mean to you? Anything else? (Q. 73)

- **Don't Know / No Response: 36%**
- **Political Rights: 58%**
 - "Freedom": 39%
 - "Rights and law", 21%
 - "Government of the people", 20%
 - "Women's rights", 11%
 - "Islamic democracy", 8%
 - Elections: 4%
 - Communism: 1%
- **Peace, Stability, Security: 20%**
- **Economic Gains: 8%**

¹⁴ Comparable figures include 39% able to name at least one characteristic of a democratic country prior to Indonesia's first democratic election, 55% in Cambodia before the 2002 local government elections there, and 63% in East Timor before its first election in 2001, the only one of the three countries where the proportion able to do so equals that in Afghanistan. See *Democracy in Indonesia, op. cit.* (p.113), *Democracy in Cambodia 2003* (The Asia Foundation, Phnom Penh, p.69), and *East Timor National Survey of Voter Knowledge* (The Asia Foundation, Dili, p.30).

Only 4% explicitly mentioned elections as part of democracy, as in other countries where we have polled prior to founding elections, although some may have regarded voting as part of a government of the people.

After political rights, peace and stability were the characteristics most strongly associated with democratic countries by Afghan citizens, with 20% of respondents mentioning them. Next came economic prosperity, cited by 8%. Although a few Afghans associated democracy with communism, reflecting the harsh memories of communist rule under the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan in the 1980s, they number only 1% of Afghans interviewed.

Fairly similar responses were given by citizens in all seven regions, including the South and Northwest. Freedom was the most frequent association with democracy in all regions and differences in the frequency of other responses statistically insignificant. The same is true for differences among ethnic groups. Surprisingly, there were few differences on the meaning of democracy among those favorable and unfavorable to the Taliban.

Nonetheless, more than one-third of our respondents (37%) could not specify any characteristics of a democracy. There is a significant gender gap here, with women (45%), especially rural women (51%), the least likely to have any idea of the meaning of democracy. The same is true of respondents who did not receive a primary education (66%) and those still not aware (73%) of the forthcoming elections. These are also the groups hard to reach through the media: 67% of those who do not listen to the radio and 43% without television could not suggest a meaning for democracy.

There was evidence of regional differences in the ability to suggest a meaning for democracy. Respondents in the South (50%), East (48%) and Central (47%) regions were less likely to suggest a meaning for democracy than those elsewhere. The respondents in the rural areas were more likely to have no response (40%) than those in urban areas (24%).

It may seem startling that a relatively high proportion of the respondents had a clear conception of democracy, considering the low level of literacy in the country and the disruptive decades of conflict it has experienced. However, despite the high illiteracy rate among Afghans, most are still exposed to news about developments in the world outside through radio and television (see Chapter Six).

Personal Consequences of Democracy

Some 63% of Afghans also offered an idea of what democracy might mean to them. When asked what democracy might bring to them personally, the most frequent answers by far referred to political rights: Freedom (mentioned by 30%), rights and law (the hope of 24%), women's rights (16%), government of the people (14%), Islamic democracy (11%), and elections (5%). Some thoughts that respondents expressed include:

- “It can give me the freedom of speech and beliefs.”
- “I want the freedom of speech, beliefs and justice.”
- “We want freedom in the framework of Islam.”
- “I want to take part in the election.”

After political rights, the next most common personal association with democracy was peace (27%), a hope for peaceable resolution to the conflicts that have divided the country for decades. The third major hope, voiced by 16%, was that democracy will provide prosperity. But it is noteworthy that this proportion was the smallest of the major hopes for democracy, consistent with the awareness of the severity of Afghanistan's economic and infrastructure issues revealed by other questions in the survey.¹⁵

Compared to our findings regarding the meaning of democracy in the abstract, views of more personal gains from democracy, both for men and women, were skewed in favor of rights and law, peace, and prosperity, aspects that people might experience directly in their lives and that contrast most explicitly with the anarchy, war, and poverty that have been their lot in recent decades. Freedom, though also the top association on this question, was mentioned a bit less often at the personal level than at the national level.

Within the general pattern there were some gender differences. Women (24%), particularly women with post-primary education suggested that democracy would bring them ‘women's rights’ (36%). Men (24%), and especially post-primary educated men (36%), focused more on prosperity as a possible outcome of democracy. Men in general were most likely to see freedom as the principal consequence to them of democracy, while women cited peace as well as women's rights more often than freedom.

The proportion of Afghans unable to suggest anything at all that democracy might personally offer them (37%) was similar to that unable to suggest any characteristics of a democratic country and drawn from the same social groups. These citizens are prime targets for civic education.

¹⁵ In Indonesia and East Timor, the proportions who expected that democracy would bring prosperity were much higher than is now the case in Afghanistan, while those focused on political rights were fewer in number. See *Democracy in Indonesia, op. cit.* (p.114), and *East Timor National Survey of Voter Knowledge, op. cit.* (p. 33).

Personal Consequences of Democracy

What, if anything, is the most important thing that a democracy in Afghanistan will bring you personally? Anything else? (Q. 74)

- **Don't Know / No Response: 37%**
- **Political Rights: 53%**
 - *“Freedom,” 30%*
 - *Rights and law: 24%*
 - *Women's rights: 16%*
 - *Government of the people : 14%*
 - *Islamic Democracy: 11%*
 - *Elections: 5%*
 - *Communism: 1%*
- **Peace, Stability, Security: 27%**
- **Economic Gains: 16%**

Democratic Values

The findings of our survey indicate a very broad consensus among Afghans regarding four basic democratic values, with each of which 75% or more agree. These include equal rights for all of any gender, tribe, or religion, supported by 89%, accountability of political leadership to the people (88%), the involvement of political parties in peaceable politics (80%), and peaceable opposition to government (78%). Particularly noteworthy about our findings is the large proportions who agree strongly with these values: around seven in ten for equality of rights and accountability, and roughly half for the two other items.

However, while the consensus is nearly universal on the issues relating to the most fundamental characteristics of democracy, i.e. equal rights under the law and governments' accountability to the people, the respondents in our survey are less familiar with the roles and procedures of democratic processes of governance. Women, particularly rural women and those with less than a primary education are likelier to have no opinion (25-30%) about peaceful opposition and the involvement of political parties in politics. Similarly, there are also regional differences – respondents from the Central (31%), Northwest (28%) and South (25%) are less likely to have an opinion on whether or not the government should also include peaceful opposition, as compared to the others. The same is true among respondents who are not familiar with any of the characteristics of a democratic country (of whom roughly 40% have no opinion).

Women as a group tend to be more wary of violence, while the regions with higher degrees of uncertainty include those which have experienced particularly intense repression (the heavily Shia Center under the Sunni Taliban) or currently have high levels of insecurity and conflict (the South and Northwest). Most of these groups are also less likely to have articulated any conception of the meaning of democracy on the previous questions.

Democratic Values

(Q. 78-82)

	Total Agree	Agree Strongly
Everyone should have equal rights under the law, regardless of their gender, ethnicity or religion	89%	71%
If political leaders do not listen to criticism from the people, they should lose their positions.	88%	69%
In Afghanistan, it is good for political parties to be peacefully involved in politics.	80%	51%
It is a good thing that the government should allow peaceful opposition.	78%	47%

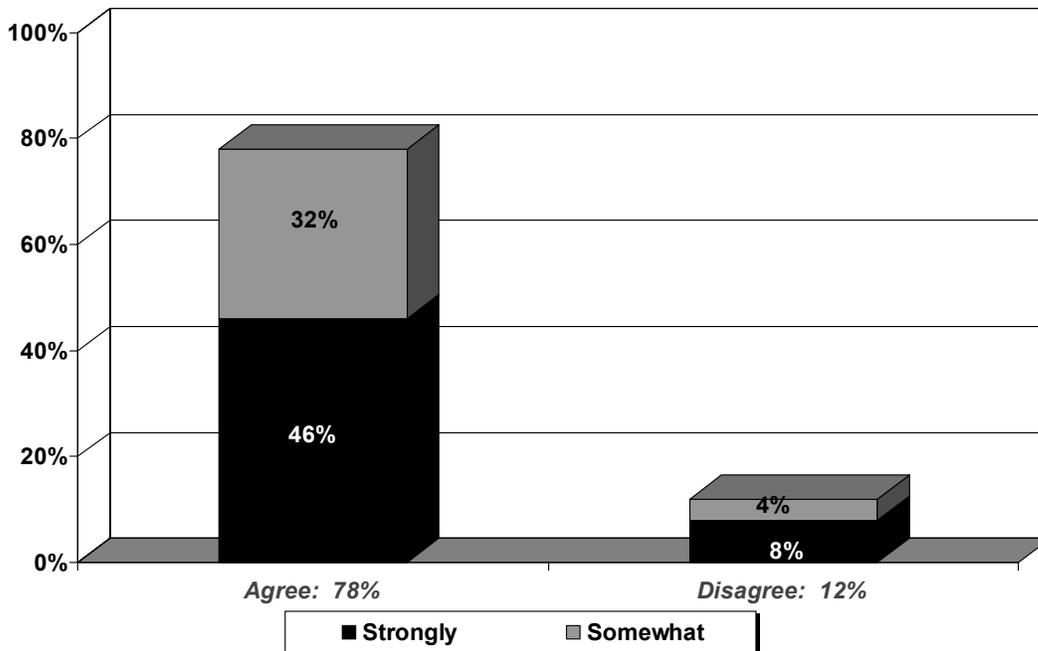
Religious and Political Leadership

Some 78% of Afghans agree that religious authorities should lead people in obeying the obligations of their faith while political leaders should make decisions about how the government is run. This includes 46% who agree strongly. Only 12% disagree with these views.

However, although most agree with the separation of religious and political leadership, differences on this issue among Afghan citizens are sharper than those regarding the democratic values cited above. Despite the acceptance of this principle by a large majority at the national level, it receives less support in the South (56%) and Northwest (48%), the two most troubled regions, though even there it does enjoy majority or plurality support.

Religious and Political Leadership

Religious authorities should lead people in obeying the obligations of their faith while political leaders should make decisions about how the government is run.



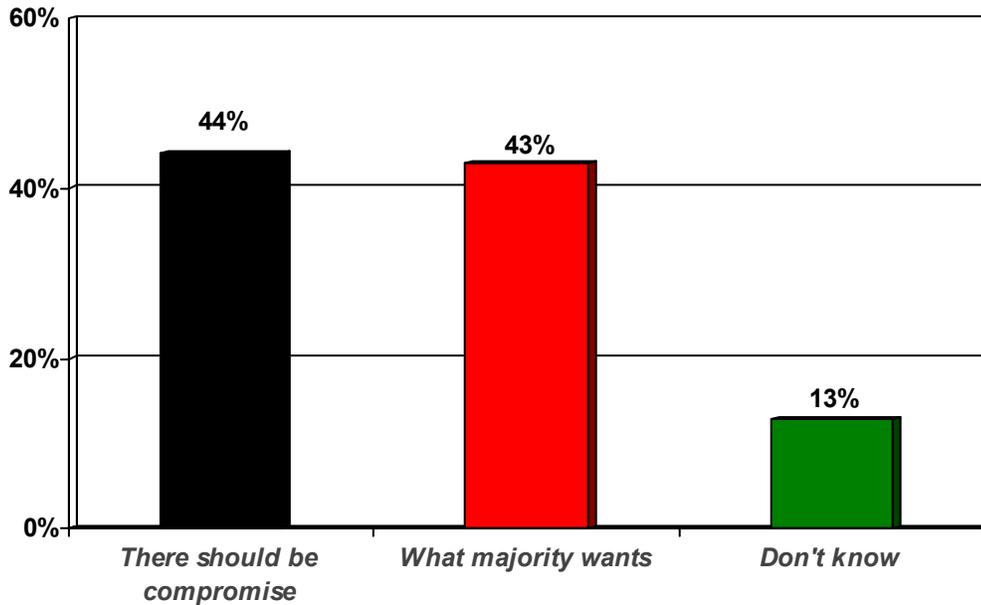
Compromise with Minorities

The respondents in our survey were split on whether compromise with minority groups to build consensus should take precedence over majority rule when decisions are made. While 44% favored efforts to achieve as much compromise as possible between majority and minority, almost as many (43%) did not agree there should be a compromise between the minority groups and the ruling majority. Men (56%) appeared more in favor of compromise as compared to women (33%), and those respondents who are literate (49%) were marginally more open to compromise with minority groups than were illiterate Afghans (39%).

There were some regional differences with respondents from the East (57%), Central East (55%) and Central (54%) more likely to favor compromise compared to the North East (37%), South (35%) and North West (27%). There were no significant differences among the major ethnic groups in their attitudes to compromise.

Compromise with Minorities

Some people say: "Decisions should be made based on what the majority wants, even if the minority disagrees." Others say: "It is more important to get as much agreement as possible between the minority and majority, even if the majority must compromise." Which is closer to your view? (Q. 83)



Islam and Democracy

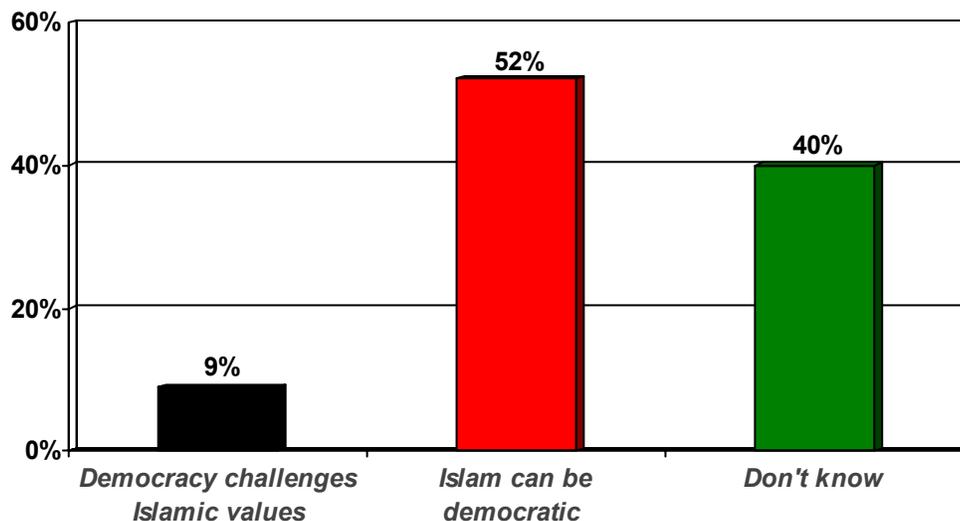
The Afghans interviewed were divided on the issue of the compatibility of western notions of democratic freedom with Islamic values. While 52% said that democracy does not pose a challenge to Islamic values by bringing freedom and Westernization, a substantial group (40%) responded that they “do not know.” However, only 9% of those surveyed said that that democracy and Islam are incompatible .

