2013 Afghanistan Civil Society Assessment

Counterpart International's Initiative to Promote Afghan Civil Society (I-PACS II)

January 2014

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ACRONYMS

CDCs	Community Development Councils
CSOs	Civil society organizations
IDIs	In-depth interviews
I-PACS and I-PACS II	USAID-funded Initiative to Promote Afghan Civil Society
IT	Information technology
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
KIIs	Key-informant interviews
NGOs	Non-governmental organizations, a form of CSO
SOs	Social organizations, a form of CSO
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

KEY TERMS

CIVIC EDUCATION: Efforts to promote democratic principles and participation among citizens, including providing information about the political system and civic values such as respect for the rule of law, tolerance of different opinions and compromise; and encouraging democratic participation though involvement in community issues, contacting government officials and voting in elections.

CIVIL SOCIETY: Defined by Van den Boogaard (2011) as "the public realm of voluntary collective action around shared interests and values that lie between the state, the market, and family."

GENDER MAINSTREAMING: Also referred to as gender integration, a strategy for promoting gender equality by ensuring that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality are integrated into all program activities, including strategy and project design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. Because the roles and power relations between males and females affect how an activity is implemented, gender mainstreaming requires identifying and addressing gender inequalities that may affect any project as well as building the capacity of organizations that are responsible for conducting development programs to address gender throughout the project cycle.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: Capacity, as used in this report, refers to the human resource and material capabilities of Afghan civil society organizations, e.g., management skills and plans, communication strategies, fundraising capabilities, staff training and internal controls, among others.

SHURA: Arabic for "consultation," shuras are traditional community councils or decision-making bodies that help resolve conflicts, decide on local issues, educate citizens and respond to local community needs.

TRANSFORMATION DECADE: The 10-year period from 2015 to 2025 that follows the 2014 transition of political and security responsibilities to a newly elected Afghan president.

YOUTH: For the purposes of this study, youth are defined as Afghans younger than 35.

Assessment Introduction and Acknowledgements

This assessment of the civil society sector in Afghanistan was commissioned by Counterpart International at the conclusion of its Initiative to Promote Afghan Civil Society (I-PACS and I-PACS II) programs, funded from 2005-2013 by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The assessment builds upon two previous reports, one conducted at the beginning of I-PACS in 2005, another at the start of its successor program, I-PACS II, in 2010.

The goal of I-PACS and I-PACS II has been to enhance the capacity of Afghan civil society organizations (CSOs) to address community problems, promote participation in the political process and encourage good governance from political leaders. The program has included a focus on women's and youth participation in civil society, gender mainstreaming within CSOs themselves and an enhanced legal and regulatory climate.

This 2013 assessment was designed to provide an overview of the current condition of Afghan CSOs and to examine changes in experiences, performance and capacity among I-PACS II CSOs, interviewed in 2010 and then re-interviewed for this study. Another key aim of this study is to examine the challenges and opportunities facing civil society organizations in the upcoming 2014 elections and the Transformation Decade beyond, covered in Section VIII of this report.

Among the research questions addressed in this report:

→ What groups benefit from the activities of CSOs and how active are CSOs in various sectors? Have I-PACS II organizations increased or decreased their activities, both overall and within specific areas?

→ What is the extent of geographical coverage of CSOs in Afghanistan? Are they reaching rural constituents? Has geographical coverage among I-PACS II CSOs expanded, contracted or stayed the same?

→ What is the organizational capacity of CSOs? Are they making efforts to train their staff in specific capacity areas? Have I-PACS II organizations improved their capacity?

→ Where are CSOs obtaining their funding, has this changed, and if so, how? Are CSOs taking specific action to obtain new funding and diversify funding sources? How do CSOs see their relationships with international donors?

→ What is the current operating environment of CSOs? What is the state of the legal and regulatory system? Is the security situation an impediment to carrying out programs, and do I-PACS II organizations report better or worse security conditions vs. three years ago?

→ What is the level of cooperation and coordination among CSOs? To what extent are CSOs communicating with constituents and consulting with community leaders and government officials? How do CSOs see their relationship with the government?

→ To what extent are women integrated into CSOs? Do they occupy decision-making positions? Are women a focus of program activities and beneficiaries of the work of CSOs? Have these changed among I-PACS II organizations?

→ To what extent do CSOs emphasize youth programs and youth participation within their organizations, and have these changed since 2010 among I-PACS II CSOs?

→ How do CSOs view the Transformation Decade and the future of civil society in Afghanistan? Are they engaging in or planning to engage in election-related activities? What are their prime concerns about the changes ahead?

The quantitative portion of the assessment is based on two components: Interviews with senior-level representatives of a random sample of 394 CSOs operating in Afghanistan drawn from government lists, provided by Counterpart, of 4,632 such organizations (including 2,565 social organizations, 1,782 Afghan non-governmental organizations and 285 international NGOs); and re-interviews with 89 I-PACS II CSOs that were participants in the I-PACS II program and previously were interviewed in 2010. The former was produced to obtain a representative sample of all CSOs on the registration lists; the latter, to measure change over time among the I-PACS II interviewees. Re-interviews were included in the full sample, weighted to their correct proportion of all registered CSOs, for a total sample of 483.

Two types of qualitative interviews were conducted: Ten key informant interviews (KIIs) with individuals identified by Counterpart as senior thought leaders in the development of Afghan civil society, and 35 in-depth interviews (IDIs) with officials of Afghan CSOs and related organizations. All qualitative interviews were done in person by trained interviewers following printed interview guides.

Design of this study and preparation of this report were overseen by Hind Haider, Technical Advisor, and Diana Bowen, Director, Afghanistan Programs, of Counterpart International. Additional contributors to the technical focus of the report include Maiwand Rahyab, Anika Vartan, Abiosseh Davis and Amal al-Azzeh.

Field work was carried out by the Afghan Center for Socio-Economic Research in Kabul, with sampling, field work oversight and data tabulation directed by Matthew Warshaw, vice president, and Samantha Lee-Ming Chiu, research analyst, of D3 Systems, Inc., of Vienna, Va.

The study was designed, produced and analyzed by Langer Research Associates of New York, N.Y. The research was directed by Gary Langer, president, and Gregory Holyk, Ph.D., research analyst, assisted by Damla Ergun, Ph.D., research analyst, and Julie E. Phelan, Ph.D., senior research analyst. Data analysis was conducted by Holyk and Ergun, and Holyk is lead author of this report. All comparisons of data have been tested for statistical significance. Langer Research Associates adheres to the Code of Professional Ethics and Practices of the American Association for Public Opinion Research and the Principles of Disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

2013 Afghanistan Civil Society Assessment

Executive Summary

Civil society organizations in Afghanistan stand on the edge of an uncertain future, bolstered by major progress in their activities, capacity and reach, yet challenged by still-unmet needs and future risks in terms of security, political stability and their own sustainability.

This assessment of the condition of Afghan CSOs finds much to celebrate. In a national survey and nearly four dozen qualitative interviews, senior CSO officials express measured confidence, awareness of critical issues and commitment to their goals. Program delivery is both broader and more focused, especially in terms of women and youth. Efforts at diversifying funding sources are under way, with some initial successes. Capacity building, enhanced internal governance and external outreach all are in progress, and the regulatory climate is highly rated.

Yet continued support down the path of these improvements remains as vitally needed as ever, perhaps even more so, given the uncertainties ahead. Afghan CSOs see opportunities but also challenges in the country's Transformation Decade ahead, as Afghanistan takes on greater self-reliance, but with less of the international support on which it has come to rely. In a troubling sign, this study finds more CSOs say their funding is decreasing than say it is rising, even in advance of the 2014 transition.

Beyond funding, a reduced international presence may deprive CSOs of a powerful source of leverage in their efforts to maintain government interest in the development of civil society. Indeed eight in 10 CSOs express concern about reduced influence for their sector in the decade ahead. But opportunities are available as well, including the potential for CSOs to play a key role in implementing and monitoring the Mutual Assistance Framework, established at the Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan in 2012, tying continued support from the international community to progress by the Afghan government in achieving development goals.

Counterpart International has supported the development of Afghan CSOs since 2005 through the U.S. Agency for International Development's Initiative to Promote Afghan Civil Society program (I-PACS). This report evaluates the state of civil society in Afghanistan, the progress among I-PACS II CSOs since 2010 and their way forward as the Transformation Decade unfolds.

The assessment includes a detailed desk review of relevant literature since 2010; a survey of a random national sample of 394 registered civil society organizations (CSOs); re-interviews with an additional 89 I-PACS II CSOs that were participants in the I-PACS II program and previously were surveyed in 2010;[1] 10 key informant interviews (KIIs); and 35 in-depth interviews (IDIs) with senior CSO officials.

The desk review, presented in full in Appendix A, reviews more than 40 research reports published from 2009 to present on the development of CSOs in Afghanistan. These include the important *Signposting Success* study (Davin, Malakooti, & Plane, 2012) produced for the U.S. State Department, the Tawanmandi Initiative *CSOs Mapping Exercise* (Tawanmandi Initiative, 2011); reactions to the 2012 Tokyo Conference (Friedman, Haqbeen, & Grossman, 2012; Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2012; Steinberg, 2012); and Counterpart's 2011 assessment (United States Agency for International Development, 2011).

These studies note progress to date, underscore the challenges ahead and identify concrete measures by which CSOs can secure their future, assisted by international donors and NGOs and the Afghan government. The steps to sustainability they identify include more diversified funding, effective capacity building, enlightened oversight, improved transparency and accountability, enhanced networking among organizations, effective partnerships with local leaders and traditional organizations and broader communications outreach to the Afghan public.

The message, to a large extent, has been received. This study finds significant efforts by CSOs in many of these areas, albeit to varying degrees, and with room for further improvement across the board. It also, perhaps most strikingly, finds substantial progress in the process of civil society weaving itself more deeply into Afghans' lives, with programs that are at once more extensive and more inclusive than ever before.

Among the key results:

Range of Activities

The range of CSO activities also is broad and has seen substantial growth. On average, CSOs report being involved in seven different programmatic activities. Among re-interviewed I-PACS II organizations, the average number of activities has increased from four in 2010 to seven now. Three years ago 27 percent had only one single activity; it's 4 percent today. And the share engaging in six or more activities has risen from 23 percent to 53 percent in just three years' time.

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1 References in this report to survey results among "CSOs" in general refer to the random national sample of all registered civil society organizations. References to results among I-PACS II organizations refer to the separate sample of I-PACS-II CSOs that were interviewed in 2010 and re-interviewed in this study..