Uncertainty about whether democracy and Islam are compatible was highest amongst rural Afghan respondents, especially rural women (54% had no opinion), and people without a primary education (59%). It was even higher among those who do not listen regularly to the radio (75%). Afghans who could not suggest a single meaning for democracy were also among the most likely to be uncertain that Islam can be reconciled with democracy (78%) – not surprisingly, since they tend to be the same groups.

There were also regional variances in these responses. Those in the East (67%), Central (48%) and Southern (41%) regions were likelier to be undecided. There were also significant minorities in two regions, the Northwest (30%) and South (17%), who think that democracy does pose a challenge to Islamic values.

Democracy and Islamic Values

Some people say: “Democracy will bring Westernization and too much freedom and challenge Islamic values.” Other people say: “An Islamic country can be democratic without becoming too Western. It can still keep its Islamic values” Which is closer to your view? (Q.84)



Political Tolerance

Although many of Afghans interviewed accepted the values of democracy, political tolerance was generally quite low amongst our respondents. Fewer than one-third of Afghans polled (30%) thought that all political parties, including unpopular ones, should be allowed to hold public meetings in their communities, while almost half (47%) would bar such groups. While respondents exhibited somewhat stronger loyalties to their friends than to abstract democratic principles, only half (49%) of Afghan citizens said they would accept a friend who supported a party they did not like. Almost one quarter (23%) would end the friendship in that case, while a slightly larger proportion (28%) was unsure what they would do.

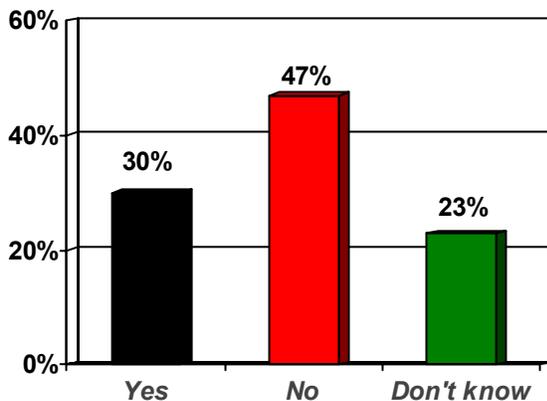
Tolerance on both issues was highest among younger urban men, students, and secondary-educated women. Uncertainty about tolerance was highest among women, particularly those with less than primary education and housewives, and among those who do not listen to radio. Intolerance was highest among men over 35, perhaps a result or their being involved in or affected by decades of conflict.

There was not much relationship between tolerance of groups and individuals with opposing political views, and acceptance of the democratic principles noted above. In the Afghan context, the lack of political tolerance appears to be an indication of fear of violence.

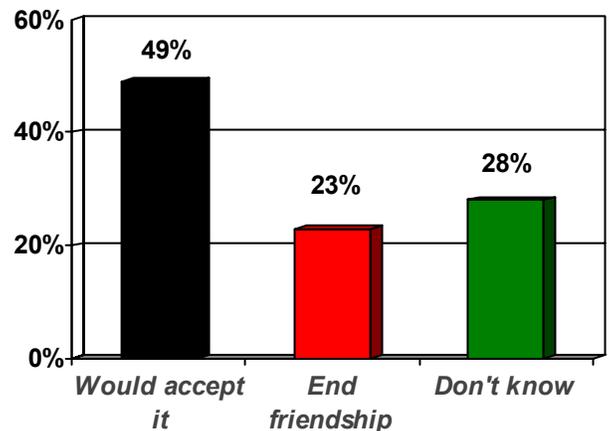
The Northeast was the only region where the majority would let unpopular parties hold public meetings in their communities. (Some 67% of respondents in the Northeast said that they would allow unpopular parties to meet.)

Political Tolerance

Do you think that all political parties, even the ones most people do not like, should be allowed to hold meetings in your area?



Suppose a friend of yours supported a party you don't like. Would you accept that, or would it end your friendship? (Q. 75/76)



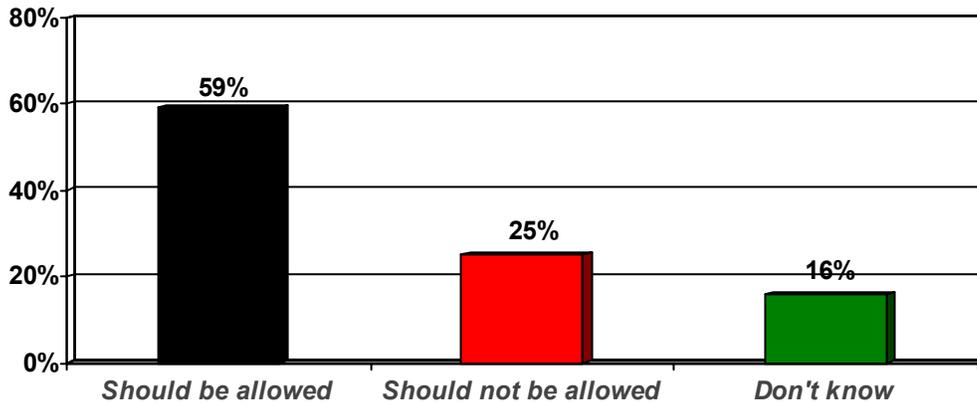
Political Tolerance: The Taliban

The majority of Afghans surveyed said they are willing to reintegrate ex-Taliban into their country's political life, forgiving the past mistakes and chaotic rule of the Taliban regime. In fact, three in five Afghans (59%) think that the Taliban should be allowed to participate in the forthcoming elections if they were to lay down their arms. Only one-fourth of the respondents in our survey were opposed to this idea.

Support for the reintegration of the Taliban was strongest among men, particularly those over 35. (This is further evidence suggesting that their intolerance reflects fears of more conflicts like those they had experienced, rather than adherence to an intolerant ideology.) It was also stronger among those with post-primary education. It enjoys a solid majority in all regions except the Northwest and North, where the population was fairly evenly split on the issue.

Political Tolerance: Taliban

If members of the Taliban lay down their weapons, do you think they should or should not be allowed to stand in the elections? (Q. 77)



Political Efficacy

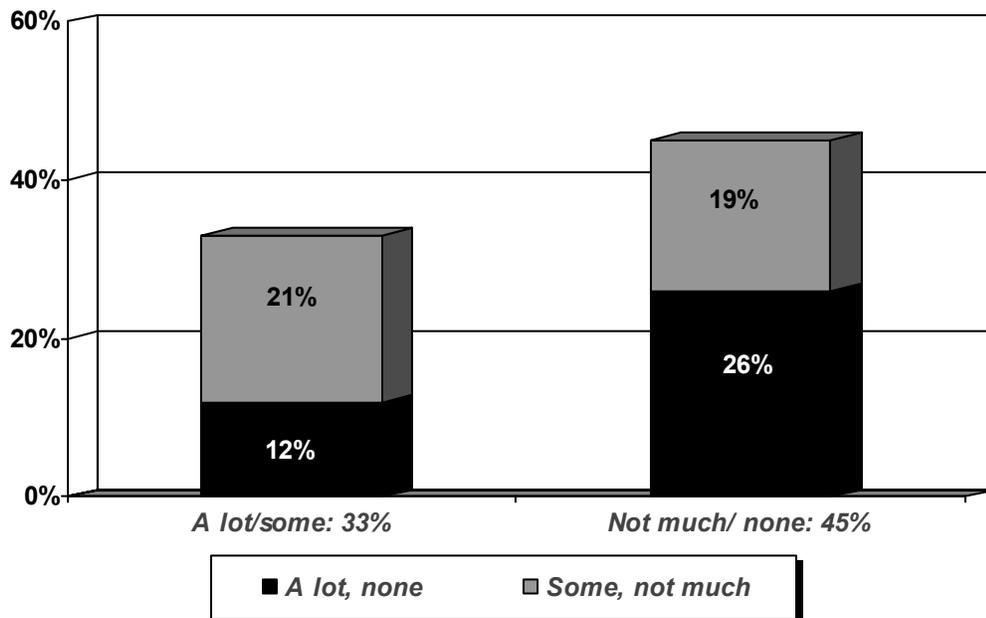
The Afghans we interviewed feel little sense of political efficacy. Only around one-third of our respondents stated that that they might have any influence over government decisions, and only one in eight thought they had a lot of influence.

There were regional and ethnic differences on these issues. Respondents from the Northeast (58%) and Central East (60%) felt most influential in matters of governance. Interestingly, those of Tadjik ethnicity were roughly twice as likely to feel empowered (46%) as Pashtuns (23%) or Uzbeks (25%), perhaps due to a proportionately large number of Tadjiks currently in power in the transitional government. Urban dwellers were considerably likelier to feel influential than those in rural areas, 45% to 29%. Similarly, only 19% of illiterates and 17% of radio non-listeners felt they have influence, compared to 41% of the literate and 38% of radio listeners. While those with primary schooling or less were the educational group least likely to feel empowered (25%), students felt highly-empowered (59% think they have influence over government). Surprisingly given the status of women in general in Afghanistan, several groups of women were also likely to feel they have influence, including those with secondary education (61%) and urban women (57%).

Other groups who perceive themselves as influential were those who were favorable to the Transitional Government (45%), who reported feeling more prosperous since the Taliban's fall, (73% of whom consider themselves influential), who displayed a high level of political tolerance (also 73%), or who stated that they are interested in politics (54%). Thus region, ethnicity, urbanization, access to education and media, gender, and political attitudes all influence levels of political efficacy among Afghans. Nevertheless, the overall level of efficacy remains low.

Political Efficacy

How much influence do you think someone like you can have over government decisions – a lot, some, very little, or none at all? (Q. 85)



Political Alienation

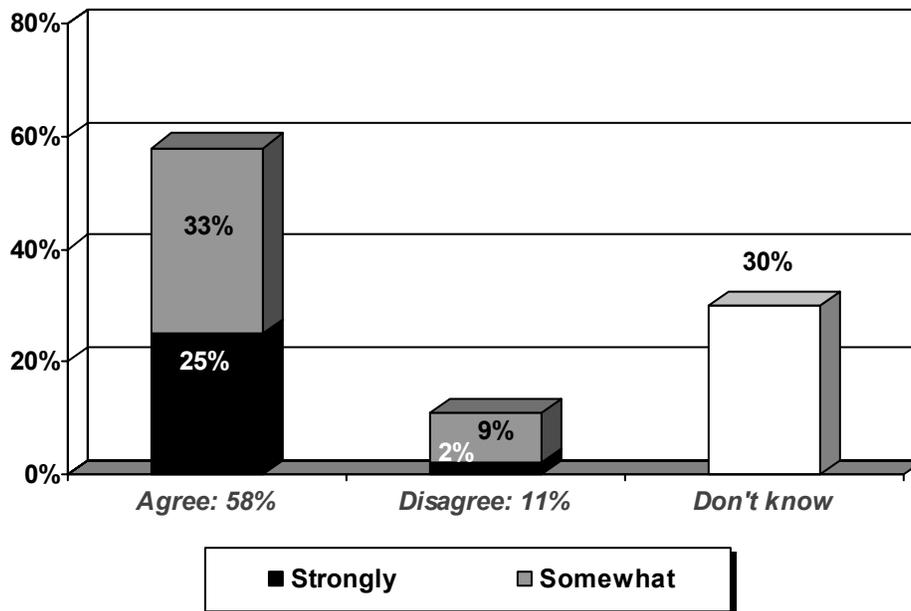
Despite their overall satisfaction with their current government and leaders, the Afghans interviewed still reported feeling extremely disconnected from their leaders. Almost six citizens in ten (58%) did not feel the government cares about what people like them think and another 30% did not know. A mere 11% said the government does care about what they think – an extremely low percentage.

Those regions reporting the greatest political alienation are the Northeast (where 71% say government doesn't care), Northwest (74%) and Central East/Kabul (76%). The more educated citizens were, the more they were likely to feel the government does not care about them or their concerns. The sense of alienation among the educated – usually the group that feels most empowered in a democracy – may reflect the degree to which the country has witnessed the displacement of education as a qualification for power by weaponry.

The high level of political alienation is an indication of how much work needs to be done to re-establish two-way communication and trust between leaders and the governed after three decades of bitter conflict in Afghanistan.

Political Alienation

Some people say, "I don't think that the government cares much about what people like me think." Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Strongly, or somewhat?(Q.34)



Political Discussion and Interest

It is also clear from the survey that few Afghans (16%) often discuss politics with their friends. Some 84% said they rarely or never discuss politics with them. In this respect, the Afghan citizenry presents a challenge for civic education planning, since everyday life for citizens seems to be marked by the absence of any significant public sphere for political discussion and hence an unusual disengagement, or disconnect, from political matters.

It is clear that political voice in Afghanistan is demarcated along the lines of gender, education, and income. One man in four said that he talks about politics regularly (“often” or “almost all the time,” compared to just one woman in twelve. The secondary-educated were more than three times as likely to talk about politics regularly as those with less schooling. The effects of gender and schooling cumulate: some 40% of secondary-educated men talk about politics, along with 16% of secondary-educated women. Likewise, those with incomes above Af20,000 per year were three times as likely (24%) to often discuss politics as those with incomes under Af12,000.

It is also noteworthy that, although a strongest determinant of political discussion is interest in politics, the effects of this factor are surprisingly limited. While a mere 2% of those uninterested in politics regularly discuss it, 44% of those who said they are interested do not regularly discuss politics.

Given the regional differences on many other political attitudes, it is striking that there are few in this area: in every region only a small minority of the citizens reported that they engage in political debate. The same was true for every ethnic group. This is understandable, given the fact that the ordinary citizens of Afghanistan have known fear and repression rather than democracy and free expression for decades. However, a situation in which there is an extremely narrow public sphere of political discussion renders difficult the development of critical political engagement among the underprivileged majority of potential citizens prior to the upcoming elections.

On the other hand, the limited degree of political discussion among Afghans currently should not be seen as indicative of a corresponding degree of apathy regarding politics or a disinterest in the upcoming elections. The level of interest in politics (33%) was roughly twice that of political discussion, and 7% claimed to be very interested in politics. Some 53% said they are not interested in politics, although for many this may reflect negative associations with the connotations of “politics” rather than disinterest in the elections (see the next section).

Not surprisingly, interest in politics is shaped by the same factors that influence political discussion: gender, education, and income. Almost half of the Afghan men surveyed (45%) said they are interested in politics, compared to only half as many women (23%). The proportion interested in politics jumps from 15% among those with less than primary school to 41% among the primary educated and 57% among Afghans who went to secondary school. Upper income Afghans were also more interested in politics: among those whose family incomes are over Af20,000, 45% are interested in politics, almost twice the proportion among those with incomes under Af12,000 (25%). Disadvantaged groups in Afghanistan not only talk less about politics – they are less interested in it as well.

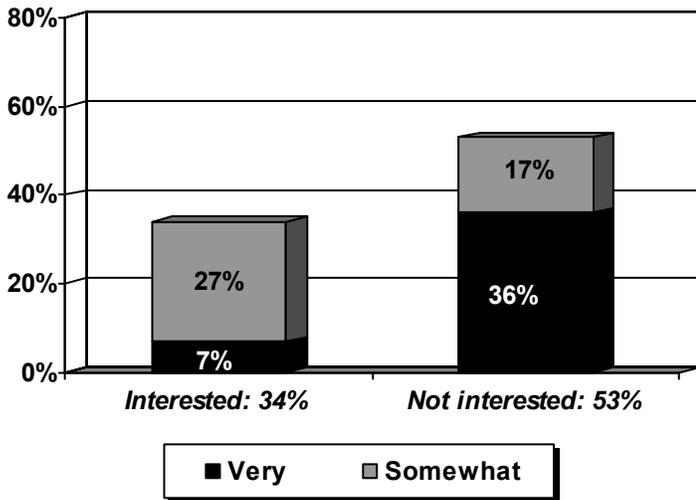
Perceptions of political efficacy have a strong effect on interest in politics. Among those who think they have a lot or some influence over government, 55% said they are interested in politics, while among those who don't, only 25% said they are interested in politics

This survey also found a correlation between interest in politics and access to media. Afghans who can read were almost five times likelier to be interested in politics than those who cannot (52% vs. 11%). Among those who listen regularly to radio, 42% were interested, more than four times the level of interest among those who do not (9%). Those who watch TV regularly were also more likely than those who do not to display interest in politics, by a margin of 41% to 30%.

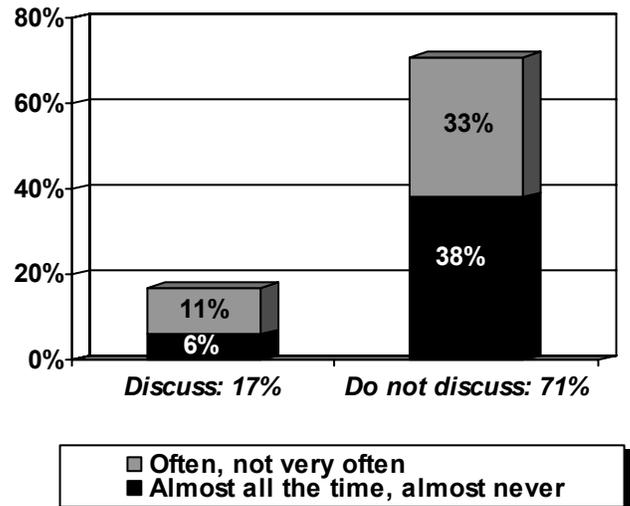
There are modest regional differences in citizens' level of political interest. Afghans in the North (44%) and Northeast (56%) regions were more interested in politics than those in the five other regions, where interest levels range from 20% to 37%.

Political Interest and Discussion

How interested are you in politics? Very interested, somewhat interested, not very interested or not interested at all?



How often do you discuss politics with friends? Almost all the time, often, not very often, or almost never? (Q. 86/87)



Interest in Political Information

Despite the low levels of political interest and discussion voiced by Afghan citizens, there was a widespread popular demand for opportunities to learn about the contestants in the upcoming election and to discuss issues of common concern. Six in ten respondents were interested in either attending a meeting with political candidates or listening to a broadcast of candidates being questioned. Three out of five Afghan women (62%), said that they would be interested in attending meetings with other women in their areas to discuss the problems they face as women.

Majorities of urban and rural citizens stated that they are interested in chances to compare candidates via meetings (including 70% of urbanites, 57% of rural people) or broadcasts (69% of town dwellers, 55% of rural people). The principal exceptions on these questions were older rural women and women with less than primary education, of whom only about four in ten expressed interest in either option. However, interest among women in engaging with women's problems at the community level was very broad, even among older rural women (63%) as well as those without primary education (61%).

There were few differences among the regions in interest and in access to these types of political forums, although residents of the Central and Southern regions were somewhat less interested in candidate meetings or broadcasts.

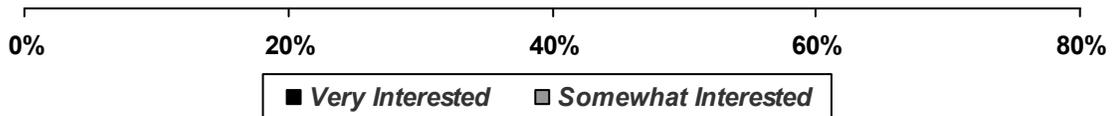
Interest in Voter Education

Please tell me how interested you would be in following ideas. (Q. 88-89)

Listening to a radio broadcast of ordinary people asking questions to candidates of the different parties during the election campaign.



Attending a meeting in your area where candidates from the different parties are present and ordinary people ask them questions.



CHAPTER 6: INFORMATION SOURCES, MEDIA USE AND LANGUAGE

Information Sources: National Events

Radio emerges clearly in the survey as the main source of information for Afghans on national affairs. Three in five (60%) reported that they rely on radio as their primary source of information regarding current events and news of national importance. Word-of-mouth, i.e. friends and neighbors, comes next, mentioned by one in six (16%). TV is the third major source of information, cited by one in eight (12%). Village chiefs were the last major news source, though just 5% rely on them regarding affairs outside the village. (Newspapers are mentioned as a source of information by just 2%).

Although radio is the main news source for both sexes, men (75%) rely on it more often than do women (45%). On the other hand, women are more likely than men to rely on news via word of mouth (20% for women, 11% for men) and TV (18% and 8% respectively).

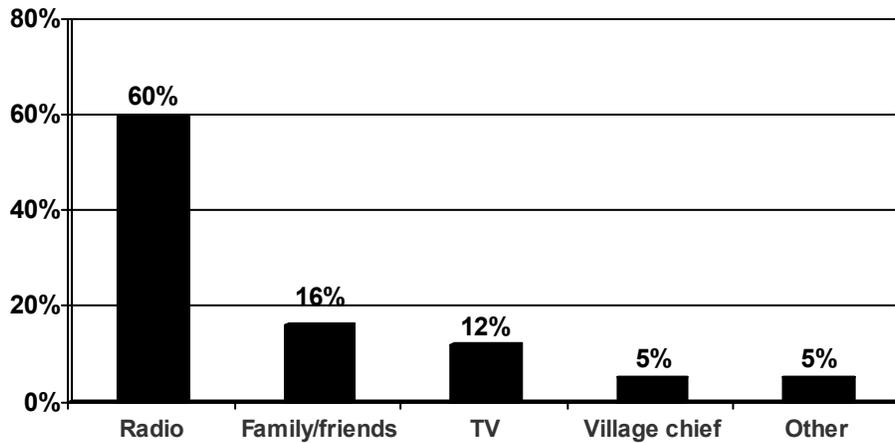
The literate are almost twice as likely as the illiterate to get their news from the radio (71% vs. 45%) and twice as likely to do so from TV (16% vs. 8%).

Among rural and urban respondents, there was virtually no difference in reliance on radio. City dwellers were somewhat more likely than rural inhabitants to watch TV, most likely because television stations do not reach far outside the urban areas. Regional differences in the proportions who make up the radio and TV news audiences were also small, except in the Northeast. This is the one region where a minority (46%) relies on the radio for news and an equally large proportion gets its news from the TV (more than three times the proportion who do so in any other region).

Those who do not listen regularly to the radio overwhelmingly rely on friends and family for national news (57%), followed by village chiefs or elders (15%). Oral sources and local social networks and institutions are most effective methods to reach them.

Information Sources: National Events

Which is the main source from where you normally get information about what is happening in the country? (Q.23)

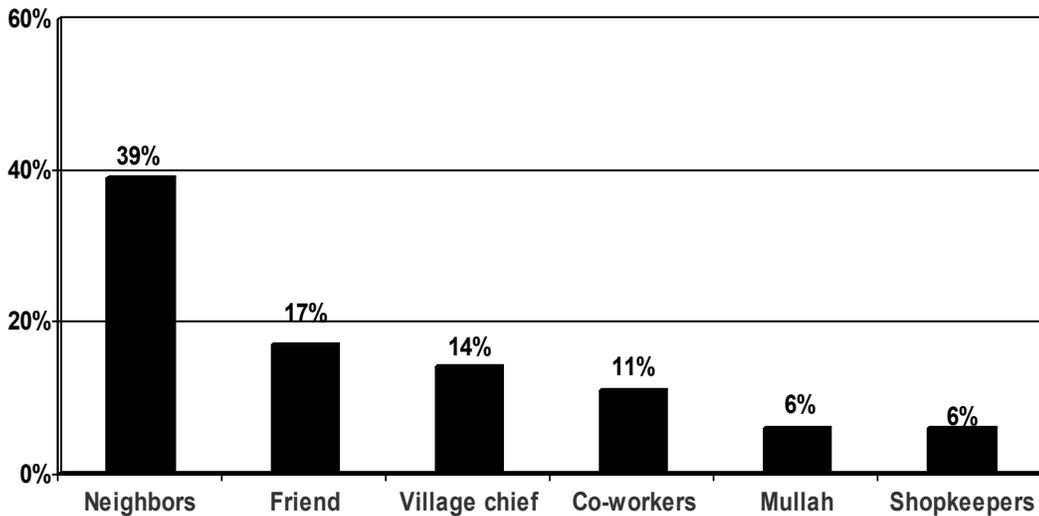


Information Sources: Local Events

Given the near-absence of local-level mass media in most Afghan communities, word-of-mouth is the universal source of information for local events. Local information sources include neighbors (39%), friends (17%), village chiefs (14%), co-workers (11%), mullahs (6%), and shopkeepers (6%). Women said they depend above all on neighbors for news on local events (54% rely on them), while men reported relying more or less equally on friends (23%), neighbors (22%), and the local authority in the village (18%). With modest variations, these patterns prevailed in every region of the country.

Information Sources: Local Events

If you wanted to find out about something important happening in your community, who, outside your family, would you want to tell you? (Q. 24)



Preferred Information Sources: Election Procedures

Radio emerged as the most widely preferred source among Afghans for information about election procedures, cited by 72%. After radio came village chiefs and community leaders, mentioned by 33%, and TV, mentioned by 28%. Other desired election information sources included newspapers (20%), posters (15%), religious leaders (13%), Constitutional Loya Jirga delegates (12%), and public meetings (10%). No other information source was suggested by 10% or more.

The overwhelming preference for radio was evident in every region. Community leaders were the second preferred source for elections information in all but two regions, the Northwest and the Northeast, where TV was preferred to community leaders. Village chiefs and local authority figures seemed strongest in the Central, North and East regions (where they were accepted as election information sources by 56%, 56%, and 45% respectively)

whereas religious authorities had significant appeal among residents of the Center (42%) and North (26%). Two-fifths of the respondents from the Central province say they prefer to get election related information from their CLJ delegates, as do a fourth in the north and a fifth in the Northeast. In no other region are CLJ figures mentioned by more than 7%. Radio and TV were more likely to be cited by city dwellers, while village chiefs, posters, and religious leaders were mentioned more often by those in rural areas.

Among Afghans who said that they do not regularly listen to the radio, the preferred sources of election information were village chiefs or community leaders (63%) and religious leaders (29%). After these sources, there were almost equal rankings for CLJ delegates (18%), public meetings (17%), and posters (17%). Among the illiterate Afghans surveyed, after radio, mentioned by just 50%, information preferences were similar, with village chiefs cited by 49%, religious leaders by 18%, posters by 16%, CLJ delegates by 15%, TV by 13%, and public meetings by 11%.

Preferred Information Sources: Election Procedures

Now I am going to read you some information sources. For each, tell me if you would like to get information about how to register and vote in elections from that source. (Q. 57)

(Sources mentioned by 10% or more)

Radio	72%
Village chief/Community leader	33%
TV	28%
Newspapers	20%
Posters w/ pictures	15%
Religious leader	13%
Delegates from your area who attended the Constitutional Loya Jirga	12%
A public meeting	10%
Other	15%

Preferred Radio Formats for Voter Education

The Afghans interviewed prefer news features or documentaries (mentioned by 63% of those who said they wanted election information from the radio) for information about the elections process. Two other formats were also broadly popular: one minute spots (accepted by 51%) and radio dramas (49%). On the other hand, talk shows with interviews were desired by barely one in five (22%).

Preferred Radio Format for Voter Education

On the radio, which of the following ways would you like to receive information about the election process? (Q 58, Base 576)

	Agree
News features or documentaries	63%
Short one minute announcements	51%
Radio dramas	49%
Talk shows with interviews and discussions	22%

Radio Exposure

Most Afghans – 72% -- said that they listen regularly to the radio. This includes 56% who reported listening every day or almost every day and 16% more who listen three or four days a week. Thus, it is apparent from our survey that radio is the single most important medium to reach Afghan men and women.

Although women's listenership is somewhat lower than men's, radio regularly reaches large majorities of both sexes, including 82% of men and 62% of women. There is little difference in listenership by income. However, radio listening is tied to education and literacy: 90% of the secondary educated listen regularly, compared to only 56% of those who did not finish primary school. So do 88% of the literate but just 50% of the illiterate.

Geographically, the overall reach of radio is almost as high in the rural areas (70%) as in the towns (79%), reflecting the prevalence of long-range shortwave and foreign broadcasters on the Afghan airwaves. More than three-fifths of the residents of every region are regular listeners, except in the Center, where only 48% fall into this category.

However, there are some specific groups among the citizenry where substantial proportions (two-fifths or more) are not regular radio listeners. These include rural women (40% do not listen regularly), illiterates (49%), women with primary education or less (46%), housewives (45%), residents of the Center (52%), Hazaras (45%), and Uzbeks (43%). For members of these groups, in-person efforts would be an important part of any voter education campaign.