While women and youth are the top focus of activities among CSOs in general, many others join the list, including efforts in education (reported by 46 percent); voter registration and civic education (40 percent); promoting the rights of minorities (39 percent); conflict resolution (also 39 percent); culture, science, history, the arts and sports (38 percent); and the rights of the disabled (35 percent).

Civic education, for its part, was mentioned by several in-depth interview respondents as one of the greatest needs civil society can help address. Many also stressed the basic role of civil society in advocating for public needs and acting as an intermediary between the public and government. However, as reported in Section VII, advocacy and interactions with government officials both are problematic areas for many CSOs.

Re-interviews of I-PACS II organizations show dramatic advances. In 2010 just 12 percent said they were involved in promoting the rights of minorities; it's 49 percent among these same organizations now. The number involved in education programs has jumped from 28 to 51 percent; in conflict resolution, from 16 to 38 percent; and in youth programs, as noted, from 25 to 43 percent. Even with the gains, there's room for further progress in these areas.

I-PACS II organizations tend to be longer established and better funded compared with other CSOs, perhaps allowing these organizations to expand activity areas during a time of generally decreased funding for other CSOs.

Additional areas receive less focus. Some relate to service delivery, i.e., health, agricultural support and infrastructure development, perhaps, as suggested in the desk review, reflecting increased government capacity. Others are identified in the desk review as important areas for CSO attention. One of those is strengthening independent media, now undertaken by 27 percent of CSOs overall and a similar 29 percent of I-PACS II CSOs, the latter up from 21 percent three years ago. Another is seeking to influence policy development, reported by 21 percent overall.

"I think the activities [of CSOs] are prominent, very visible and getting better. Compared to their activities two to three years ago, they have improved a lot, their projects are sufficient and in every field."

– Deputy director of a CSO providing job training for women

"In the context of Afghanistan, I would say [civil society] has never been stronger. There are more civil society organizations now than there were 10 years ago. They are more active, they hold the government more accountable than they used to. I think if you compare this with western countries then they look weak, but in comparison to where it has come from in such a short amount of time, take for example in women's health and rights, education, and other things, then civil societies are doing a great job in this context.

– Country director of an international CSO focused on economic development

Reach of the Sector

The reach of the civil society sector overall is broad. Nearly half of CSOs say 1,000 or more people benefit from their programs and activities; 26 percent say they benefit more than 5,000 people apiece. Given that there are more than 4,600 registered CSOs in the country, these figures indicate an enormous impact of CSOs on the Afghan population.

Support is critical, as evidenced by the increasing level of outreach specifically among CSOs that have received I-PACS II mentoring. In interviews three years ago, 46 percent of these organizations reported serving more than 1,000 people with their ongoing projects and activities. In re-interviews now, that's swelled to 69 percent.

"Civil society organizations have improved from the past because they gained experience and their capacity has increased."

– Executive director of an Afghan media organization

Geographical Coverage

For all their advances, lack of geographical coverage and Kabul-centricity still mark the work of Afghan CSOs. Fifty-eight percent say they are active in Kabul; far fewer report activity in other provinces, led by Herat (18 percent), Balkh (16 percent) and Nangarhar (14 percent).

Six in 10 CSOs have a single office, and as many have their headquarters in Kabul. Sixty-three percent operate mainly in urban areas, even though 75 percent of the country's population is rural.

While many more CSOs say they've increased rather than decreased their activities, this has occurred disproportionately in provinces in which they already were operating. Perhaps due to the difficulty in expanding operations to less secure areas, just 12 percent of CSOs say they've expanded their operation to new provinces in the past few years. Specifically among I-PACS II CSOs that were re-interviewed this year, 48 percent report expanding their operational areas, but that's down from 63 percent in 2010. Again, challenging security environments may be to blame.

Among those reporting a decrease in geographical coverage, lack of funding is far and away the chief reason given. But lack of security is a factor as well; nearly every in-depth interviewee cited insecurity as an impediment to civil society development, particularly in the south and east of the country. Many also mentioned inaccessibility and poor infrastructure.

Rural places in Afghanistan have been deprived of their rights.

– Senior official at an Afghan think tank

There are two kinds of geographic areas that are particularly underserved. The first geographic areas are insecure ones. … The second geographic areas are inaccessible ones. … In previous years, we could have had access to these places, but we have been restricted to very few provinces because security problems have increased. The geographic coverage of civil society organizations has slowly become smaller.

– Director of a CSO assisting smaller organizations

Funding

It may be no surprise that CSOs cite funding as their biggest concern. More than half, 56 percent, have annual budgets less than the equivalent of $25,000 (1.4 million Afghanis). Just one in eight has a budget more than $100,000.

Four in 10 are funded by international donors, the source with the highest level of uncertainty in the Transformation Decade. At the same time, 55 percent report some funding from individual members, an alternative and potentially self-sustaining revenue source. Moreover, among I-PACS II re-interviews, the proportion receiving membership revenue is up from 29 percent three years ago to 47 percent now, an encouraging trend.

Notably, half of the CSO representatives interviewed in more detail mentioned lack of funding, dependency on international donors or general economic problems as one of the biggest challenges facing CSOs, a close second to security concerns.

Still, alternative sources do not appear to be making up for loss of other funding. While 30 percent of CSOs overall say their funding has increased in the past three years, 37 percent say it's decreased. Among I-PACS II CSOs, a nearly identical 38 percent say their funding has decreased, while 30 percent say it's up. In 2010, by contrast, 52 percent of these same CSOs said their funding was on the rise, and just 25 percent reported a decrease.

Nearly all CSOs say they are seeking new revenue sources. But many are not engaging in the kinds of activities necessary to raise funds. No more than a third of organizations had done each of nine different fundraising activities (e.g., capital campaigns, membership dues, special events, personal solicitations and foundation grants). Among those who'd attempted any of these specific fundraising activities the average number was fewer than two. That needs improvement given the importance of diversifying funding sources identified in the desk review.

Several in-depth interviewees mentioned efforts at reducing their reliance on big donors, especially international ones. But they reported varying levels of success in those attempts, with some citing difficulties with the application procedures and others saying they feel they lack the credentials, capacity or contacts required to receive international funding.

> *One of the biggest challenges that civil society organizations face is the issue of their financial support. During the past decade their main funding sources were the international donors and aid institutions, most of which have already left and others are leaving.*
>
> – Program director of a human rights CSO

> *The first challenge that we'll face [in 2014] would be lack of funding…[but this is] a good opportunity for the Afghan people to have more responsibility for their own society.*
>
> – Director of a CSO focused on poverty, education and human rights

> *We are doing everything in our power to move toward greater self-sufficiency and are trying our best to increase our membership fees, because after 2014 we will not be able to receive funding from our international donors and aid institutions.*
>
> – Lawyer for a legal-assistance CSO

> *We have a team in the office that is looking for new funding sources. When we find them, we prepare proposals for new projects and submit them to our new donors to provide us funding and money.*
>
> – Deputy director of an Afghan CSO focused on helping the disabled

Growth of Capacity Development

Capacity development has been an important element of the advances reported. Half of CSOs list providing capacity-building services among their activities. Among I-PACS II CSOs 44 percent are involved in external capacity building now, up from a mere four percent three years ago.

Nearly all CSOs have written rules and a mission statement, and most also have procurement, accounting and employee manuals, as well as official financial policies and procedures, all critical elements of successful organizations.

Again there is room for greater efforts. In terms of working on internal capacity building within their own organizations, 59 percent of CSOs have procedures in place for ongoing performance assessments and the same number have written communication plans, but that means that four in 10, in both cases, do not. A quarter lack specific financial policies or procedures. Almost two-thirds of all CSOs don't have an external governing body, although among I-PACS II CSOs, the presence of an external board has soared from 20 percent in 2010 to 58 percent now.

Other capacity-related results also show the impact of I-PACS II capacity-building efforts. Among I-PACS II organizations, 84 percent have done staff training in administration, vs. 62 percent of CSOs overall; 66 percent have trained in program monitoring and evaluation, vs. 45 percent overall; and 44 percent have trained in networking among organizations, vs. 28 percent overall.

The impacts are clear. Most I-PACS II CSOs have written rules, financial policies, a mission statement and procurement and employee manuals. They far surpass other CSOs in implementing IT policies, security protocols, formal assessments, written communication plans and external governing committees, improving significantly in these areas since 2010.

In qualitative interviews, nearly all CSO officials, including those from I-PACS II-affiliated organizations, report greater professionalism, training and capacity building in the sector. Many say their employees have taken courses or workshops on topics such as report writing, management, finances, proposal writing, evaluation and monitoring, fundraising and the English language.

"Having active offices, ordered plans and policies for finances and management and transparent reports differentiate more–successful from less–successful CSOs."
– Executive director of a CSO working on increasing women's democratic participation

> *We have made strides to improve the organizational capacity of our organization. For instance, we organized short–course training for our administrative and finance teams…Our staff members received training in proposal writing, monitoring and so on.*
>
> — Program director of a human rights CSO

> *I am the main trainer in the organization. I have made progress in the improvement of our organization and staff. We hold workshops about proposal writing, report writing and fundraising for the capacity of our staff. There are some issues that we have no information about, such as financing and accounting. We have made contact with other organizations to hold workshops about these issues for our staff.*
>
> — Director of a CSO providing assistance to smaller organizations

We note that gender mainstreaming and support for youth can be included within the category of capacity development. However, given the particular focus of those two activities, as well as their importance to civil society more broadly, both are evaluated separately in this report from capacity development more generally.

The Regulatory Environment

Afghan CSOs are broadly positive about the legal and regulatory environment in which they operate. Eighty-nine percent rate the situation positively, though they're more likely to say it's "somewhat" (56 percent) rather than "very" good (33 percent). Almost half say the legal and regulatory situation has improved in the last three years, while just 18 percent say it's worsened.

As the desk review notes, notable regulatory reform efforts have included the creation of Community Development Councils in 2003 to channel aid for local development projects and the 2005 Non-Governmental Organization Law establishing a legal framework for the registration and regulation of CSOs. Regulatory reform also has been a focus of the I-PACS program since 2005. Most recently, with the encouragement of I-PACS II CSOs and others, the government early in 2013 enacted a series of amendments to the Social Organization Law. Among other steps, these give social organizations access to donations from foreign sources and allow them to participate in policy debates, including from an advocacy standpoint.

As one result of this legislation, 84 percent of CSOs say they file funding reports with the Afghan government, rising to 96 percent of those that receive funding from international donors. Three-quarters say they file non-funding activity reports, chiefly with the ministries of economy and justice.

Also 49 percent of CSOs say the legal and regulatory situation has improved in the last three years, far more than the 18 percent who say it's worsened. That confirms qualitative findings cited in the desk review suggesting that official registration of CSOs with government ministries and streamlined funding through CDCs has enhanced the legal and regulatory environment.[2]

In in-depth interviews, some frustration with government is reflected, complaints about corruption are significant and many CSOs see themselves in a watchdog role. Regardless, government reporting requirements are seen as beneficial: Eighty-three percent say the current legal and regulatory environment for CSOs helps their organizations operate effectively, an overwhelmingly positive assessment.

CSOs thus express satisfaction with the overarching legal framework that's been put in place, but also express a great deal of frustration with government corruption and difficult interactions with government officials.

> *We have good coordination with the government in our projects and we share it with the government. We involve the government and other CSOs in preparing our reports and talk about a variety of topics with them.*
>
> — Director of an education CSO

> *We have some problems in maintaining relations with the government, but don't have any problems [in coordinating with] civil society organizations. Some challenges lay ahead for us in terms of sharing information with the government.*
>
> — Vice president of a CSO that promotes mass media

Involvement of Women

While many groups benefit from CSO activities, women and youth (detailed in the next subsection) stand out: Eighty-one percent of Afghan CSOs say they help women, second only to youth. This result marks the fruits of a major effort, by I-PACS II and other programs, to address the historically underserved needs of women.

Nearly three-quarters of CSOs say they are engaging, or plan to engage, in activities intended to encourage women (and youth) to participate in the 2014 Afghan elections. More broadly, among I-PACS II CSOs interviewed in 2010 and again in 2013, there's been a sharp increase in those reporting that women benefit from their activities – 60 percent three years ago, 80 percent now. Sixty-two percent specifically promote gender equality and integration, up from 50 percent.

2 The National Solidarity Programme was created in 2003 by the Afghan government to empower communities to identify, plan, manage and monitor their own development projects through establishment of CDCs. The program provides block grants enabling CDCs to design and implement projects to address community needs. By linking CDCs with government agencies, NGOs and donors, the program facilitates improved and coordinated service delivery at the community level. Funded by bilateral and multilateral countries, the program is administered by Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development and implemented by local and international NGOs as facilitating partners.
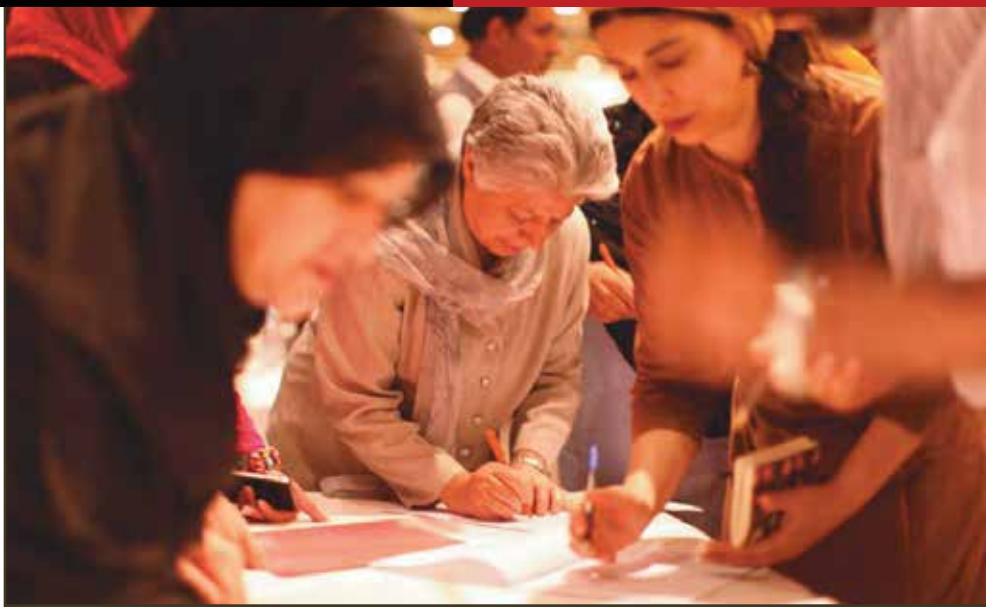
In-depth interviews identify a wide range of services and programs that CSOs provide to women, including health services, civic education, schooling, legal help, job training and efforts to prevent violence against women. Some of the most frequently mentioned areas include providing women with knowledge about their democratic rights, including voting and legal rights; and providing job training and economic opportunities, such as assistance starting artisan or other small-business enterprises.

Many in-depth interview participants brought up assisting women and promoting women's rights as one of the chief aims of Afghan CSOs, and indicated that they are working to improve their capacity to understand and address women's issues. In survey results, half of all CSOs and 58 percent of I-PACS II organizations reported receiving training in gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment in the last three years, both among the top half of capacity-building activities in which CSOs have engaged.

Many donors and CSOs themselves have pushed for greater participation of women, especially in more prominent positions, within the civil society sector itself. While CSOs are leaders in this area, there still is much work ahead.

On average, women comprise 55 percent of part-time staff and 46 percent of volunteers among I-PACS II CSOs, up by 10 and 12 percentage points, respectively, from 2010. Women also account for 40 percent of full-time staff at these organizations, but that is little changed from its 2010 level, 37 percent. In another measure, CSOs overall that have managerial staff say, on average, that 40 percent of those managers are women. Among I-PACS II CSOs that advances closer to parity, 46 percent. Comparative data from 2010 aren't available, but that is a hopeful result.

Almost all qualitative interviewees said women hold positions of responsibility within their organizations, with several almost exclusively run by women. Nearly all also reported greater efforts to include women, and several have affirmative action policies in place.

Participants in qualitative interviews report difficulties in finding educated and otherwise qualified female candidates for full-time positions. However, this, to at least some extent, may reflect self-justification for a lack of progress in improving gender integration. Further efforts to accomplish gender mainstreaming should be encouraged.

> *Today if you take a look at every CSO's staff, you can see women present in the staff, participating in the leadership and in the decision making.*
>
> — Senior official at a local Afghan think tank

> *I do my best to offer better positions to women…and I won't accept working in an organization where women's rights are not considered.*
>
> — Deputy director of a large international NGO

Youth

With the demographic dominance of youth in the country's population, the I-PACS II program has closely focused on youth as well. Eighty-six percent of Afghan CSOs say they benefit youth, highest among any group served.

Among I-PACS II CSOs that were re-interviewed this year, 43 percent specifically promote youth programs, up from a quarter three years ago. Eighty-nine percent of re-interviewed organizations also say that youth benefit from their activities more generally, double the number three years ago. And, on average, 70 percent of Afghan CSOs' full-time employees are younger than age 35.

Clearly, these results show that youth play a leading role within civil society and, along with women, benefit highly from CSO programs. The broad participation of youth in civil society and the increase in activities that benefit young Afghans among I-PACS II organizations is a positive sign for Afghanistan's future.

In-depth interviews indicate that youth-focused CSOs are most active in providing education and employment support to young Afghans, crucial to the success of Afghanistan's next generation.

> *Fortunately, all our staff members in Kabul and the provinces are youth under the age of 35 and this is one of the reasons for our success because we have youth who are energetic and have more potential to serve and work harder and harder. Our organization is 100 percent youth staff and this process will continue in the future as well.*
>
> — Director of a CSO focused on youth issues

Communication and Cooperation

As the 2012 *Signposting Success* report notes, "The most effective CSOs nurture strategic partnerships with local elites, including media, politicians and respected community members, and coordinate with other organizations." The current survey finds that majorities of CSOs do consult with a variety of other stakeholders and groups apart from their direct constituents, but that relatively few do so frequently, making this another area that's ripe for improvement.

At the top of the list, for example, 84 percent of CSOs consult with community leaders, but just 37 percent do so frequently. Seventy-one percent consult with other CSOs at least sometimes, but just 25 percent do so frequently. And while seven in 10 consult with representatives of local and national government, just a quarter do so frequently.

In-depth and key-informant interviewees recognized the importance of involving local leaders when implementing programs, with many saying they try to cultivate close relationships with local officials, elders and religious leaders. Several mentioned holding shura councils before beginning a project.

There are challenges: In qualitative interviews, several CSO leaders mentioned difficulties in working with government representatives and rural communities alike, citing bureaucracy, adversarial relations or corruption in the former, and traditional social mores in the latter.

Further, seven in 10 CSOs say they do not belong to any larger network organization – a missed opportunity, given that among those that do belong to a network group, 94 percent find it effective at supporting their goals, including two-thirds who say it's "very" effective. I-PACS II organizations are taking advantage of networking much more than CSOs overall: Fifty-one percent belong to a network, a substantial 21 points more than CSOs in general.

> *All of our programs are based on our relationships with local communities. When we begin a relationship with a new community… it's generally initially through the mullah and shura, then the elders of that community, and then the wider community.*
>
> – Country director for an international NGO working on local economic development

> *As you know, our people have different customs. Our projects are all in women's issues and sometimes we face serious opposition to our projects, but we try to satisfy them with comprehensive talks.*
>
> – Deputy director of a CSO providing job training for women

> *I always try to get the ideas and opinions of reputable people, religious leaders and elders in the area, which has proven to be very effective.*
>
> – Director of a CSO that assists smaller organizations

The Future

Concerns about funding animate consideration of the Transformation Decade. Eight in 10 CSOs are worried about reduced international funding; 62 percent see lack of funding as the greatest challenge for the sector in the decade ahead. But there are other worries aplenty: 79 to 89 percent also express concern about possible increased insecurity, political instability and the potential for reduced influence of CSOs.

Funding and security worries also dominated in-depth discussions of the Transformation Decade, even while most CSO officials maintained optimism about the future of civil society and the country as a whole.

Several areas were identified in qualitative interviews as critical if CSOs are to survive and thrive in the years ahead. These include:

→ Working to make the 2014 elections successful

→ Increasing transparency and accountability

→ Searching for new funding sources and relying less on international funding

→ Cultivating sustainable funding sources such as membership fees and fees for service

→ Increasing coordination and cooperation with local communities, with the Afghan government and among CSOs themselves

Many of the above-mentioned concerns relate to the April 2014 elections for president (and provincial councils). In qualitative interviews, CSO leaders express concern that flawed or fraudulent elections may add to political instability, produce greater insecurity and hasten the reduction of international support. All would seriously negatively impact the operating environment for civil society groups.