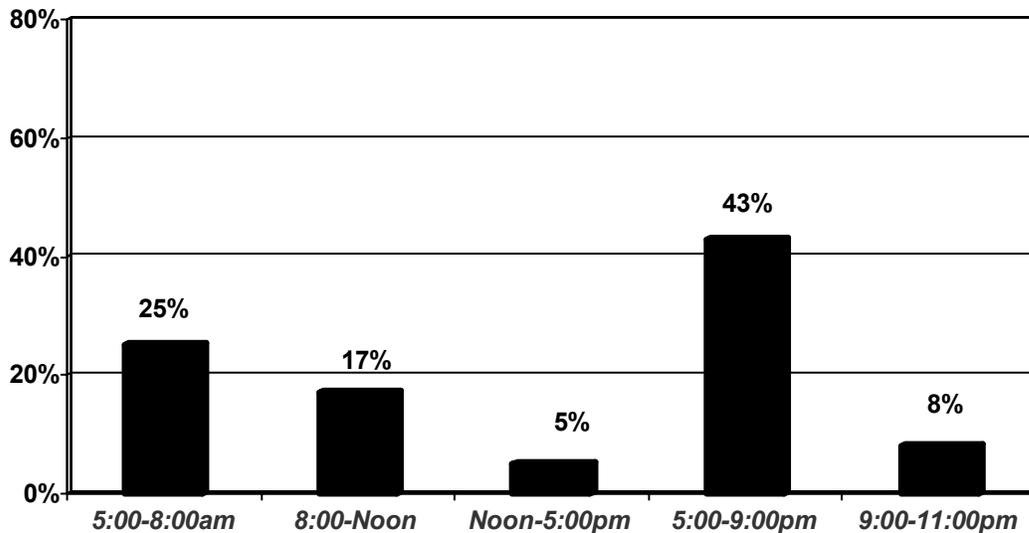
Time of Radio Listening

Based on our interviews, Afghan radio listenership is concentrated in a few specific times of day. Peak listening hours are from 5 pm to 9 pm, when 43% of radio listeners say they most often tune in. Next come the early morning hours, 5 am to 8 am, when 25% listen, followed by the 8 am to 12 noon period, when 17% listen. All told, some 88% of listeners tend to tune in during those 12 hours.

These three periods cover the vast bulk of radio listenership for both genders and all regions, with modest differences in detail. Men are more likely to listen between 5 and 8 am (36%), women between 8 am and 12 noon (29%). The East is the only region where the second-highest listenership period runs from 12 noon to 5 pm and the Center-East is the only one where it occurs in the 8 am – 12 noon time slot.

Time of Radio Listening

*What time of day do you most often listen to the radio?
(Respondents who listen to the radio) (Q. 17)*



Radio Station Audiences

The largest reported audience shares in Afghanistan by far belonged to foreign stations chiefly heard on shortwave, particularly those from the US and Britain. The BBC Farsi service topped the list, with 20% of listeners saying it is the station they choose most often.¹⁶ It was followed by Radio Azadi (America's Radio Free Asia) Dari service, with 16%, BBC Pashto service with 15% and Azadi Pashto with 10%, while the Voice of America Dari and Pashto services got 6% and 4% shares respectively. This gives a total audience first choice share of 70% to US and UK radio stations. A further 7% of Afghans listed other foreign stations as their first choice, mainly neighboring Iranian, Pakistani, and Indian broadcasts.

Among local stations, Radio Afghanistan is the only one with a national presence, but its first choice audience share is just 5%. (It was, however, the second choice of 13% of respondents, giving it a respectable total audience share of 18%). The new Arman FM is so popular in Kabul and its surrounds that it has a national audience share of 5%. Other local radios collectively have a first choice audience share of 13%, giving Afghan radio stations a total audience first choice share of 23%.

There are some important gender differences among the stations. Among foreign stations, men were more likely than women to report listening to Radio Azadi and BBC Pashto, while women are likelier to listen to BBC Farsi, and VOA had similar audience shares among both sexes. Among local stations, the audience of Radio Afghanistan and Radio Arman was largely female, while there was no clear pattern for other stations.

The proportions of target groups for voter education, civic education, and men reluctant to let their wives vote who listen to the radio were slightly smaller than the normal audience share for most of the stations. The main exceptions are the BBC Pashto service, whose listeners were slightly likelier to belong to the target groups, and Azadi Pashto, where the station attracted the same share of targets as of the general population.

The radio audience figures show clearly that the biggest role in any voter education campaign must be played by US and UK radios, particularly BBC, Azadi, and VOA. However, local radios have an important supplemental role to play, particularly with women voters.

¹⁶ Farsi, spoken in Iran, is very similar to and mutually understandable with Dari, spoken in Afghanistan.

Radio Station Audiences

Station Listened to Most Often: Foreign Radios (Q. 15/16, Base 617)

	All	Voter Ed Targets	Civic Ed Targets	Reluctant Men
BBC Farsi	20%	17%	14%	12%
Azadi-Dari	16%	13%	9%	13%
BBC Pashto	15%	19%	24%	27%
Azadi Pashto	10%	10%	10%	7%
VOA Dari	6%	4%	7%	0%
VOA Pashto	3%	3%	3%	2%
Total US/UK	70%	66%	67%	59%
Other Foreign Radio*	7%	7%	6%	13%

*Other foreign radio stations include VIR Iran, VIR Iran-Farsi, All India Radio-Dari, Deutsche Welle-Pashto, Deutsche Welle-Dari, Radio Pakistan-Pashto.

Radio Station Audiences

Station Listened to Most Often: Local Radios (Q. 15/16, Base 617)

	All	Voter Ed Targets	Civic Ed Targets	Reluctant Men
Radio Afghanistan	5%	5%	5%	3%
Arman FM	5%	6%	4%	0%
Other Local Radio*	13%	12%	9%	16%
Total Local Radio	23%	23%	18%	19%

*Other local radio stations include Radio Ghazni, Radio Herat, Radio Sharq, Radio Nangarhar, Radio Balkh, Radio Kandahar, Radio Khost, and Killid FM.

Radio Station Audiences by Region

The regional radio audience varied substantially by region with foreign stations in the top position in every region except the Center. The stations with the highest first choice listenership (at least 10%) in the regions were the following

- North: BBC Farsi (34%), Azadi-Dari (32%).
- Northeast: BBC Farsi 38%, Azadi-Pashto 25%, Azadi-Dari 20%.
- East: Azadi Pashto 25%, Radio Nangarhar 14%, Radio Afghanistan 12%, Radio Sharq 12%, BBC Pashto 10%.
- Center-East: BBC Farsi 26%, Azadi-Dari 24%, Arman FM 20%.
- Center: Radio Ghazni 29%, BBC Farsi 18%, Azadi-Dari 17%, Azadi-Pashto 11%.
- South: BBC Pashto 42%, Azadi Pashto 15%.
- Northwest: BBC Pashto 27%, VOA Pashto 24%, Radio Herat 20%, Azadi Pashto 13%.

Totals do not add to 100% because stations with first-choice audience shares of less than 10% and foreign stations other than US or UK stations have been omitted. Our analysis here is focused on stations on which voter education material might be aired.

Radio Stations by Region

*US/UK Radio: Station Listened to Most Often
(All stations with at least 5% in one region) (Q. 18)*

	North	Northeast	East	Center East	Center	South	Northwest
BBC Farsi	34%	38%	3%	26%	18%	1%	8%
Azadi-Dari	32%	20%	7%	24%	17%	3%	3%
BBC Pashto	7%	3%	10%	5%	5%	42%	27%
Azadi Pashto	3%	1%	25%	7%	11%	15%	13%
VOA Dari	9%	25%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%
VOA Pashto	2%	1%	5%	2%	2%	2%	24%

Radio Stations by Region

Local Radio: Station Listened to Most Often
 (All stations with at least 5% in one region) (Q.15 base 617)

	North	Northeast	East	Center East	Center	South	Northwest
Radio Afghanistan	0%	2%	12%	6%	5%	7%	2%
Arman FM	0%	0%	0%	20%	0%	0%	0%
Radio Ghazni	0%	0%	0%	1%	29%	6%	0%
Radio Herat	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	20%
Radio Sharq	0%	1%	12%	0%	0%	3%	0%
Radio Nangarhar	0%	0%	14%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Radio Balkh	9%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Television Exposure

Compared to radio, television has a substantially smaller audience, regularly reaching just over one-third of Afghans (36%). However, it is important to note that the coverage of television is far more fragmented by geography, unlike the radio audience, which is more evenly dispersed. This is because TV is carried by short range line-of-sight signals (except for satellite TV broadcasts, which require expensive equipment to receive that few Afghans possess). Above all, in Afghanistan, television is a medium of the cities. The majority of urban residents surveyed (52%) reported watching TV three days a week or more, compared to only 31% of those in rural areas.

There are also big regional differences in television coverage. The only region where TV reaches the majority is the Northeast, where 71% claimed to watch regularly, almost twice the national average. Some 44% reported watching regularly in the Northwest, as do one-third in the Center-East, South, and North regions. The regular TV audience was very small in the East (12%) and Center (9%).

Reflecting these regional patterns, the reach of television was higher among ethnic groups of the North and Northeast (60% of Tajiks reported watching regularly, as do 43% of Uzbeks). This was in contrast to regular viewership of 33% among the Pashtuns, more prevalent in the South, Northwest, and East, and 23% among Hazaras, concentrated in the mountainous signal-poor Center.

Women were somewhat likelier than men to report watching TV regularly: 39% of women said that they watch at least three days a week, compared to 31% of men. TV is thus a useful medium for voter education efforts to reach urban Afghans, especially urban women. But it is important to remember that town dwellers make up just under one-quarter (23%) of the predominantly rural country's population.

TV Exposure

How many days a week do you watch TV, if any? (Q.18)

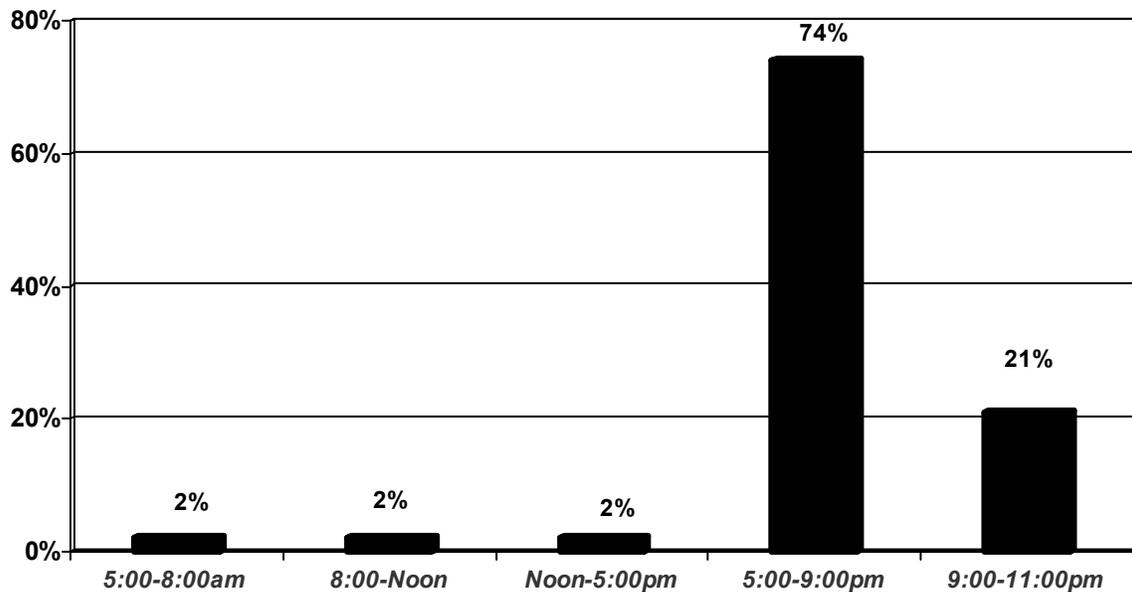
	All Voters	Voter Ed Targets	Civic Ed Targets	Reluctant Men
Every day/Almost every day	29%	27%	23%	15%
3-4 days a week	7%	5%	5%	5%
1-2 days a week	1%	1%	1%	0%
Less than once a week	5%	3%	3%	7%
Never	57%	62%	66%	68%

Time of TV viewing

TV viewing in Afghanistan is an evening activity, reflecting the schedules of local broadcasters. Almost three-fourths (74%) of all television viewers said that their viewing is concentrated in the evening from 5pm to 9pm. Late night viewing was significant among our respondents, with 21% watching from 9 pm to 11 pm. Viewership before 5 pm is marginal and largely involves satellite TV.

Time of TV Viewing

*What time of day do you watch TV?
(Respondents who watch TV) (Q.21)*



Television Station Audiences

The most important fact about the TV audience in Afghanistan is the absence of a national TV network. As a result, the regional fragmentation of signals is matched by the division of viewers among regional stations in the different major towns, supplemented by foreign TV in border areas and satellite TV for the few who can afford to receive it.

From a national standpoint, few stations have a substantial audience share. TV Afghanistan received 26% audience share among our respondents, mostly in Kabul, followed by TV Kandahar with 13%, Baghlan TV with 11%, and TV Herat with 8%. The proportions of voter education targets who watch each station were similar to the national numbers. Among civic education targets, TV Kandahar is the top station, reflecting their bias towards the South. Among men reluctant to let their wives vote, the most watched stations are TV Herat and Kandahar, but together those stations reach only just over one-third of them.

The most watched television stations varied in the different regions. Some regions have more than one station, others only one that has a substantial audience share.

The top ranked Afghan TV stations were:

- North: TV Balkh – Mazar-i-Shrarif (37%), Aina TV-Jawazjan (22%), Zee TV (16%).
- Northeast: Baghlan TV (42%), Takhar TV (20%), TV Kunduz (17%), Badakhshan TV (11%).
- East: Nangarhar TV (52%), TV Afghanistan-Kabul (9%).
- Central-East: TV Afghanistan-Kabul (91%)
- Central: Ghazni TV (100%)
- South: TV Kandahar (79%)
- Northwest: TV Herat (55%).

Audiences do not total 100% for some regions because of the omission of foreign and satellite channels.

TV Station Audiences

*Which TV station do you watch most often?
(Domestic TV Stations) (Q.20)*

	All voters	Voter Ed Targets	Civic Ed Targets	Reluctant Men
TV Afghanistan-Kabul	26%	30%	13%	6%
TV Kandahar	13%	19%	32%	15%
TV Herat	8%	11%	3%	20%
Baghlan TV-Pulkhomri	11%	6%	10%	0%

Women's Voter Education Sites

There has been some concern that many Afghan women will not be able to receive voter education because they cannot leave the house. To test this assumption, we asked Afghan women how often they leave their homes to perform a variety of household activities.