One response is a commitment by many CSOs to contribute to a successful election. Out of five election-related activities tested in the survey (e.g., increasing awareness, encouraging participation and election monitoring), three-quarters of CSOs say they're undertaking at least one, and 56 percent are doing all five. CSO leaders speak of the election as the keystone to future success for their organizations and the nation more broadly.

> *Currently, our biggest concern is about the elections. CSOs should make people aware about the election and our aim is that each Afghan will use their voter's card and elect their president.*
>
> — Senior advisor of a CSO providing job training to women

> *If the 2014 election is held transparently without violation of the rules and regulations…and it results in the formation of a legitimate government, and the previous factional and ethnic conflicts do not resume I think the Afghan people, including women, will not face any serious challenges and problems in the future. However, if the government is not able to hold lawful elections, and the previous factional and ethnic conflicts resume in different parts of the country, of course all Afghan people, especially women, who are more vulnerable, will face many difficulties and problems after 2014 when the international community leaves.*
>
> — Lawyer for a legal assistance CSO

The stakes could hardly be higher. In-depth interviewees paint a bleak picture of a potential future, with substantially decreased international funding leading to fewer functioning CSOs – many going defunct, others sharply restricted in their capacity.

" The biggest challenge that civil society organizations are faced with is funding issues after 2014. As you know, the majority of these organizations are being funded by foreign donors, so they are concerned about their presence after the withdrawal of foreign forces in 2014… If the international community did not support them, civil society organizations would have no presence at all in the field. "

— Director of a women's and youth CSO

Still, some are optimistic that the sector will be able to withstand these difficulties and continue their work, especially if they can increase volunteerism and become more self-sustainable; some indeed see the Transformation Decade as an opportunity for them to gain self-reliance.

Ultimately, and remarkably given the uncertainty ahead, Afghan CSO officials are broadly positive about the future: Eighty-seven percent say they're very or somewhat optimistic about the prospects for civil society during the Transformation Decade. More than solely an assessment of risks vs. opportunities, that view reflects the indomitable spirit that offers the prospect of a thriving civil society in Afghanistan in the decade ahead, and the decades beyond.
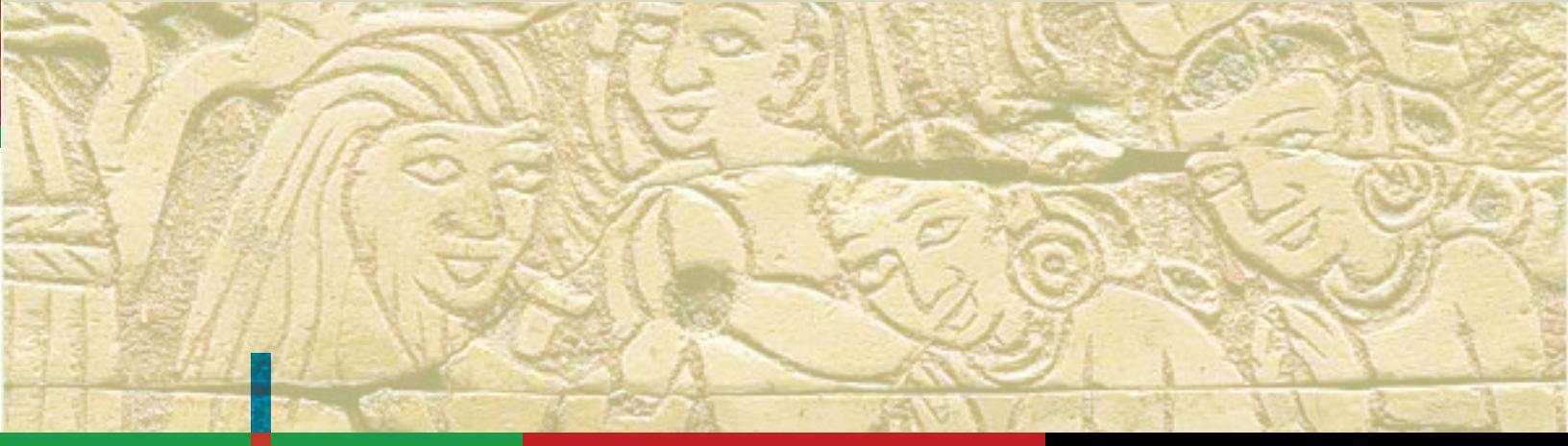
Characteristics of Afghan CSOs

Civil society organizations serve a range of important roles in Afghan society, from health and education services to civic engagement to promoting the rights of ethnic and religious minorities. This study finds tremendous growth in many of these activities and the number of people they serve, notably women and youth. These gains have occurred despite circumstances that constrain many such programs' geographical coverage.

Constituents

In terms of the number of individuals they assist, slightly fewer than half of CSOs report serving more than 1,000 people in their programs, including 26 percent that serve more than 5,000 – a comparatively wide reach for one in four CSOs. A little more than a half say they benefit 1,000 or fewer people, including 15 percent that serve fewer than 100.

Notably, I-PACS II organizations re-interviewed from 2010 report sizable increases in this gauge. Sixty-eight percent of these organizations say they assist more than 1,000 people in their projects and activities, up 22 points from the number who said so in 2010. Thirty percent help fewer than 1,000 people, down 12 points. As detailed below, that growth is paralleled by an equally substantial increase in activities.

Number of people served

2013 all CSOs

- 3%
- 15%
- 21%
- 15%
- 20%
- 26%

2013 I-PACS

- 1%
- 11%
- 11%
- 8%
- 29%
- 39%

2010 I-PACS

- 11%
- 9%
- 22%
- 11%
- 20%
- 26%

Legend:
- Less than 100
- 100 to 500
- 501 to 1,000
- 1,001 to 5,000
- More than 5,000
- No opinion
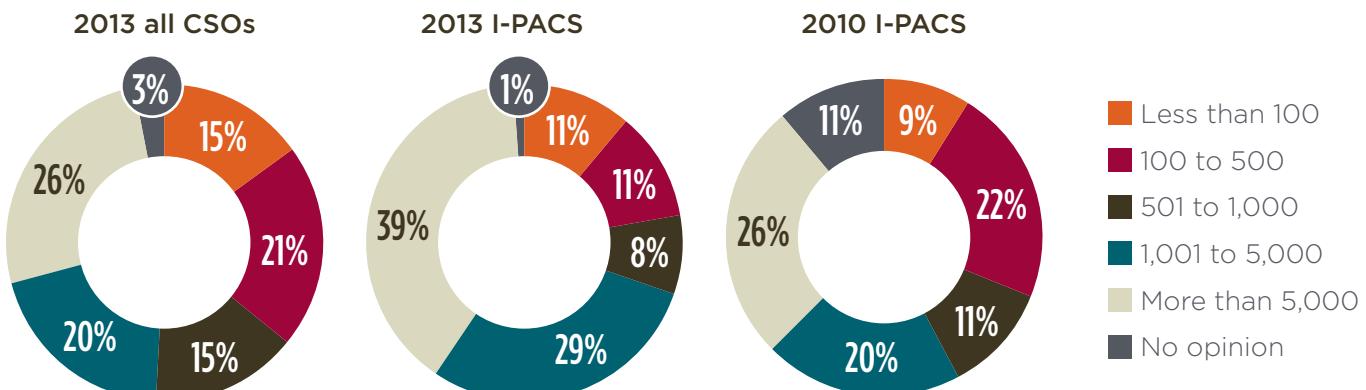
While many groups are represented, women and youth receive the most attention and assistance by far. Eighty-six percent of CSOs say they benefit youth and 81 percent assist women. The next most-cited beneficiaries, at some distance, are whole communities (68 percent), the poor (67 percent), those in need of literacy training or other education (65 percent) and those in need of job skills (53 percent). Just fewer than half of CSOs report programs that benefit the elderly (49 percent), disabled Afghans (46 percent), members (43 percent) and returnees or displaced persons (40 percent).

Groups that benefit from CSO activities

Youth	86%
Women	81%
Whole communities	68%
The poor	67%
Those in need of literacy/other education	65%
Those in need of job skills	53%
The elderly	49%
The disabled	46%
Members of the organization	43%
Returnees/internally displaced persons	40%
Sick people	38%
Farmers	36%
Local policy makers	36%
Infants/children	33%
National policy makers	27%
People trying to start small businesses	22%
Government employees	20%
Veterans/retired military	13%

Somewhat less-served groups include those in ill health, farmers, local policy makers, infants and children, national policy makers, and, farther down the list, entrepreneurs, government employees and veterans. The lack of focus on policy makers and government employees may reflect an often strained relationship between government and CSOs, noted in many qualitative interviews.

Re-interviews with I-PACS II organizations find sharp increases in specific groups served, as well as in the overall numbers served. The poor, CSO members, youth, the elderly and the disabled see the greatest increases, from 34 to 46 points.

Beneficiary groups reported by I-PACS II CSOs

Legend: 2010 (orange), 2013 (dark red)

Beneficiary group	2010	2013
Poor	20%	66%
Members of the organization	7%	53%
Youth	44%	89%
Elderly	16%	54%
Disabled	11%	45%
Returnees/internally displaced persons	9%	36%
Women	60%	80%
Whole communities	55%	73%
Government employees	9%	25%
Veterans/retired military	3%	16%
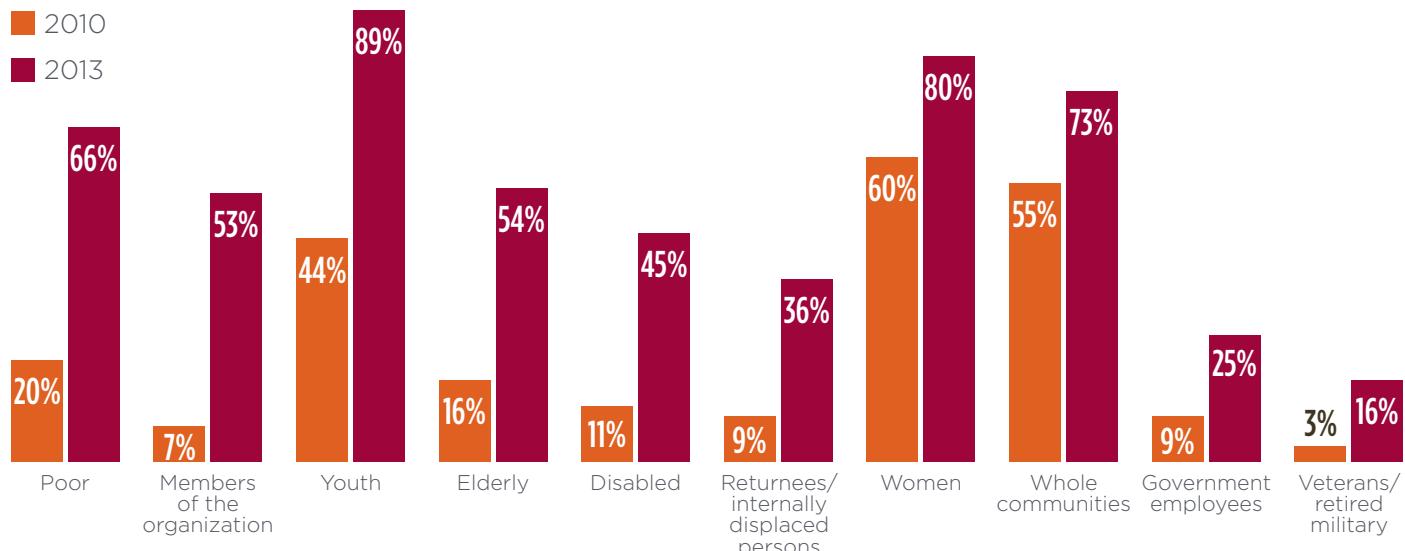
CSOs in general are more apt than I-PACS II organizations to offer programs that benefit farmers, 36 vs. 25 percent. I-PAC II organizations, for their part, are more likely than CSOs overall to undertake activities that benefit policy makers at the local level (51 vs. 36 percent) and at the national level as well (44 vs. 27 percent).

Main Activities

As noted in the desk review, basic service delivery was an initial priority of CSOs after the fall of the Taliban and continues as an important activity, reflecting the government's still-limited capacity. Nonetheless, Counterpart's 2010 assessment review found a shift in attention from basic services in the first half of the decade to education, gender equality, youth and human rights in the latter half. The current results show this trend continuing, bolstered by a major increase in the number and range of activities among I-PACS II organizations.

The average number of activities reported in I-PACS II organizations has jumped from nearly four per organization in 2010 to nearly seven now. (It averages seven among all CSOs as well.) The percentage of I-PACS II organizations concentrating on only one activity decreased by 23 points (from 27 to 4 percent); the share engaging in more than six rose by 30 points (from 23 to 53 percent) – dramatic shifts.

Ninety-one percent of all CSOs say they work directly at the community level (64 percent solely, 27 percent partly), vs. just 7 percent who say they provide support to other organizations working at the community level, rather than doing community-level work themselves. I-PACS II organizations are somewhat more apt to say they support community-level groups (20 percent) rather than doing community-level work themselves.

When asked their organization's focus, three-quarters of CSO representatives select "providing services to those in need." A far-distant one in 10 each cites "providing advocacy on issues of concern or on behalf of a particular group" or providing a social forum; hardly any focus chiefly on policy development or religious issues.

Clearly CSOs consider "providing services" to encompass a wide range of activities, including many that go beyond basic needs. Paralleling findings on their main beneficiaries, CSOs cite women and youth as the top focus of their programs. Choosing from a list of activities, 57 percent say they promote gender equality and integration, and 52 percent promote youth programs – the only two activities cited by majorities of Afghan CSOs. Also of interest, CSOs that support gender equality or youth programs are 9 to 11 points more likely than all CSOs to say they also serve local and national policy makers – apparently reflecting efforts to have gender and youth-program providers take up policy and advocacy roles.

CSO activities

Activity	%
Promote gender equality/integration	57%
Promote youth programs	52%
Capacity building	50%
Education	46%
Provide voter/civic education	40%
Promote rights of minorities	39%
Conflict resolution	39%
Promote culture/science/history/arts/sports	38%
Promote rights of the disabled	35%
Health	33%
Protect environment/ecology	31%
Strengthen independent media	27%
Coordinate other organizations	27%
Develop agriculture	25%
Influence policy development	21%
Implement religious activities (incl. educ.)	20%
Water and irrigation	17%
Promote political party development	16%
Deliver food	14%
Housing/roads/electricity	12%
Develop alternative livelihood/promote income generation/microcredit	10%
Demining activities	3%

Following these are capacity building in general (performed by 50 percent of CSOs); education (46 percent); providing voter and civic education (40 percent); promoting the rights of minorities (39 percent); conflict resolution (39 percent); promoting culture, science, history, the arts and sports (38 percent); and promoting the rights of the disabled (35 percent).

Beyond services to women and youth, it's encouraging that half of Afghan CSOs work on some aspect of capacity building; the need to extend the capacities of government and citizens alike is a common theme in the literature. Civic education, for its part, was mentioned by several in-depth interview respondents as one of the greatest needs civil society can help address. Separately from these, many also stressed the basic role of civil society to advocate for public needs and act as an intermediary between the public and government.

> *Civil society should work as a bridge between people and their government.*
>
> – Director of an education CSO

> *CSOs are kind of a bridge between the government and people. They transfer the voice of the people to the government and share the goals of the government with the people.*
>
> – Director of a CSO that provides assistance to smaller organizations

The four in 10 CSOs working on conflict resolution indicate civil society's necessary involvement in this critical sector. As noted in the desk review, Afghan civil society is integral to representing the public at the negotiating table and arriving at a national consensus needed to forge a lasting peace for the country.

CSOs are less active in areas including health, environmental protection, coordinating other organizations, efforts to "strengthen independent media," developing agriculture, influencing policy development and "religious activities" of any kind, including religious education. The growth of an independent media sector, in particular, has been hailed as one of the country's biggest civil society successes, as well as a key element in its transition to a democratic system.

CSO activity is least concentrated in promoting political party development; food assistance; water and irrigation; housing, roads and electricity; and alternative income development. As noted, it's significant that most of these are basic services or infrastructure-related. Sources cited in the desk review suggest that this is likely to be a declining focus of Afghan CSOs as government capacity advances.

Among I-PACS II organizations, the overall increase in activities is reflected in many individual domains. Biggest are capacity building (up 40 points from 2010), promoting the rights of minorities (up 37 points), education

(up 23 points), conflict resolution (up 22 points), coordinating other organizations (up 19 points) and promoting youth programs (up 18 points). Basic service functions, meanwhile, remain comparatively low-activity areas, given the I-PACS II program's focus on civic and political engagement.

Change in I-PACS II CSO activities

	2010	2013	Change
Capacity building	4%	44%	+40 pts.
Promote rights of minorities	12%	49%	+37
Education	28%	51%	+23
Conflict resolution	16%	38%	+22
Coordinate other organizations	17%	36%	+19
Promote youth programs	25%	43%	+18
Promote rights of the disabled	22%	37%	+15
Implement religious activities (inc. educ.)	9%	22%	+13
Promote political party development	4%	17%	+13
Provide voter/civic education	27%	38%	+11
Promote gender equality/integration	52%	62%	+10
Strengthen independent media	21%	29%	+8
Protect environment/ecology	22%	26%	+4
Health	18%	22%	+4
Housing/roads/electricity	7%	11%	+4
Develop agriculture	12%	15%	+3
Demining activities	1%	4%	+3
Water/irrigation	12%	12%	0
Deliver food	8%	8%	0
Develop alternative livelihood/promote income generation/microcredit	8%	7%	-1
Promote culture/science/history/arts/sports	36%	31%	-5

These results are reflected in this study's qualitative interviews, with many in-depth and key-informant interviewees saying CSOs have improved their performance across a range of areas, despite their challenges.

> *I think the activities [of CSOs] are prominent, very visible and getting better. Compared to their activities two to three years ago, they have improved a lot, their projects are sufficient and in every field.*
>
> – Deputy director of a CSO providing job training for women

"I think [CSOs] are doing a better job than the past due to the experience they have gained in the past few years. I think they are now able to perform their jobs well apart from whether or not they are receiving support from others."

— Director of a CSO focused on women's and youth programs

"Civil society is a new concept in Afghanistan and people did not have any information regarding it, but from last 10 years I have seen so many improvements and development in this regard."

— Program manager of a CSO providing capacity support to other CSOs

"Honestly, it's only been 12 years since civil society was established in Afghanistan. … It's improved dramatically after the collapse of the Taliban regime. …Civil society needs enough time to be improved and for people to accept civil society in our country."

— Deputy country director of a large international NGO

Number of Projects

In addition to the increase in their areas of focus, there's also been a significant rise in activity among I-PACS II CSOs, measured by the number of projects they've completed or have under way. Sixty-two percent of those re-interviewed are working on two or more projects, up 17 points compared with three years ago. And the number to have completed two or more projects is up by 10 points, from 57 to 67 percent.

Among all CSOs, 24 percent have one project currently under way and 44 percent have two or more, the latter trailing I-PACS II CSOs by 18 points. Similarly, 29 percent of all CSOs have completed one project in the last year, while 48 percent have completed two or more. That is 19 points behind I-PACS II CSOs, which, as noted, tend to be better funded.

| | Current projects | | | Completed projects | | |
| | 2013 | | 2010 | 2013 | | 2010 |
	All CSOs	I-PACS	I-PACS	All CSOs	I-PACS	I-PACS
None	32%	25%	31%	23%	15%	25%
One	24%	13%	24%	29%	18%	18%
Two	17%	19%	13%	20%	18%	21%
Three or more	27%	43%	31%	28%	49%	36%

Thirty-two percent of CSOs overall say they currently are not working on any projects, and 23 percent have not completed any in the last year, though all these organizations have employees, are active and are registered. To some extent that reflects less activity by newer

organizations; those founded in the past two years are 13 and 17 points less likely than others to have current or recently completed projects, respectively. Less-active CSOs also have smaller budgets and fewer staff. Further, many CSOs report challenges maintaining a regular flow of funding, obtaining projects and keeping workers continually employed.

Organization Types and Tenure

As noted in the desk review, civil society is diverse and varied, including charities, faith-based organizations, professional associations, trade unions, business associations, social movements, peace groups, community groups, youth centers or clubs and women's organizations, among others. The civil society organizations interviewed in this study span many of these areas.

CSO survey respondents most often said their organizations are unions, including teachers', women's, students', trade, service, farmers' and charity unions (26 percent); community associations (24 percent); or CSO support organizations (12 percent). Fifteen percent are women's unions and 6 percent are youth associations.