The survey results show that most Afghan women (78%) leave their homes at least once a month, and the bulk of these women reported leaving at least once a week for various household activities. Only 22% of the women we surveyed can be considered housebound on our measure, in the sense that they did not report leaving their home at least once a month for any of these activities. (The true number of house-bound women is slightly smaller, since about one in five of the women in this group say they work and one in ten says they are a student.)

Interestingly, we found that urban and rural women were almost equally likely to be house-bound. Their regional distribution varies greatly. House-bound women were heavily concentrated in the Northeast, Northwest, and Center-East. They were relatively rare in the South. Indeed, in ethnic terms, house-bound women were far more likely to be Tadjiks than any other group, which helps explain their regional distribution. The house-bound were also more likely to be Shia than Sunni.

Among women who reported leaving the house at least once monthly for household activities, the principal reasons were visiting family (68%) or friends (65%), fetching wood or water (49%) or going to a health clinic with their children (45%) or for themselves (40%). Relatively few women reported going shopping (24%) or accompanying their children to school (19%).

Women's Voter Education Sites

*How often do you go out of your house for the following activities?
At least once a week, at least one a month, less than once a month, never?
(Q.22 base 404)*

Activities	At least once a week	Never
Visit neighbors	44%	13%
Household chores (fetch water, wood)	42%	44%
Visit family/ friends	26%	5%
Visit health clinic	9%	18%
Shopping	9%	61%
Take children to school	8%	71%
Take children to health clinic	7%	23%

Language

The principal languages spoken in Afghanistan are Dari and Pashto, although several minority languages are spoken as well. Amongst the Afghans surveyed, slightly more are native speakers of Dari (47%) than Pashto (44%), with 9% native speakers of other tongues (principally Uzbek, 5%).

Understanding of both main languages was far higher among our respondents than the proportions of the population who had each as their mother tongue, but literacy is far less frequent than understanding. Dari is understood by 83% of the population, Pashto by 73%, and other local tongues by 24%. However, Dari is read by only 58%, Pashto by 48%, and other local languages by 4% of the population.

Some 35% of Afghan citizens we spoke with are illiterate. Illiteracy is more frequent among women (43%) than men (27%) and in rural areas (38%) than towns (25%). It is most frequent among women over 35 (53%). Regional illiteracy rates vary relatively little, ranging from roughly 30% to 45%. However, there are some differences in literacy by ethnic group, with illiteracy highest among Uzbeks (53%) and Pashtuns (40%) and lower among the Hazara (30%) and Tadjiks (29%).

The preferred language for election-related information follows mother tongues fairly closely, with Dari the choice of 49%, Pashto 44%, and other languages 4% (Uzbek 3% and Noristani 1%).

There are substantial regional differences in language preferences for election material. Of the two main languages, Dari is preferred in the Northeast (78%, where 14% prefer Pashto), Center-East (76%, 7% for Pashto), and North (66%, 14% for Pashto). Pashto is the language of choice in the South (94%, 1% Dari) and East (76%, 7% want Dari). Preferences are fairly evenly split in the Northwest (52% Pashto, 44% Dari) and Center (57% Dari, 42% Pashto). Of the minority languages, Uzbeki is the preference of 17% in the North and 5% in the Northeast, Noristani the choice of 5% in the East, Pashae the preference of 4% in the East, and Turki is desired by 2% in the North and 1% in the Center-East.

Languages

Q.11,12,13,59

	Mother Tongue	Understand	Read	Prefer
Dari	47%	36%	51%	49%
Pashto	44%	30%	43%	44%
All other local languages	9%	23%	4%	4%
Uzbeki	5%	10%	4%	3%
Turki	1%	2%	0%	0%
Pashae	1%	0%	25%	0%
Noristani	1%	0%	0%	1%

CONCLUSION

Messages and Target Groups

Based on the survey results, we believe there are three types of messages which election education efforts need to communicate. These are voter education messages (explaining the workings of the electoral process), civic education messages (democratic values and principles), and messages on women's participation (to encourage men to permit it). Each of these message types will have its own specific content and target groups, outlined below.

- *Voter Education*

There are two voter education messages with very broad applicability. These concern:

- Ballot secrecy: ("Everyone will mark their vote on a paper in private, fold it up, and put it in a box, so no one will see for whom you vote. Your vote will be your secret.")
- Plans for monitoring the election: ("Groups of monitors independent of the parties will observe every step of the elections and inform the people and authorities of any cheating.")

The survey found that public awareness on both these issues is quite low in Afghanistan: only 24% are aware that the ballot will be secret and 40% that there are any plans for monitors. However, our research showed that informing people about these points is the key to building public confidence in the election process. Consequently, we recommend targeting all voters for information on these issues.

A major secondary concern that affected up to one-quarter of the voters is fear that the election will be compromised with vote buying. The principal groups who thought that voters were or might be obligated to vote for parties who gave them money are:

- Illiterate Afghans
- Rural women over 35
- Citizens in the Northwest, South, and Central regions

Together these groups total around 63% of the electorate. They are the prime audience for a specific campaign aimed at discouraging vote buying and intimidation of voters.

- *Civic Education*

Political tolerance is a major challenge throughout Afghanistan. The results of this survey indicated that only 30% of Afghans would allow a political party they disliked to meet in their areas and that only 49% would accept a friend who supported such a party. These numbers are so low that they suggest that messages to promote partisan and inter-personal political tolerance should be part of a national effort. Since intolerance appears to relate to fears of violent conflict involving unpopular parties, not to the desire to impose a particular ideology, messages in favor of inter-party tolerance should stress the ideas of peaceful participation of all as the key to peaceable resolution of conflict.

While the basic democratic ideas of equal rights and public accountability of officials are supported (at least in principle) by almost all Afghan citizens, many – some 20-30% are unfamiliar with some of the basics of democracy and democratic procedures. In particular, they are unfamiliar with:

- The meaning of the term “democracy”
- The role of political parties in democracy
- The importance of peaceful opposition
- The separation of religious and political leadership.

A targeted civic education campaign would explain the connection of democracy to freedom, rights, and elections, the role of political parties and peaceful opposition in the peaceful solution of problems, and the separate functional roles of religious and political leaders.

The principal groups who were unfamiliar with these issues and thus should be targets of such a campaign include:

- Illiterate Afghans
- Rural women over 35
- Citizens in the South

Together, these citizens make up 52% of the survey population.

- *Messages on Women’s Participation*

Another important target group for voter education will be Afghan men who are reluctant to let their wives or daughters vote. They make up at least 18% the male respondents by their own avowal. The actual number may be as high as 35%, to judge by the proportion of women who fear they will not be allowed to vote.

Among the men we found open to persuasion to let women vote, the most effective arguments include:

- Islamic authority: “Many Islamic scholars have approved that women have the right to vote, so they should be allowed to vote.”

- Separate voting for men and women: “Women will vote separately from men. They will not mix. So they should be allowed to vote.”
- No proxy voting: “In the election, everyone must vote for themselves. Men cannot vote in place of women. Women must vote for themselves.”

We also found two other effective messages: that women vote in other Islamic democracies, such as Pakistan, Iran, Egypt, Bangladesh, Malaysian, and Indonesia, and that communities where women do not vote will lose half their votes, which may make their candidates lose.

Men who are reluctant to let women vote tend to be:

- Illiterate Afghans
- From the South and Northwest regions.

Media and Formats

Radio should be the principal medium for voter education: it reaches the large majority of Afghan adults, including those in our targeted groups above. Because foreign radios from the US and UK (Azadi/Radio Free Asia, VOA, BBC) account for the bulk of listenership in Afghanistan, putting voter education information on their airwaves will be crucial to the success of voter education efforts. Afghan stations also have an important role to play in the campaign, especially in efforts targeted on women and particular regions, and should be involved as much as possible.

The preferred radio formats for election information are news features or documentaries, one minute spots, and radio dramas. There is also strong interest in programs which allow citizens to ask questions of candidates from different parties.

Afghan television can also provide a visual supplement to voter education efforts, particularly in the towns and in regions targeted for campaigns. Posters are the other visual medium which has wide acceptability. They will be important to convey visual messages, especially to illiterates and in areas without television.

Among those who do not listen to the radio (including a large part of the illiterate population), the preferred information sources include village chiefs and community leaders, religious leaders, and Constitutional Loya Jirga delegates. Efforts should be made to involve these local leaders in voter and civic education.

Although small proportions indicated an interest in public meetings as a source of voter education, many Afghans voiced a desire to attend meetings to ask questions of candidates and many women would like to attend meetings to discuss issues of concern to them.

As the women we spoke with are most likely to leave their houses to go to a neighbor home or to a health clinic, voter education efforts specifically oriented to women should focus on neighbor-to-neighbor outreach programs as well as the provision of information about the elections at health clinics.

**APPENDIX 1:
TARGET DEMOGRAPHICS**

	All Voters	Civic Ed Targets	Voter Ed Targets	Reluctant Men
Gender				
Female	50%	60%	52%	0%
Male	50%	40%	48%	100%
Area				
Urban	23%	15%	24%	11%
Rural	77%	85%	76%	89%
Region				
North	15%	15%	20%	13%
Northeast	13%	10%	6%	9%
East	10%	8%	5%	3%
Central East	23%	14%	29%	12%
Central	9%	9%	11%	10%
Southeast	5%	10%	6%	5%
Southwest	13%	25%	16%	25%

	All Voters	Civic Ed Targets	Voter Ed Targets	Reluctant Men
Employment				
Working	48%	41%	46%	91%
Retired	1%	0%	43%	0%
Housewife	38%	52%	0%	0%
Student	8%	1%	5%	0%
Unemployed	5%	6%	5%	9%
Age				
18-24	24%	17%	22%	19%
25-34	25%	20%	22%	24%
35-49	29%	39%	33%	26%
50+	22%	25%	23%	30%

APPENDIX 2: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This survey was the first national opinion poll involving a representative, random sample of Afghan citizens to be conducted in the post-Taliban period. Some 804 interviews were conducted in-person by trained Afghan interviewers working under the auspices of the Afghan Media Resource Center (AMRC) between February 22, 2004 and March 13, 2004. Men were interviewed by men and women by women. Technical assistance in sampling, interviewer training, and data entry and checking were provided by AC Nielsen India. Questionnaire drafting, data processing and analysis, report drafting, and overall project management were the responsibility of Charney Research of New York. Craig Charney, Radhika Nanda and Nicole Yakatan drafted this report and Amy Marsman managed the project.

In order to prepare for the interviews, staff from ACNielsen India and Charney Research conducted briefing and training sessions for experienced local interviewers working for AMRC in Kabul. Pre-tests of the survey were also conducted in Kabul. After training and pre-tests were complete, interviewers went throughout the country to recruit a random cross-section of respondents.

This survey builds on the results of a previous phase of qualitative research, involving 32 in-depth interviews conducted with men and women around the country in urban and rural areas in each of the eight regions designated for the Constitutional Loya Jirga between November 15 and 21, 2003. The findings of the earlier study are available in our report, *Voices of Afghanistan: Afghans Speak About their Country, Elections, Gender, and Democracy* (Kabul, The Asia Foundation: 2004).

The National Sample

The survey is based on a representative national sample of 804 in-person interviews, randomly drawn in proportion to the adult population over 18 in each of the eight regions used for the Loya Jirga elections. It has a margin of sampling error of +/- 3.5% for national-level results.

A two-stage process was used to draw the sample. In the first stage interviewing points were distributed randomly among the regions and provinces in proportion to their population. The drawing was based on a list of Afghanistan's districts in order of population size. Some 103 districts were randomly selected for sampling on a probability proportionate to size basis. Of these, 17 had to be substituted on the advice of AMRC because they were inaccessible due to poor weather or security. They were replaced by one of the districts next to them on the list, which were the closest in population size. In the second stage of the process, at the sample point, households and individuals within them were randomly selected for interview.

Interviewing took place in 29 of Afghanistan’s 32 provinces. The only provinces omitted altogether were Urozgan, Neemroz, and Ghor provinces, which have a total of 6% of the country’s population between them. Elsewhere, every citizen in the country had an equal chance of being interviewed.

In order to compensate for the omission of districts in those three provinces, we up-weighted the responses from elsewhere in their regions to ensure that their regions were fairly represented in the national results. As a result, the proportions of interviews in each region of the final weighted data matched their proportions in the population estimates of the Central Statistics Office: the North (15% of the sample), Northeast (13%), East (10%), Central East (23%), Central (9%), Southeast (5%), Southwest (13%), and the Northwest (12%).¹⁷ Thus, the survey reflects the views of a broad and representative cross-section of the Afghan voters.

Representativeness of the Sample

Since the sample is truly national and random, the survey results represent all parts of the population in their correct proportions. As a result, the survey findings correctly reflect the public in terms of gender, urban-rural balance, and age. Therefore the findings regarding public opinion are thus likely to be representative as well, within the survey’s margin of error. In other words, because these are randomly-based quantitative findings, the results of our work can be projected numerically to the population at large.

After slight adjustments for weighting, the sample used for the survey closely mirrored the adult population of Afghanistan as a whole in terms of gender, urban-rural, regional and age distribution compared to 2004 projections by the Central Statistics Office from the results of the 1979 National Census, the last available data.¹⁸ The estimated gender breakdown is 52% male / 48% female, ours is 50-50. Reflecting the overwhelmingly rural character of Afghan society, 23% of the sample is urban, 77% urban, one point off the respective figures from the CSO projections. In terms of age, 24% of the sample is between 18 and 24, another quarter (25%) is between 25 and 34, 29% are between 35 and 49, and 22% of respondents are over the age of 50. All of these are within two percentage points of the CSO estimate for the corresponding age category. Thus, the survey sample provides an accurate reflection of Afghanistan’s demographics.

	CSO Estimates	Survey Sample
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	52%	50%
Female	48%	50%
<i>Area Type</i>		
Urban	22%	23%
Rural	78%	77%

¹⁷ In our tabulations, we combined the Southeast and Southwest into one region, the South, because there were too few interviews in the Southeast to tabulate it separately.

¹⁸ Preliminary results from the first five districts to be tabulated in the 2004 Heads of Household census indicated that those estimates are accurate to within +/-10% at the district level.