The desk review also indicated that most CSOs now operating in Afghanistan are relatively new. This indeed is the case, though I-PACS II organizations are notably older and better established in comparison with all CSOs.

Overall, three in 10 civil society organizations have appeared in the three years since the last Counterpart assessment. An additional 47 percent were established between 2006 and 2010, and 15 percent were founded in the five years immediately after the fall of the Taliban (2001-2005). Fewer than one in 10 was established before 2001.

In stark contrast, among I-PACS II organizations, only 2 percent are new additions (2011-2013). Thirty percent were founded between 2006 and 2010, nearly half between 2001 and 2005 and two in 10 pre-2001. All in all, re-interviewed I-PACS II organizations are 43 points more apt than all CSOs to have been established before 2006.

When CSOs were founded

All CSOs — 8%, 15%, 47%, 29%

I-PACS — 2%, 20%, 47%, 30%

Pre-2001
2001-05
2006-10
2011-13
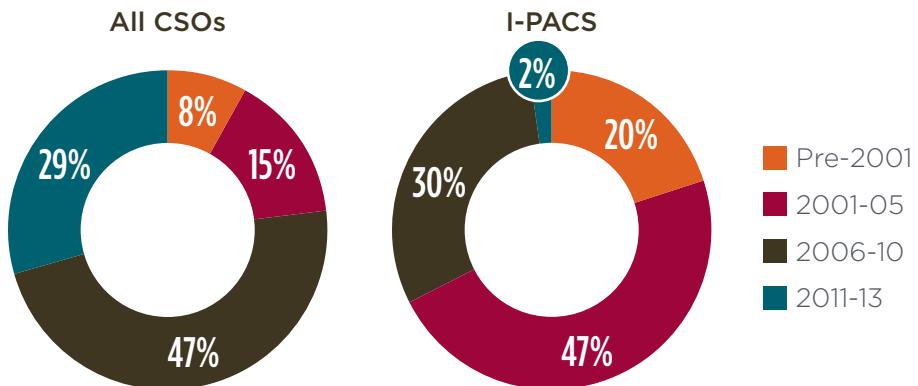
Human Resources

In terms of human resources, Afghan CSOs rely mainly on full-time employees and volunteers, employing fewer part-time workers, with notable growth in full-time workers among I-PACS II CSOs in the past few years.[3] Fewer than half of CSOs overall have more than 10 full-time employees. That rises to 62 percent of I-PACS II organizations, up from 48 percent in 2010.

I-PACS II organizations also are more apt than CSOs more generally to have six or more managers (25 vs. 15 percent).

Half of CSOs overall, and 45 percent of I-PACS II organizations, make use of part-time workers, a 12-point decrease vs. 2010 among I-PACS II CSOs. This use is not widespread; only one in 10 CSOs overall has more than 10 part-timers.

Volunteers, as noted, are more common than part-time employees; about six in 10 CSOs use them, although again fairly few, two in 10, have more than 10 volunteers. To the extent they're available, increased use of volunteers would benefit CSOs at a time of increased uncertainty over funding and the need to raise their self-sufficiency and cost effectiveness.

Geographical Coverage

Lack of geographical coverage has been a shortcoming of efforts to develop Afghanistan's civil society, as identified in previous I-PACS assessments and other studies. (The problem, of course, is broader than civil society alone.) CSO activities are urban-focused and indeed in many cases Kabul-centric, with difficulties reaching rural Afghans given both security and accessibility challenges – despite the fact that three-quarters of the country's population is rural. The current results indicate that this problem continues unabated.

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3 See Sections V and VI for discussions of the representation of women and youth in CSO staff.

Sixty-three percent of CSOs have their offices mainly in urban centers, vs. just 16 percent mainly in rural areas. (The rest are in both areas equally). Further, 60 percent implement the bulk of their activities in provincial capitals (32 percent exclusively, 29 percent mostly), vs. 40 percent mainly in districts beyond large urban centers (31 percent mostly, only 8 percent exclusively).

There are a few differences based on programming. CSOs that work on civil rights, political party development or civic and voter education are somewhat more apt to be based in urban areas, including provincial capitals, compared with those focused on irrigation or infrastructure.

Office locations

- 22%
- 63%
- 16%
- Mainly urban centers
- Mainly rural areas
- Both equally

Location of activity

- 8%
- 32%
- 31%
- 29%
- Only in provincial capitals
- Mostly in provincial capitals
- Mostly in other districts
- Only in other districts
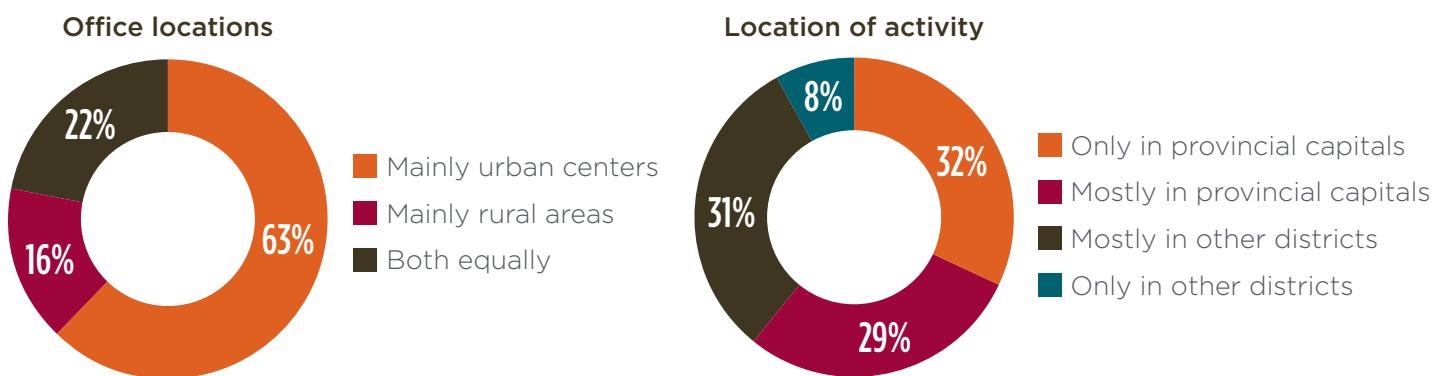
In-depth and key-informant interviews yield similar information. Nearly all interviewees said rural areas with high levels of insecurity were most underserved by civil society, especially in the south and east of the country.

❝ *There are some provinces, districts and areas including Helmand, Kandahar and Paktia, where civil society organizations are not able to extend their activities and implement their projects because of lack of security.* ❞

— Founder of a women's CSO

❝ *Civil society organizations have not yet focused their attention on provinces located in remote areas. People are deprived of their rights and live in poor conditions because donors do not allocate extra budget to these provinces.* ❞

— Director of a youth CSO

There are two kinds of geographic areas that are particularly underserved. The first geographic areas are insecure ones. Even the government cannot provide services for people in insecure areas. The second geographic areas are inaccessible ones. They are located in distant places…In previous years, we could have had access to these places, but we have been restricted to very few provinces because security problems have increased. The geographic coverage of civil society organizations has slowly become smaller.

– Director of a CSO providing assistance to smaller organizations

Civil society organizations are active and they are busy in the provision of services to people, but the area or sphere of their activities is limited due to…[fighting, a weak economy, lack of employment opportunities and poor security]. These institutions are in need of assistance and cooperation to extend the area of their services to remote provinces and the countryside.

– Deputy director of a CSO aiding the disabled

Rural places in Afghanistan have been deprived of their rights. …One of the main goals of CSOs is to increase their capacity in remote areas too.

– Senior official at an Afghan think tank

[The professionalism and organizational capacity of large Kabul-based CSOs] is good because their budget, security and personnel problems are solved here, but if they are in the provinces, they face budget limitations, insecurity and lack of personnel and capacity that result in a lack of quality work and effectiveness.

– Senior official at the Afghan Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development

The activities of CSOs are unfortunately not comprehensive. They provide services only in Kabul, Kandahar, Balkh, Heart and Nangarhar. I want them to increase their activities and cover rural and remote areas.

– Senior official at the Afghan Ministry of Information and Culture

Unfortunately, in some insecure regions very little work has been done, as is the case with some remote areas as well. For example, Daykundi is a very secure province, but the highway there is very difficult, which makes it hard for us to reach it. …In Badakhshan, impassable roads are a problem too.

– Executive director of a human rights network organization

Another part of the difficulty is resource related; six in 10 Afghan CSOs have just one office and an additional 22 percent have two, leaving few with a wider physical presence (11 percent have three to five offices, 6 percent six or more.) I-PACS II organizations appear to have consolidated their office space: Forty-three percent have only one office, a 17-point increase from 2010.

Number of offices
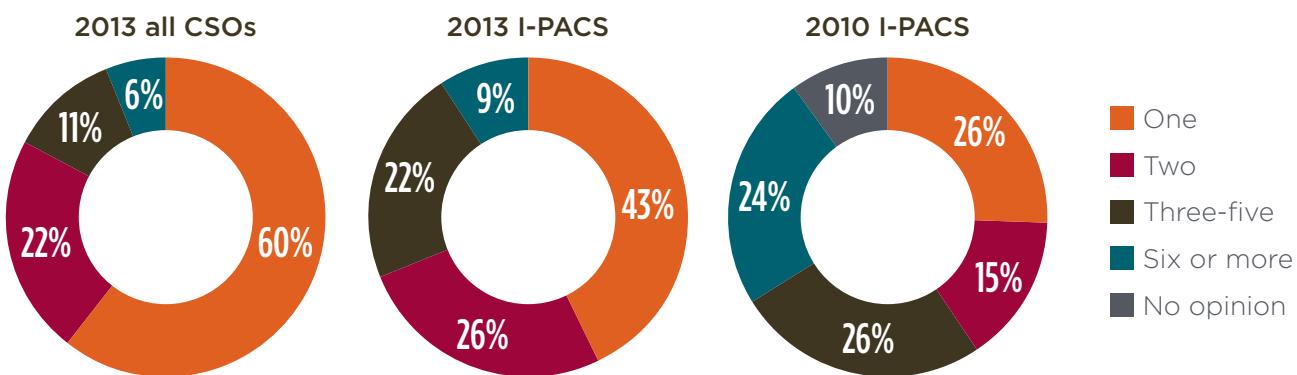
Notably, six in 10 main offices, which for many organizations is their only office, are located in Kabul, including 55 percent of the main offices of I-PACS II organizations. (The rate was 63 percent for these same organizations in 2010.) Other main offices are very thinly distributed across other provinces. And among the approximately four in 10 CSOs that have site offices, only three provinces reach double-digit coverage: Kabul (14 percent of CSOs have a site office there), Nangarhar (13 percent) and Balkh (10 percent).

I-PACS II organizations are more apt to have site offices compared with CSOs overall, but with a decrease in coverage since 2010, including double-digit decreases in the percentage of I-PACS II CSOs with site offices in Balkh, Ghazni, Takhar, Laghman and Baghlan.

Apart from office locations, the geographical distribution of CSO activity in general follows a similar pattern. Fifty-eight percent of CSOs overall are active in Kabul (declining to 47 percent of I-PACS II affiliates, vs. 40 percent in 2010). The only other provinces with CSO activity levels in the double digits are Herat (18 percent), Balkh (16 percent) and Nangarhar (14 percent).

Change in Geographical Coverage

Despite the sparse coverage of rural areas, more CSOs overall and I-PACS II organizations say the geographic area their organization covers has increased rather than decreased in the past few years (by 39 and 33 points, respectively). However, in line with results on offices and activity, the number of I-PACS II organizations that say their coverage has increased has declined by 15 points since 2010, from 63 to 48 percent.

Further, among those CSOs that cite a recent increase in coverage, 64 percent say it's occurred within the same provinces in which they already operated. Perhaps because of the difficulty in expanding operations to less-secure areas, only 12 percent of Afghan CSOs overall have expanded their activities to new provinces, with the rest saying they've increased within the same area or provide the same or less coverage.

Overall change in geographic area covered

2013 all CSOs	2013 I-PACS	2010 I-PACS
31% / 54% / 15%	37% / 48% / 15%	25% / 63% / 10%

- ■ Increased
- ■ Decreased
- ■ About the same
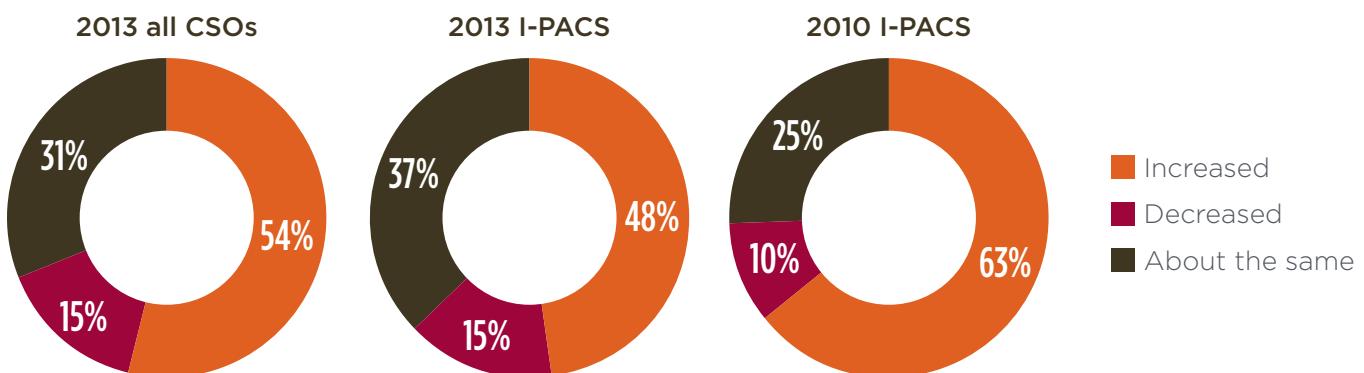
Among the CSOs that have seen a decrease in geographic coverage, eight in 10 say it's mostly due to a lack of funding. And indeed funding plays an important role in geographical expansion: Organizations that report an increase in funding are much more likely than those that have seen their funding decrease or remain stagnant to report that their coverage area has increased in the last three years (88 vs. 31 and 47 percent, respectively). Similarly, CSOs that have engaged in fundraising activities in the last 12 months also are more likely to say they've expanded their geographical presence, compared with those that don't report fundraising (68 vs. 46 percent).

Perceived Success

Finally for this section, despite their challenges, Afghan CSOs feel they're performing well. Nearly all, 94 percent, say their organization has been at least somewhat successful in achieving its goals in the past three years, including six in 10 who say they've been "very" successful.

That self-assessment is related to other indicators of an organization's capacity. CSOs that have a stronger institutional architecture, i.e., procedures and policies governing their operations (see Section II for details), are 18 points more likely to think of themselves as "very" successful, compared with organizations that lack these basic pillars. Similarly, those with financial policies, performance assessment procedures, written communication plans, security protocols and IT policies are 16 to 14 points more likely than others to say their institutions are very successful. Causality, of course, cannot be discerned from this result. It may be that having better internal capacity leads an organization to see itself as successful, or an organization that sees itself as successful may be more likely to have better internal capacity.

Perceived organizational success

1% / 4% / 34% / 60%

- ■ Very successful
- ■ Somewhat successful
- ■ Somewhat unsuccessful
- ■ Very unsuccessful
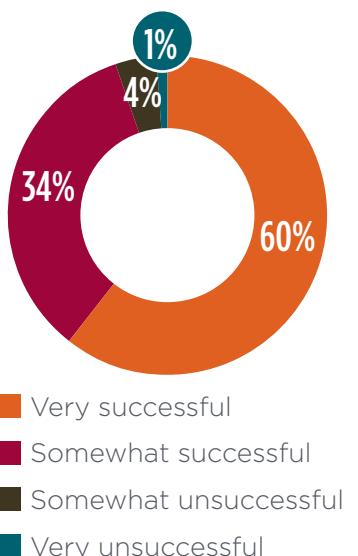
Funding

Funding has been of paramount importance to Afghan civil society organizations, many of which owe their existence to support from donor groups. And revenue concerns are especially high now, as the Transformation Decade holds forth the potential for diminished assistance from international governments.

Indeed this survey already finds a reported decrease in overall funding for CSOs in recent years, a result that confirms recent reports of cutbacks taking place even before anticipated reductions in the post-2014 transition and beyond.

More Afghan CSOs say their funding has decreased rather than increased in the past three years, 37 vs. 30 percent (the rest report no change.) That includes belt-tightening specifically at I-PACS II organizations. In 2010, 52 percent of these groups said their overall funding had increased in previous last five years, while only a quarter said it had decreased. Now only 30 percent say their funding is up since the last survey, while 38 percent say it's declined.

Change in funding in the past three years

2013 all CSOs
- 30% Increased
- 37% Decreased
- 32% Stayed the same

2013 I-PACS
- 30% Increased
- 38% Decreased
- 31% Stayed the same

2010 I-PACS
- 52% Increased
- 25% Decreased
- 24% Stayed the same

Legend:
- Increased
- Decreased
- Stayed the same
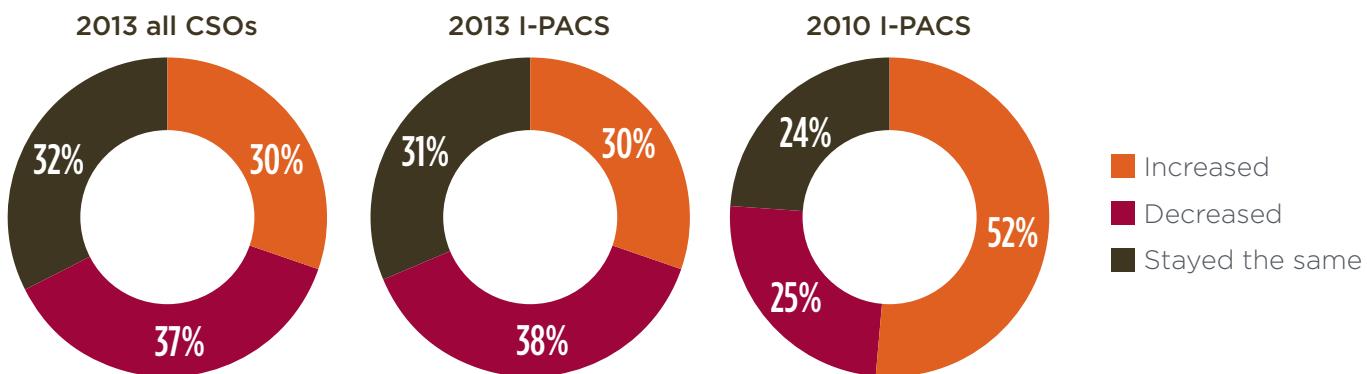
Reduced funding has serious repercussions: Seven in 10 CSOs with decreased overall funding in the last three years report no growth in their geographic coverage areas, versus just 12 percent among those with funding increases. CSOs with increased funding also are more likely than those whose funding has decreased to have completed three or more projects in 2012 (by 19 points), to have 20 or more employees (by 23 points) and to have current projects underway (by 30 points).

Notably, half of the CSO representatives interviewed in more detail mentioned lack of funding, dependency on international donors or general economic problems as one of the biggest challenges facing CSOs, a close second to security concerns.

Civil society organizations in Afghanistan are generally experiencing funding difficulties and don't have a stable financial system in place. Our organization has tried its best to find a donor to support us in our cause so we can serve people. Unfortunately, we didn't find one, so we had to contact the education minister and he helped us a lot. … To sum it up in one sentence – all of the civil society organizations in Afghanistan need funding to pursue their targets and provide help to those in need.

— Director of a CSO working in the education sector

Current Budgets

Most current budgets are small. Fifty-six percent of CSOs have annual budgets less than $25,000 (1.4 million Afghanis), and a total of two-thirds work on less than $50,000 a year. Just 11 percent have budgets of $50,000-$100,000, and just 13 percent exceed $100,000.

As noted, many I-PACS II organizations exceed other CSOs at the high end of available resources – 28 percent of re-interviewed I-PACS II CSOs have $100,000-plus budgets, vs. 13 percent of all CSOs. At the other end of the spectrum, I-PACS II CSOs are 12 points less apt than CSOs overall to survive on less than $25,000 a year.