<i>Age</i>		
18-24	26%	24%
25-34	25%	25%
35-49	27%	29%
50+	22%	22%

**APPENDIX 3:
INTERVIEW DISCUSSION GUIDE**

PROJECT TRUTH – MAIN QUESTIONNAIRE

Urban	23%	Rural	77%
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Zone:

North	15%	North-east	13%	East	10%	Central-east	23%
Central	9%	South-east	5%	South-west	13%	North-west	12%

Province:

Balkh	5%	Samangan	2%	Jawzjam	2%	Faryab	3%
Sar-e-pul	4%	Kunduz	3%	Takhar	4%	Badakhshan	1%
Baghlan	5%	Nangarhar	5%	Laghman	2%	Kunar	1%
Noristan	1%	Kabul	18%	Parwan	3%	Kapisa	1%
Logar	1%	Bamiyan	2%	Wardak	1%	Ghazni	6%
Paktia	3%	Paktika	1%	Khost	1%	Kandahar	6%
Zabul	1%	Urozgan	0%	Neemroz	0%	Helmand	6%
Heart	7%	Badghis	2%	Ghor	0%	Farah	3%

INTRODUCTION

Asalaam Valeikum, I am from AMRC, an independent research organization. We regularly conduct surveys among people like you to find out what you feel about issues of public interest. AMRC has no relation to the government. I just want to ask you some questions about “matters of interest to Afghans”. I am interested in your opinion. Your answers will be kept confidential and your name will not be given to anyone and your views will be analyzed along with those of hundreds of others.

I. DEMOGRAPHICS

Respondents..... 804

RECORD RESPONDENT GENDER:

Male.....50%
Female.....50%

RESPONDENT AGE:

17-24.....24%
25-34.....25%
35-49.....29%
50+.....22%

Let me begin by first getting to know a few things about you.

1. Are you now working, a housewife (**ASK ONLY WOMEN**), retired, a student, or looking for work? [**ONE RESPONSE ONLY**]

Working.....	CONTINUE	48%
Retired	CONTINUE	1%
Housewife.....	GO TO Q4	38%
Student	GO TO Q4	8%
Unemployed	GO TO Q.4	5%
Other (Specify)	GO TO Q4	0%
Don't know/No response	GO TO Q4	0%

2. **IF WORKING OR RETIRED:** What is your main occupation? **SINGLE RESPONSE ONLY. RECORD RESPONSE VERBATIM AND THEN CODE OPTION. IF RETIRED ASK FOR PREVIOUS OCCUPATION AND THEN CODE**

Respondents.....	394
Farmer (own land / tenant farmer).....	24%
Farm laborer (other's land)	4%
Laborer, domestic, or unskilled worker.....	2%
Informal sales/ business.....	20%
Skilled worker/artisan.....	7%
Office worker/ Clerical worker	8%
Self employed Professional	18%
Small business owner	5%
Executive or managerial	5%
Military/ Police.....	1%
Baker	0%
Driver.....	0%
English teacher in a course	0%
Gardener	0%
Livestock	1%
Pharmacist	0%
Teacher	0%
Other, (Specify).....	4%
Don't know/ no response	0%

3. **IF FARMING (I.E. ONLY THOSE CODING 01 IN Q.2):** How much land do you farm? [**SINGLE RESPONSE ONLY**]

Respondents.....	93
Less than 1 Jerib	2%
1 - 2 Jerib	7%
2.1- 3 Jerib	19%
More than 3 Jerib.....	72%
Don't know/ no response.....	0%

Respondents.....	804
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4. What is the highest level of school you completed? **SINGLE RESPONSE ONLY. RECORD RESPONSE VERBATIM AND THEN CODE OPTION**

Never went to school	43%
Primary School, incomplete	8%
Primary School, complete	11%
Junior high school	10%
Senior high school	20%
University or academy.....	7%
Don't know/ no response	1%

5. What religion do you practice?

Sunni.....	92%
Shia.....	7%
Ismaeli	1%
Hindu.....	0%
Buddhist	0%
Sikh.....	0%
None/ Atheist	0%
Other , Specify.....	0%
Don't know/ refused	0%

6. Were you ever forced to leave the country because of war?

Yes.....	CONTINUE	55%
No.....	GO TO Q.9	45%
Other (SPECIFY)	GO TO Q.9	0%
Don't know/Refused	GO TO Q.9	0%

(Per the comments on the right – the numbers I see reported in the newspaper estimate that 2 million people have returned to the country since the fall of the Taliban (which would be just over 7%, while we say 22% “fled under the Taliban. Maybe that is just to other regions, but we need to clarify this point)

7. Where did you go? **[MULTIPLE RESPONSES ALLOWED; CODE ALL MENTIONS]**

Respondents.....	441
Pakistan	76%
Iran	22%
India.....	0%
Tajikistan.....	2%
Turkmenistan.....	0%
Uzbekistan	0%
Europe	0%
East Asia.....	0%
USA.....	0%
Canada.....	0%
Other (SPECIFY)	0%
Don't know/Refused	0%

8. Which year did you return to Afghanistan? **[IF MORE THAN ONCE, RECORD MOST RECENT TIME]**

1990	2%
1991	0%
1992	5%
1993	3%
1994	2%
1995	3%
1996	4%
1997	1%
1998	3%
1999	4%
2000	3%
2001	11%
2002	24%
2003	32%
2004	4%
Don't know/refused	0%

Respondents..... 804

9. Are you married or single?

Single	17%
Married	83%
Don't know/ refused	0%

10. Which ethnic group do you belong to?

Pashtun	46%
Tajik	39%
Uzbek	6%
Hazara	6%
Turkomen	1%
Noristani	1%
Arab	1%
Baluchi	0%
Pashaee	0%
Safi	0%
Other (SPECIFY)	1%
Don't know/ refused	0%

II. MEDIA EXPOSURE AND INFORMATION SOURCES

11. In which language did you learn to speak, first? **(MOTHER TONGUE – ONLY ONE RESPONSE)**

Pashto	44%
Dari.....	47%
Uzbeki	5%
Turki	1%
Noristani.....	1%
Pashae	1%
Urdu.....	0%
Hindi.....	0%
English.....	0%
Arabic	0%
Russian	0%
Baluchi	0%
Hazaragi	0%
Other (SPECIFY)	1%
Don't know.....	0%

12. Which other languages do you speak, if any? **(MULTIPLE RESPONSES ALLOWED)**

Dari.....	36%
Pashto	30%
Uzbeki	10%
English.....	10%
Urdu.....	9%
Turki	2%
Hindi.....	1%
Arabic	1%
Russian	1%
None	0%
Hazaragi	0%
Noristani.....	0%
Pashae	0%
Czech.....	0%
Other (SPECIFY)	0%
Don't know.....	28%

13. Which languages can you read? **(MULTIPLE RESPONSES ALLOWED)**

Dari.....	51%
Pashto	43%
English.....	13%
Urdu.....	7%
Uzbeki	4%
Arabic	2%
Russian	1%
Turki	0%
Hindi.....	0%
None	35%
Other (SPECIFY)	0%
Don't know.....	8%

14. How many days a week do you listen to the radio, if any? **(SINGLE RESPONSE ONLY)**

Every day or almost every day.....	CONTINUE	56%
Three or four days a week	CONTINUE	16%
One or two days a week	CONTINUE	5%
Less than once a week	GO TO Q.18	6%
Never	GO TO Q.18	17%
Don't know/No response.....	GO TO Q.18	1%

15. To which radio station do you listen most often? **CODE IN GRID BELOW UNDER APPROPRIATE SPACE**

Respondents..... 617

AFTER RESPONSE ASK:

16. And then which other radio station do you next most often listen to? **CODE IN GRID**
BELOW UNDER APPROPRIATE SPACE

Most Often Q.15	Next most Often Q.16	Radio Stations	Most Often Q.15	Next Most Often Q.16	Radio Stations
20%	11%	BBC-Farsi	0%	0%	Radio Pakistan-Dari
16%	9%	Radio Azadi - Dari	0%	0%	Radio China International-Pashto
15%	10%	BBC-Pashto	0%	0%	Radio Paktia
10%	10%	Radio Azadi - Pashto	0%	0%	Radio Kunar
6%	5%	VOA-Dari	0%	0%	Radio Samangan
5%	6%	Arman FM	0%	1%	Radio Bamiyan
5%	13%	Radio Afghanistan	0%	0%	Radio Ghore
3%	6%	VOA-Pashto	0%	0%	Radio Farah
3%	3%	Radio VIR Iran-Farsi	0%	0%	Sahar Radio
3%	1%	Radio Ghazni	0%	0%	Radio Sada-I-Solh
3%	3%	Radio Herat	0%	1%	Voice of Afghan Women
2%	1%	Radio Sharq	0%	0%	Kabul University Radio
1%	1%	All India Radio-Dari	0%	2%	Radio Azad Afghan
1%	0%	Radio Pakistan-Pashto	0%	0%	Peace Radio
1%	2%	Deutsche Welle-Dari	0%	2%	Radio Helmand
1%	0%	Deutsche Welle-Pashto	0%	1%	Radio Faryab
1%	1%	Killid FM	0%	0%	Riarabia Balkh Women's Radio
1%	2%	Radio Nangarhar	0%	1%	Radio Laghman
1%	2%	Radio Kandahar	0%	0%	Millie-Paygham Radio Station
1%	0%	Radio Khost	0%	0%	Taraj-Mir Radio Station
1%	2%	Radio Balkh	0%	1%	Radio Takhar
0%	1%	All India Radio-Pashto	0%	0%	Radio Nimroz
0%	0%	Radio Information-Dari	0%	0%	Radio Jozjan
0%	0%	Radio VIR Iran-Pashto	0%	0%	Radio Nawbahar
0%	0%	Radio Information-Pashto	1%	0%	Other (SPECIFY)
			0%	1%	Don't know

17. What time of day do you most often listen to the radio? **(SINGLE RESPONSE ONLY)**

05:01 hrs – 08:00 hrs	25%
08:01 hrs – 12:00 hrs	17%
12:01 hrs – 17:00 hrs	5%
17:01 hrs – 21:00 hrs	43%
21:01 hrs – 23:00 hrs	8%
23:01 hrs – 05:00 hrs	0%
Don't know	2%

18. How many days a week do you watch TV, if any? **(SINGLE RESPONSE ONLY)**

Every day or almost every day	CONTINUE	29%
Three or four days a week	CONTINUE	7%
One or two days a week	CONTINUE	1%
Less than once a week	GO TO Q.18	5%

Never **GO TO Q.18**.....57%
 Don't know/No response..... **GO TO Q.18**.....1%

19. Which TV station do you watch most often? **CODE IN GRID BELOW UNDER APPROPRIATE SPACE.**

Respondents.....294

AFTER RESPONSE ASK:

20. Which TV station do you watch next most often? **CODE IN GRID BELOW UNDER APPROPRIATE SPACE**

Most Often Q.19	Next Most Often Q.20	TV Stations
22%	4%	TV Afghanistan - Kabul
13%	1%	TV Kandahar
11%	0%	Baghlan TV -Pulkhomri
8%	4%	TV Herat
5%	1%	TV Balkh – Mazar-e-Sharif
5%	1%	Takhar TV – Taloqan
4%	0%	TV Konduz
4%	9%	Iran TV
3%	0%	Badakhshan TV
3%	1%	Aeena TV - Jawazjan
3%	5%	Al Jazeera TV
3%	2%	Zee TV
2%	3%	Uzbekistan TV
2%	5%	CNN
2%	0%	Ghazni TV
2%	0%	Nangarhar TV
1%	4%	Jawazjan TV- Shebrghan
1%	1%	Pakistan TV
1%	3%	Star TV
1%	7%	BBC
1%	8%	TV Tajikistan
0%	0%	Ghoryan TV- Herat
0%	0%	TV Nimroz
0%	0%	Parwan TV
0%	0%	Sahara TV
0%	1%	Samangan TV
0%	4%	DWT (German TV)
0%	1%	India TV
1%	3%	Other (SPECIFY)
1%	32%	Don't know/ No response

21. What time of day do you most often watch TV? **(SINGLE RESPONSE ONLY)**

05:01 hrs – 08:00 hrs.....	2%
08:01 hrs – 12:00 hrs.....	2%
12:01 hrs – 17:00 hrs.....	2%
17:01 hrs – 21:00 hrs.....	74%
21:01 hrs – 23:00 hrs.....	21%
23:01 hrs – 05:00 hrs.....	0%
Don't know	0%

FOR MALE RESPONDENT GO TO Q.23

22. **ASK WOMEN ONLY:** How often do you go out of your house for the following activities? – Often, sometimes, rarely or never? **READ OUT EACH ACTIVITY ONE BY ONE AND CODE RESPONSE IN THE GRID**

Respondents..... 404

Activities	At least once a week	At least once a month	Less than once a month	Never
Household chores – fetch water/ wood for fuel	42%	7%	6%	44%
Take children to school	8%	11%	9%	72%
Take children to health clinic	7%	35%	35%	23%
Visit health clinic	9%	31%	43%	17%
Visit family/ friends	26%	39%	30%	5%
Visit neighbors	44%	24%	19%	13%
Shopping	9%	15%	14%	61%

Respondents..... 804

ASK ALL

23. Which is the main source from where you normally get information about what is happening in the country? **DO NOT READ OUT RESPONSES, SINGLE RESPONSE ONLY**

Radio	60%
Friends and family and neighbors	16%
TV	12%
Village chief/community leaders	5%
Newspapers	2%
Religious leader	1%
From family males	1%
From husband	1%
From father	0%
Other (SPECIFY)	0%
Don't know / refused	0%

24. If you wanted to find out about something important happening in your community, who, outside your family, would you want to tell you? **DO NOT READ OUT RESPONSES. SINGLE RESPONSE ONLY**

Neighbors/ villagers	38%
Friend	17%
Village chief/ Community leader	14%
Co-workers	11%
Mullah	6%
Shopkeepers	6%
Worker at community centers (school, health center)	3%
From husband	1%
From father	0%
From brothers	0%
From the bazaar	0%
No one	0%
Radio	0%
Radio/TV	0%
From family	0%
Other (SPECIFY).....	0%
Don't know / refused	2%

III. MOOD

25. Generally speaking, do you think things in Afghanistan today are going in the right direction, or do you think they are going in the wrong direction?

Right direction.....	CONTINUE	64%
Wrong direction	GO TO Q.27	11%
Mixed directions (DON'T READ; MUST BE VOLUNTEERED) – GO TO Q.28		8%
Don't know	GO TO Q.28	16%

26. **(IF RIGHT DIRECTION):** Why do you say that? **(DO NOT READ CODES. OPEN END WITH PRE-CODES, MAXIMUM OF TWO RESPONSES ALLOWED)**

Respondents..... 516

Peace / end of war	53%
Disarmament	35%
Good security	20%
Reconstruction / rebuilding	18%
Girls schools / women can work / women's freedom	13%
Freedom / free speech	11%
Democracy / elections	9%
Refugees return	9%
Travel possible / free movement	7%
Good government.....	6%
Economic revival	5%
International Assistance	1%
Other (SPECIFY)	0%
Don't know	0%

GO TO Q.28

27. **(IF WRONG DIRECTION):** Why do you say that?
(DO NOT READ CODES. OPEN END WITH PRE-CODES, MAXIMUM OF TWO RESPONSES ALLOWED)

Respondents.....	92
No reconstruction / no progress	35%
Bad government	40%
Economy bad.....	30%
Neighboring countries cause problems	28%
Education bad.....	14%
Lack of aid / no development assistance	13%
Western influence too great / dangers to Islam	8%
Too many foreigners / foreigner aid causes problems.....	6%
Security problems.....	2%
War.....	2%
No disarming.....	1%
Problems of existing arms	1%
War Lords/ violence	1%
War Lords / Commanders	1%
Other (SPECIFY)	1%
Don't know	1%

Respondents..... 804

28. In your view, what is the biggest problem facing Afghanistan as a whole? **CODE RESPONSE IN GRID BELOW**

(AFTER RESPONSE):

29. And after that, what is the next biggest problem? **CODE RESPONSE IN GRID BELOW**

	Q28. Biggest problem	Q29. Next biggest problem
Security / warlords / attacks / violence	37%	6%
Economy / poverty / jobs	29%	22%
Education / schools / literacy	9%	17%
Electricity	6%	10%
Lack of rReconstruction / rebuilding.....	5%	10%
Roads.....	5%	7%
Health care / clinics / hospitals.....	2%	7%
Water.....	2%	3%
Taliban	1%	2%
Government / weak government / central authority	1%	12%
Discrimination.....	0%	0%
Narcotics/ Narcotics business.....	0%	0%
Disarming Commanders.....	0%	0%
Foreigner Interference	0%	0%
The work given to those who deserve it.....	0%	0%
Other (SPECIFY)	0%	0%
Don't know	3%	3%

30. What is the biggest problem in your local area? **CODE RESPONSE IN GRID BELOW**

AFTER RESPONSE ASK :

31. And what is the next biggest problem in your local area? **CODE RESPONSE IN GRID BELOW**

	Q30. Biggest problem	Q31. Next biggest problem
Economy / poverty / jobs	28%	11%
Security / warlords / attacks / violence	15%	3%
Education / schools / literacy	12%	20%
Electricity	12%	14%
Roads.....	9%	10%
Lack of reconstruction / rebuilding	8%	11%
Health care / clinics / hospitals.....	7%	11%
Water.....	5%	11%
Government / weak government / central authority	3%	7%
Taliban	1%	0%
No Problems.....	0%	0%
No girls schools.....	0%	0%
Everything is destroyed.....	0%	0%
No interest with Govt.	0%	0%
Other (SPECIFY).....	0%	0%
Don't know	0%	1%

32. How would you rate the work of the present government (Afghanistan's Transitional Government) – excellent, good, fair, or poor?

Excellent.....	28%	57%
Good.....	29%	
Fair	17%	
Poor	18%	35%
Refused.....	0%	
Don't know	8%	

33. How would you rate the work of Hamid Karzai as President of Afghanistan – excellent, good, fair, or poor?

Excellent.....	34%	62%
Good.....	28%	
Fair	16%	
Poor	15%	31%
Refused.....	0%	
Don't know	6%	

34. Some people say, "I don't think that the government cares much about what people like me think." Do you agree or disagree with this statement? **WAIT FOR RESPONSE AND THEN ASK - Strongly, or somewhat?**

Agree strongly.....	25%	58%
Agree somewhat.....	33%	
Disagree somewhat	9%	
Disagree strongly	2%	12%
Don't know	30%	

35.	How would you rate the security situation in your area: excellent, good, fair, or poor?		
	Excellent.....	15%	53%
	Good.....	38%	
	Fair.....	26%	
	Poor.....	20%	46%
	Don't know.....	1%	
36.	How often do you fear for your own personal safety or security or for that of your family these days?		
	Often.....	12%	35%
	Sometimes.....	24%	
	Rarely.....	22%	
	Never.....	41%	64%
	No comment/ refused.....	0%	
	Don't know.....	1%	
37.	How often did you fear for your personal safety or security or for that of your family under the Taliban rule?		
	Often.....	30%	41%
	Sometimes.....	11%	
	Rarely.....	10%	
	Never.....	27%	36%
	No comment/ refused.....	0%	
	Absent during Taliban rule.....	22%	
	Don't know.....	1%	
38.	Have you or has anyone in your family been a victim of physical aggression or of some criminal act in the home or community in the past year?		
	Yes.....	12%	
	No.....	87%	
	01 Don't know.....	1%	
39.	Do most people feel free to express their political opinions in the area where you live?		
	Yes.....	52%	
	No.....	23%	
	Don't know.....	25%	
40.	Did most people feel free to express their opinions under the Taliban government?		
	Yes.....	1%	
	No.....	73%	
	Absent during Taliban rule.....	18%	
	Don't know.....	8%	

41. If you think about your family, would you say that today your family is more prosperous, less prosperous, or about as prosperous as under the Taliban government?

More prosperous.....	10%
Less prosperous.....	37%
01 About as prosperous.....	42%
Absent during Taliban rule.....	9%
Don't know	2%

42. For statistical purposes only, we need to know your total annual household income for last year. Will you please tell me which of the following categories best represents your total family income in the last one year? **[READ CATEGORIES ALOUD.]**

Less than 12,000 Afs.....	11%
12,001 – 20,000 Afs.....	21%
20,001 – 50,000 Afs.....	23%
50,001 – 100,000 Afs.....	9%
More than 100,000 Afs	5%
Refused.....	0%
Don't Know.....	31%

IV. FAVORABILITY

Now I'm going to ask what you think about some people, organizations and countries.

43. Zahir Shah: Is your opinion of Zahir Shah very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable?

Very favorable.....	38%	77%
Somewhat favorable.....	39%	
Somewhat unfavorable.....	7%	
Very unfavorable.....	7%	13%
Don't know	10%	

44. Hamid Karzai: Is your opinion of Hamid Karzai very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable?

Very favorable.....	48%	85%
Somewhat favorable.....	37%	
Somewhat unfavorable.....	5%	
Very unfavorable.....	5%	10%
Don't know	5%	

45. Jihadi leaders: Is your opinion of the Jihadi leaders very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable?

Very favorable.....	7%	29%
Somewhat favorable.....	22%	
Somewhat unfavorable.....	21%	
Very unfavorable.....	44%	64%
Don't know	7%	

46.	Foreign aid workers in Afghanistan: Is your opinion of foreign aid workers in Afghanistan very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable?		
	Very favorable.....	29%	80%
	Somewhat favorable.....	51%	
	Somewhat unfavorable.....	6%	
	Very unfavorable.....	7%	13%
	Don't know	7%	
47.	The Taliban: Is your opinion of the Taliban very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable?		
	Very favorable.....	3%	13%
	Somewhat favorable.....	10%	
	Somewhat unfavorable.....	13%	
	Very unfavorable.....	62%	75%
	Don't know	12%	
48.	The United States: Is your opinion of the United States very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable?		
	Very favorable.....	13%	65%
	Somewhat favorable.....	51%	
	Somewhat unfavorable.....	8%	
	Very unfavorable.....	16%	24%
	Don't know	11%	
49.	The United Nations or UN. Is your opinion of the UN very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable?		
	Very favorable.....	51%	84%
	Somewhat favorable.....	33%	
	Somewhat unfavorable.....	5%	
	Very unfavorable.....	2%	7%
	Don't know	9%	
50.	US military forces in Afghanistan. Is your opinion of the US military forces in Afghanistan very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable?		
	Very favorable.....	20%	67%
	Somewhat favorable.....	47%	
	Somewhat unfavorable.....	6%	
	Very unfavorable.....	17%	22%
	Don't know	10%	

V. ELECTION AWARENESS, PERCEPTIONS, AND EXPECTATIONS

51. Have you heard anything about elections coming in Afghanistan?

Yes **CONTINUE**91%
 No **GO TO Q53**9%

52. Do you happen to know for which month and year the elections are scheduled? **PLEASE RECORD ACTUAL MONTH AND YEAR MENTIONED FIRST AND THEN CODE OPTION**

Respondents..... 735
 Gave month other than June 2004.....7%
 Heard of elections in June 200472%
 Don't know/No response.....20%

Respondents..... 804

53. Under the new constitution of Afghanistan, a President of Afghanistan will be elected in 2004. This will be followed by an election for the members of parliament. Every Afghan 18 years and above will be able to vote in these elections.

Do you think you will vote in this election?

Yes **CONTINUE**81%
 No..... **GO TO Q.55**10%
 Don't know/not sure..... **GO TO Q.55**9%

54. **(IF WILL VOTE):** What are the most important reasons why you want to vote? **DO NOT READ OUT OPTIONS. MULTIPLE RESPONSES ALLOWED, CODE ALL MENTIONED**

Respondents..... 652
 To choose my leaders..... 66%
 It is my right..... 58%
 To bring peace..... 30%
 It will help the country 27%
 To bring prosperity / reconstruction..... 27%
 It is my obligation as a citizen to vote..... 21%
 I want to express my views 14%
 New government will be established 0%
 Strong government 0%
 80 Other (, SPECIFY) 0%
 Don't Know 0%

GO TO Q.56

55. **(IF WILL NOT VOTE OR DON'T KNOW/ NOT SURE):** What are the most important reasons why you may not vote? **DO NOT READ OUT OPTIONS. MULTIPLE RESPONSES ALLOWED, CODE ALL MENTIONED**

Respondents.....	151
Don't know how elections work	27%
Don't understand politics	24%
Personal reasons: too old, sick, etc.	22%
Won't have permission/women not allowed to vote/cannot leave house.....	16%
Not interested.....	10%
Fear of intimidation / violence/ insecurity	8%
Don't know enough about the parties / candidates.....	7%
Don't support any party	7%
New government will be established	2%
Other (SPECIFY)	3%
Don't know	15%

ASK ALL

Respondents..... 804

56. Do you think that voting in the election will make a big difference, some difference, little difference, or no difference at all?

Big difference.....	44%	77%
Some difference	33%	
Little difference.....	4%	
No difference at all.....	2%	6%
Don't know	16%	

57. Now I am going to read you some information sources. For each, please tell me if you like to get information about the election process from that source.

(READ LIST, MULTIPLE RESPONSES ALLOWED)

Radio	72%
Village chief or community leader	33%
TV.....	28%
Newspapers.....	20%
Posters with pictures.....	15%
Religious leader	13%
Delegates from your area who attended the Constitutional Loya Jirga	12%
A public meeting	10%
School teacher	5%
Special election video shown in your neighborhood	4%
Through songs by famous singers	3%
Using poetry	1%
A cartoon book	1%
Using comedians.....	1%
Don't know.....	0%

ASK Q.58 ONLY TO THOSE WHO CODE RADIO IN Q.57. FOR OTHERS GO TO Q.59

58. On the radio, which of the following ways would you like to receive information about the election process? **(READ LIST, MULTIPLE RESPONSES ALLOWED)**

Respondents.....	576
News features or documentaries	63%
Radio dramas	49%
Short 1-minute announcements.....	51%
Talk shows with interviews and discussions.....	22%
Don't know	0%

59. In which language would you prefer to receive information about the election? **(SINGLE RESPONSE ONLY)**

Respondents.....	804
Dari	49%
Pashto	44%
Uzbeki	3%
Noristani.....	1%
Turki.....	0%
Urdu	0%
Hindi	0%
English	0%
Arabic.....	0%
Hazaragi	0%
Pashaee.....	0%
We are not interested in elections	0%
Other (SPECIFY)	0%
Don't know	3%

60. Have you heard anything about people being required to register themselves to vote in the coming elections?

Yes	90%
No.....	5%
Don't know	5%

VI. ELECTION LEGITIMACY AND CONCERNS

61. Do you think the elections will be free and fair or do you think they will not be free and fair?
- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| Will be free and fair | 37% |
| Will not be free and fair | 4% |
| Don't know / not sure..... | 60% |
62. I'm going to mention some problems that can happen in elections. For each one, tell me if you think it is possible in the coming elections. **(READ ITEMS OUT, CODE EACH ONE THEY SAY IS POSSIBLE, MULTIPLE RESPONSES ACCEPTED)**
- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| Buying of votes | 60% |
| Cheating in the vote count..... | 50% |
| Husbands not letting wives vote..... | 24% |
| Intimidation against voters or party activists..... | 8% |
| Finding out for whom people voted without their saying | 6% |
| None of these possible | 5% |
| Don't know/No response..... | (DO NOT READ) |
| | 17% |
63. If a party gives someone money and they accept it, do you think the correct action is to vote for that party, or is it right for them to vote for whatever party they prefer?
- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Vote for party giving money | 6% |
| Vote for party they prefer..... | 73% |
| Don't know | 21% |
64. Do you think the election will be like the *Loya Jirga* election, where people voted publicly and others could see their choices, or do you think they will vote privately, where no one can see for who they vote?
- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| Publicly, people can see | 32% |
| Privately, people cannot see | 24% |
| 01 Don't know | 44% |
65. Have you heard whether there will be non-partisan groups to observe and monitor the elections?
- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| Yes, there will be monitors | 40% |
| No, I have not heard of monitors..... | 37% |
| Don't know | 22% |

VII. VOTER EDUCATION MESSAGES

Here is some information about the coming elections.

66. Everyone will mark their vote on a paper in private, fold it up, and put it in a box, so no one will see for whom you vote. Your vote will be your secret.

Does this make you much more confident, somewhat more confident, a little more confident, or no more confident that the elections will be free and fair?

Much more confident	37%	67%
Somewhat more confident.....	30%	
A little more confident	11%	
No more confident.....	3%	13%
Don't know	19%	

67. Because voting will be secret, even if political parties give people money for their votes, people will still be able to vote for the party they like.

Does this make you much more confident, somewhat more confident, a little more confident, or no more confident that the elections will be free and fair?

Much more confident	33%	65%
Somewhat more confident.....	33%	
A little more confident	15%	
No more confident.....	3%	17%
Don't know	18%	

68. Because voting will be secret, even if political parties make threats to get people to vote for their candidates, people will still be able to vote for the party they like.

Does this make you much more confident, somewhat more confident, a little more confident, or no more confident that the elections will be free and fair?

Much more confident	29%	58%
Somewhat more confident.....	29%	
A little more confident	13%	
No more confident.....	5%	18%
Don't know	24%	

69. Groups of monitors independent of the parties will observe every step of the elections and inform the people (authorities) of any cheating.

Does this make you much more confident, somewhat more confident, a little more confident, or no more confident that the elections will be free and fair?

Much more confident	46%	75%
Somewhat more confident.....	29%	
A little more confident	9%	
No more confident.....	2%	11%
Don't know	14%	

70. Some people would prefer Afghan monitors, while others prefer monitors from other countries. Would you prefer Afghan monitors, foreign monitors, or are both equally acceptable?
- | | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Afghan monitors..... | 20% |
| Foreign monitors..... | 32% |
| Both equally acceptable..... | 39% |
| Don't know..... | 9% |
71. If the monitors are Afghans, would you prefer ones from your area or from another area?
- | | |
|------------------------|-----|
| From your area..... | 14% |
| From another area..... | 36% |
| A mix..... | 42% |
| 01 Don't know..... | 8% |
72. Now that you have heard these things, do you think the elections will be free and fair or do you think they will not be free and fair?
- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| Will be free and fair..... | 69% |
| Will not be free and fair..... | 3% |
| Don't know / not sure..... | 27% |

VIII. DEMOCRATIC VALUES

Now I'd like to ask about something else. A lot of people in Afghanistan today are talking about democracy.

73. If a country is called a democracy, what does that mean to you?
- | | |
|---|-----|
| Freedom..... | 39% |
| Rights and law..... | 21% |
| Government of the people..... | 20% |
| Peace..... | 20% |
| Women's rights..... | 11% |
| Islamic democracy..... | 8% |
| Prosperity..... | 8% |
| Elections..... | 4% |
| Communism..... | 1% |
| Democracy cannot help us..... | 0% |
| Democracy has bad meaning..... | 0% |
| Democracy has no meaning..... | 0% |
| Election..... | 0% |
| Freedom of religion..... | 0% |
| Freedom of speech & beliefs..... | 0% |
| It's the law of westerners..... | 0% |
| Its against our religion and culture..... | 0% |
| Liberation according to Islamic values..... | 0% |
| Strong Govt..... | 0% |
| We can defend our right..... | 0% |
| We do not want democracy..... | 0% |
| Western democracy is dangerous for Islam..... | 0% |
| Will develop our country..... | 0% |
| Others (Specify)..... | 0% |
| Don't know / not sure..... | 36% |

74. What, if anything, is the most important thing that democracy in Afghanistan will bring you personally?

Freedom	30%
Peace	27%
Rights and law.....	24%
Prosperity	16%
Women’s rights	16%
Government of the people.....	14%
Islamic democracy	11%
Elections.....	5%
Communism.....	1%
Democracy cannot help us	0%
Election	0%
Freedom of speech & beliefs.....	0%
Liberation according to Islamic values	0%
Anarchy	0%
Democracy brings nothing to me	0%
Freedom for women according to the Islamic values.....	0%
It will provide work for us.....	0%
Law for people	0%
Reconstruction	0%
Reconstruction & rehabilitation	0%
We do not need democracy	0%
We just accept Islam as a religion.....	0%
Others (Specify)	1%
Don’t know/not sure.....	37%

75. Do you think that all political parties, even the ones most people do not like, should be allowed to hold meetings in your area?

Yes	30%
No.....	47%
01 Don’t know	23%

76. Suppose a friend of yours supported a party you don’t like. Would you accept that, or would it end your friendship?

Would accept it	49%
Would end friendship.....	23%
01 Don’t know / not sure	28%

77. If members of the Taliban lay down their weapons, do you think they should or should not be allowed to stand in the elections?

Should be allowed.....	59%
Should not be allowed.....	25%
01 Don’t know	16%

I'm going to read some ideas. Please tell me if you agree with each.

78. "It is a good thing that the government should allow peaceful opposition" Do you agree or disagree? **WAIT FOR RESPONSE AND THEN ASK** - Strongly or somewhat?
- | | | |
|------------------------|-----|-----|
| Agree strongly..... | 47% | 78% |
| Agree somewhat..... | 30% | |
| Disagree somewhat..... | 1% | |
| Disagree strongly..... | 5% | 6% |
| Don't know..... | 16% | |
79. "Everyone should have equal rights under the law, regardless of their gender, ethnicity or religion" Do you agree or disagree? **WAIT FOR RESPONSE AND THEN ASK** - Strongly or somewhat?
- | | | |
|------------------------|-----|-----|
| Agree strongly..... | 71% | 89% |
| Agree somewhat..... | 18% | |
| Disagree somewhat..... | 1% | |
| Disagree strongly..... | 1% | 2% |
| Don't know..... | 9% | |
80. "In Afghanistan, it is good for political parties to be peacefully involved in politics." What do you think about this idea? Do you agree or disagree? **WAIT FOR RESPONSE AND THEN ASK** - Strongly or somewhat?
- | | | |
|------------------------|-----|-----|
| Agree strongly..... | 51% | 80% |
| Agree somewhat..... | 29% | |
| Disagree somewhat..... | 1% | |
| Disagree strongly..... | 5% | 6% |
| Don't know..... | 14% | |
81. "Religious authorities should lead people in obeying the obligations of their faith while political leaders should make decisions about how the government is run." What do you think about this idea? Do you agree or disagree? **WAIT FOR RESPONSE AND THEN ASK** - Strongly or somewhat?
- | | | |
|------------------------|-----|-----|
| Agree strongly..... | 46% | 78% |
| Agree somewhat..... | 32% | |
| Disagree somewhat..... | 4% | |
| Disagree strongly..... | 8% | 12% |
| Don't know..... | 10% | |
82. "If political leaders do not listen to criticism from the people, they should lose their positions." Do you agree or disagree? **WAIT FOR RESPONSE AND THEN ASK** - Strongly or somewhat?
- | | | |
|------------------------|-----|-----|
| Agree strongly..... | 69% | 88% |
| Agree somewhat..... | 19% | |
| Disagree somewhat..... | 2% | |
| Disagree strongly..... | 3% | 5% |
| Don't know..... | 7% | |

83. Some people say: “Decision should be made based on what the majority wants, even if the minority disagrees.”

Others say: “It is more important to get as much agreement as possible between the minority and majority, even if the majority must compromise.”

Which is closer to your view?

What majority wants	43%
There should be compromise	44%
01 Don't know	13%

84. Some people say: “Democracy will bring Westernization and too much freedom and challenge Islamic values.”

Other people say: “An Islamic country can be democratic without becoming too Western. It can still keep its Islamic values”

Which is closer to your view?

Democracy challenges Islamic values.....	9%
Islam can be democratic also	52%
01 Don't know	40%

85. How much influence do you think someone like you can have over government decisions – a lot, some, very little, or none at all?

A lot	12%	33%
Some	21%	
Very little	19%	
None at all	26%	45%
01 Don't know	22%	

86. How interested are you in politics? Very interested, somewhat interested, not very interested, or not interested at all?

Very interested	7%	34%
Somewhat interested	27%	
Not very interested	17%	
Not interested at all	36%	52%
Don't know	13%	

87. How often do you discuss politics with friends? Almost all the time, often, not very often, or almost never?

Almost all the time	6%	16%
Often	11%	
Not very often	33%	
Almost never / Never	38%	71%
Don't know	13%	

Please tell me how interested you would be in the following activities.

88. Listening to a radio broadcast of ordinary people asking questions to candidates of the different parties during the election campaign. Would you be very interested, somewhat interested, not very interested, or not interested at all in listening to such a broadcast?

Very interested	27%	58%
Somewhat interested	31%	
Not very interested	13%	
Not interested at all	19%	32%
Don't know	10%	

89. Attending a meeting in your area where candidates from the different parties are present and ordinary people ask them questions.

Would you be very interested, somewhat interested, not very interested, or not interested at all in attending such a meeting?

Very interested	29%	60%
Somewhat interested	31%	
Not very interested	11%	
Not interested at all	20%	31%
Don't know	9%	

FOR MALE RESPONDENTS GO TO Q.91

90. **ASK WOMEN ONLY:** Attending a meeting with other women from your area to discuss the problems facing women.

Respondents..... 404

Would you be very interested, somewhat interested, not very interested, or not interested at all in attending such a meeting?

Very interested	38%	63%
Somewhat interested	24%	
Not very interested	12%	
Not interested at all	14%	26%
Don't know	11%	

IX. WOMEN AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

91. Now let's talk specifically about women related issues. What is the biggest problem facing women in this area today? **DO NOT READ OPTIONS. SINGLE RESPONSE ONLY.**

92. **(AFTER RESPONSE: And the next biggest? DO NOT READ OPTIONS. SINGLE RESPONSE ONLY.**

	Q91. Biggest Problem	Q92. Next Biggest Problem
Lack of rights / women's rights	26%	8%
Education / illiteracy	22%	25%
Health care	15%	17%
Under control of men / men have power	10%	12%
Can't leave homes	7%	4%
Forced marriages/ dowry	6%	11%
Poverty	6%	12%
Security	3%	3%
Domestic violence	1%	3%
Women have no problems	1%	0%
Other, (Specify)	0%	1%
Don't know	2%	3%

93. Do you think women need to ask their husband's permission to vote in the elections, or do you think they do not need to ask permission to vote?

Women need to ask for permission87%
 Do not need to ask permission5%
 Don't know9%

FOR MALE RESPONDENT GO TO Q.95

94. **MARRIED WOMEN:** Do you think that your husband would give you permission to vote if you ask?

UNMARRIED WOMEN: Do you think that your male elder would give you permission to vote if you ask?

Respondents..... 404
 Yes, he would.....64%
 No, he would not.....15%
 I don't need to ask him (**DO NOT READ OUT, MUST BE VOLUNTEERED**)0%
 Don't know20%

GO TO Q.96

95. **MARRIED MEN:** Do you think you would give your wife permission to vote if she asks?
UNMARRIED MEN: If you were married. Do you think you would give your wife permission to vote if she asks?

Respondents..... 400
 Yes, I would 80%
 No, I would not 18%
 She don't need to ask me (**DON'T READ OUT, MUST BE VOLUNTEERED**) 1%
 Don't know 1%

ASK ALL

Respondents..... 804

96. If women vote, do you think that women should decide for themselves or should they receive advice from men?
 Women should decide for themselves..... 21%
 Men should advise them..... 72%
 Don't know..... 6%

97. If there are separate educational programs for men and women, should women participate in programs to learn about the elections? **DO NOT READ OUT RESPONSES.**
 Yes 80%
 No..... 6%
 Women should participate together with men, not separately..... 2%
 Don't know 11%

I'm going to read some statements. These are reasons that people give on why they think women should be allowed to vote in the election. For each statement, please tell me to what degree you agree or disagree.

98. Women will vote separately from men. They will not mix. So they should be allowed to vote.
 What do you think about this statement? Do you agree or disagree? **WAIT FOR RESPONSE AND THEN ASK** - Strongly or somewhat?
 Agree strongly 60% 85%
 Agree somewhat 25%
 Disagree somewhat 2%
 Disagree strongly 3% 5%
 Don't know 10%

99. The new constitution says men and women have equal rights, including the right to vote.
 What do you think about this statement? Do you agree or disagree? **WAIT FOR RESPONSE AND THEN ASK** - Strongly or somewhat?
 Agree strongly 63% 86%
 Agree somewhat 23%
 Disagree somewhat 3%
 Disagree strongly 3% 5%
 Don't know 9%

100. In the election, everyone must vote for themselves. Men cannot vote in place of women. Women must vote for themselves.

What do you think about this statement? Do you agree or disagree? **WAIT FOR RESPONSE AND THEN ASK** - Strongly or somewhat?

Agree strongly	61%	85%
Agree somewhat	25%	
Disagree somewhat	3%	
Disagree strongly	2%	5%
Don't know	10%	

101. When a woman votes, she supports her husband's vote.

What do you think about this statement? Do you agree or disagree? **WAIT FOR RESPONSE AND THEN ASK** - Strongly or somewhat?

Agree strongly	55%	85%
Agree somewhat	30%	
Disagree somewhat	2%	
Disagree strongly	4%	6%
Don't know	9%	

102. If the women in your community don't vote, your community loses half its votes, and your candidate may lose the election because of that. So women should vote.

What do you think about this statement? Do you agree or disagree? **WAIT FOR RESPONSE AND THEN ASK** - Strongly or somewhat?

Agree strongly	56%	86%
Agree somewhat	30%	
Disagree somewhat	2%	
Disagree strongly	2%	5%
Don't know	9%	

103. Women are allowed to vote in Islamic democracies like Pakistan, Iran, Egypt, Bangladesh, Malaysia and Indonesia and so they should vote in Afghanistan too.

What do you think about this statement? Do you agree or disagree? **WAIT FOR RESPONSE AND THEN ASK** - Strongly or somewhat?

Agree strongly	66%	85%
Agree somewhat	20%	
Disagree somewhat	1%	
Disagree strongly	3%	4%
Don't know	10%	

104. Many Islamic scholars have approved that women have the right to vote. So women should be allowed to vote.

What do you think about this statement? Do you agree or disagree? **WAIT FOR RESPONSE AND THEN ASK** - Strongly or somewhat?

Agree strongly.....	72%	90%
Agree somewhat.....	18%	
Disagree somewhat.....	1%	
Disagree strongly.....	1%	3%
Don't know.....	7%	

TERMINATE INTERVIEW HERE FOR WOMEN (AFTER RECORDING NECESSARY DETAILS)

105. **MEN ONLY:** Now that you have heard this,

MARRIED MEN: do you think you would give your wife permission to vote if she asked?

UNMARRIED MEN: suppose you were married. Do you think you would give your wife permission to vote if she asked?

Respondents.....	400
Yes, I would.....	85%
No, I would not.....	12%
She doesn't need to ask me (DON'T READ OUT, MUST BE VOLUNTEERED).....	1%
Don't know.....	2%

THANK AND TERMINATE INTERVIEW (AFTER RECORDING NECESSARY DETAILS)

For supervisor to code:

Check Details

	Accompanied	Scrutinized	Spot Checked / Back checked	Signature	Date
Sup	01	02	03		
COL.	86-87	88-89	90-91		

ALSO POST CODE:

- Language in which interview was conducted:

Dari.....56%
Pashto.....44%

- Was the main interview conducted at respondent’s residence or at a more convenient place outside home?

At respondent’s residence84%
At some other place (outside home).....16%

- Was there any other person present during the interview? For how long?

Family members/others were present almost throughout the interview17%
Family members/other were present for about half the interview15%
Family members/others were present for a little while23%
Nobody was present/respondent was alone (during the entire interview)45%

###