Annual budget

All CSOs

13%
11%
13%
56%

I-PACS

28%
9%
17%
44%

- Less than $25K
- $25-$50K
- $50-$100K
- $100K-plus
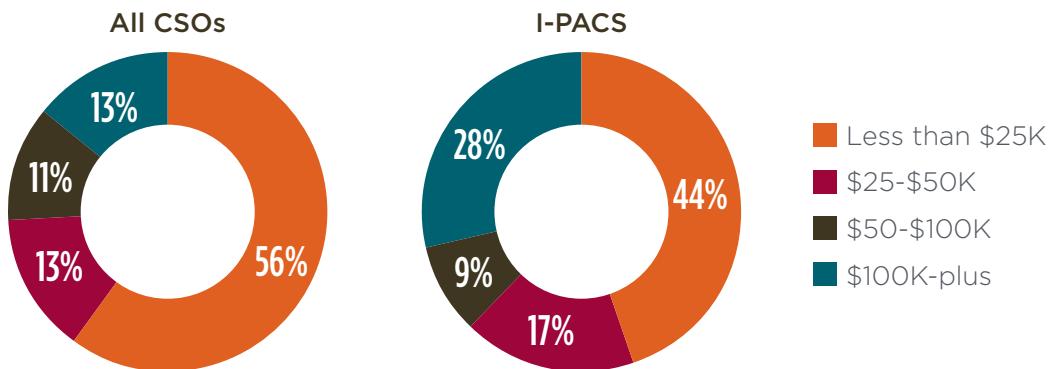
Funding Sources

Two funding sources stand out as the most prevalent revenue streams, membership fees and international donors – each of which has divergent implications for the long-term sustainability of CSOs in Afghanistan.

Encouragingly, 55 percent of CSOs received funds from individual members last year, making it their most common source of funding. The number of I-PACS II organizations that received funding from individual members is up by 18 points in the past few years, to nearly half.

On the other hand, the next most-cited funding source is international donors, which provide resources for 41 percent of CSOs overall and 62 percent of I-PACS II CSOs, up sharply among the latter from just 27 percent in 2010. Decline in this international support could pose major problems, particularly for many of the larger and more active CSOs. (Note, too, that the survey measured funding sources, not the proportion of funds received from each source.)

Other results underscore the importance of international funding. Among all CSOs that receive international donations, 82 percent report having projects that they currently are working on, compared with 58 percent of organizations that don't receive such funds. And four in 10 CSOs with international funding report budgets of $50,000 or more, compared with just 13 percent of organizations without this resource.

Funding sources

	2013 all CSOs	2013 I-PACS	2010 I-PACS
Contributions from members	55%	47%	29%
International donors	41%	62%	27%
Contributions from non-members	25%	25%	17%
For-profit businesses	21%	13%	19%
Fees for services	21%	11%	16%
Afghan national government	10%	10%	13%
Other Afghan CSOs	6%	19%	27%
Afghan local government	5%	7%	6%
Afghan provincial government	4%	4%	12%
Other	5%	2%	4%

Other sources make up a lower tier of funding: A quarter of CSOs receive resources from non-members in their communities; two in 10 get funds from businesses or businesspeople and fees for services alike; one in 10 is at least partially funded by the Afghan national government;

and 6 percent or fewer are funded either by other Afghan CSOs, local governments or provincial governments. Funding from other Afghan CSOs is more prevalent among I-PACS II organizations; 19 percent report that revenue source.

Most funding sources were in place before 2012, indicating either slow movement by CSOs to find new revenue streams or limited availability of new sources. But in one case – fees for services – that pattern doesn't hold. Among organizations that realized fee-for-service income last year, about as many say it's from new sources as from pre-existing ones, 43 vs. 39 percent.

Greater diversity in funding has been recommended in previous studies of civil society in Afghanistan, as reflected in the desk review prepared for this report. Qualitative interviews indicate recognition of that need. Several in-depth interviewees mentioned their efforts at reducing their reliance on big donors, especially international ones. But they've experienced varying levels of success in those attempts.

We are doing everything in our power to move toward greater self-sufficiency and are trying our best to increase our membership fees, because after 2014 we will not be able to receive funding from our international donors and aid institutions.

— Lawyer at a legal-assistance CSO

We have tried not to miss any opportunities whether from government, international donors or other organizations. We send proposals to many different donors depending on the work they request. Our income is mostly from courses we hold and students we find to attend them.

— Director of a CSO focused on capacity building

New Funding

Nearly all CSOs – 96 percent – say they are seeking new outlets for resources. But those efforts could be greatly intensified; far fewer, 32 percent, say they've conducted any specific activities designed to obtain additional funding.

Seeking new funding sources?

4%

96%

Conducted any activities designed to get additional funding?

32%

68%
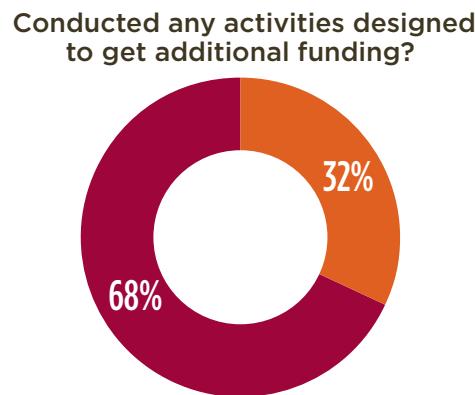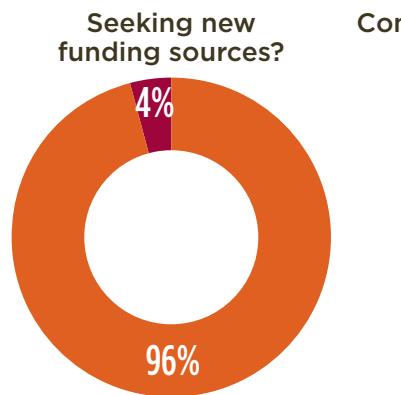
- Yes
- No

Even among I-PACS II organizations, only 37 percent have conducted any specific fundraising activities. But it's at least moving in the right direction, having doubled from three years ago.

In a further sign of relative inactivity, most CSOs that have engaged in fundraising have averaged only about one specific type of activity out of nine listed. Only 6 percent have engaged in four or more of the nine.

Most common are capital campaigns (reported by 40 percent of organizations that have had fundraising activities), membership dues (26 percent), corporate contributions (21 percent) and special events (18 percent). Fewer than 15 percent of organizations have attempted to raise funds through private foundation grants, personal solicitations, government grants or contracts.

In the in-depth interviews, most organization representatives did report efforts to diversify and expand their funding. Some even have a department dedicated to finding new sources of funding. And many talked about fundraising even when they were asked to name their non-funding needs.

We have a team in the office that is looking for new funding sources. When we find them, we prepare proposals for new projects and submit them to our new donors to provide us funding and money.
— Deputy director of a CSO serving the disabled

We have tried to get our main budget from our donors but we have not yet succeeded. If donors do not provide us with a budget then we cannot keep our staff permanently. The problem is that our key staff will leave us after six to eight months of work and then we have to employ new staff and start the training process all over again. … We are sending proposals to donors and always trying to get projects, but it upsets us that our proposals are not accepted and they don't give us feedback on why they have rejected us.
— Director of an education and job training CSO

We have tried not to miss any [funding] opportunities whether from government, international donors or other organizations. We send proposals to many different donors depending on the work they request. Our income is mostly from courses we hold and students we find to attend them.
— Director of a CSO focused on capacity building

The U.S. State Department's 2012 *Signposting Success* report notes that a clear strategy for funding often differentiates successful CSOs from others, and these findings suggest that many organizations could benefit from capacity building in this area.

Relationships with International Donors

As mentioned, international donors are the second most-frequently cited source of CSO funding, with four in 10 organizations depending on them at least to some extent. For many, that can be an uneasy position: Among CSOs that receive international funding, just more than six in 10 say it's difficult to obtain, and three times as many find it "very" difficult as very easy (24 vs. 8 percent). Previous reports on Afghan civil society, noted in the desk review, have recommended simplifying often complex funding requirements, which may advantage larger organizations with better grant-writing skills, rather than the most deserving ones.

Afghan CSOs are well aware of the problem of relying on international donors. Eighty-two percent are worried about the possibility of international funding being cut in the Transformation Decade, and nearly half are very worried. Further, 62 percent of CSOs say lack of funding is the greatest challenge facing civil society organizations operating in Afghanistan in the decade ahead, nearly twice as many as the second-place concern, lack of security, cited by 32 percent. In-depth and key-informant interviews also reflect these concerns.

Ease of obtaining funding from international donors
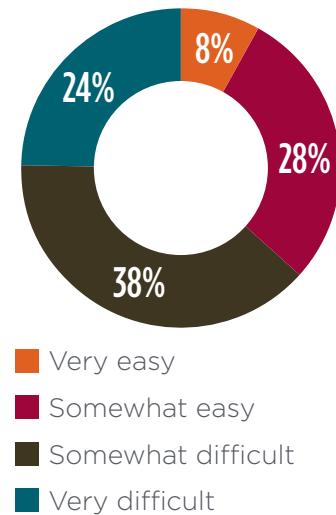
- 8% Very easy
- 28% Somewhat easy
- 38% Somewhat difficult
- 24% Very difficult

- ■ Very easy
- ■ Somewhat easy
- ■ Somewhat difficult
- ■ Very difficult

> *One of the biggest challenges that civil society organizations face is the issue of their financial support. During the past decade their main funding sources were the international donors and aid institutions, most of which have already left and others are leaving. Due to the above mentioned reasons we have already downsized our staff members.*
> – Program director of a CSO promoting human rights and democracy

> *Unfortunately, the CSOs in Afghanistan are funded by foreign countries or the international community. There are some CSOs that are self-sufficient and do not have any sponsors or funding sources. Sometimes the projects that are announced by foreign donors do not suit the requirements of our people. …We hope that civil society in Afghanistan will become independent and self-sufficient.*
> – Director of a CSO assisting smaller organizations

> *Unfortunately, civil society organizations haven't yet been able to create financial sustainability for themselves. …They can't continue to live off national financial aid and are still dependent on financial aid from the world community. …If the world community cuts off its support, there will be a huge crisis among Afghan CSOs.*
> – Executive director of a human rights network organization

Notably, despite the hurdles in obtaining international funding, nearly all Afghan CSOs that have received such assistance rate their donors highly, saying they understand their CSOs and Afghanistan overall. Ninety-four to 88 percent believe international donors understand Afghan culture and customs, their organization's priorities, the needs of local communities and the challenges faced by their organization. Two-thirds say international donors understand Afghan culture and community needs "very" well, and six in 10 say the same about their organization's priorities. Fewer, but still 54 and 52 percent, respectively, say their international funders are very well versed in Afghan customs and their organizational challenges.

Understanding of international donors

■ Very or somewhat well

■ Very well

	Afghan culture	Your own organization's priorities	Afghan customs	Community needs	Your organization's challenges
Very or somewhat well	94%	92%	92%	90%	88%
Very well	65%	60%	54%	66%	52%
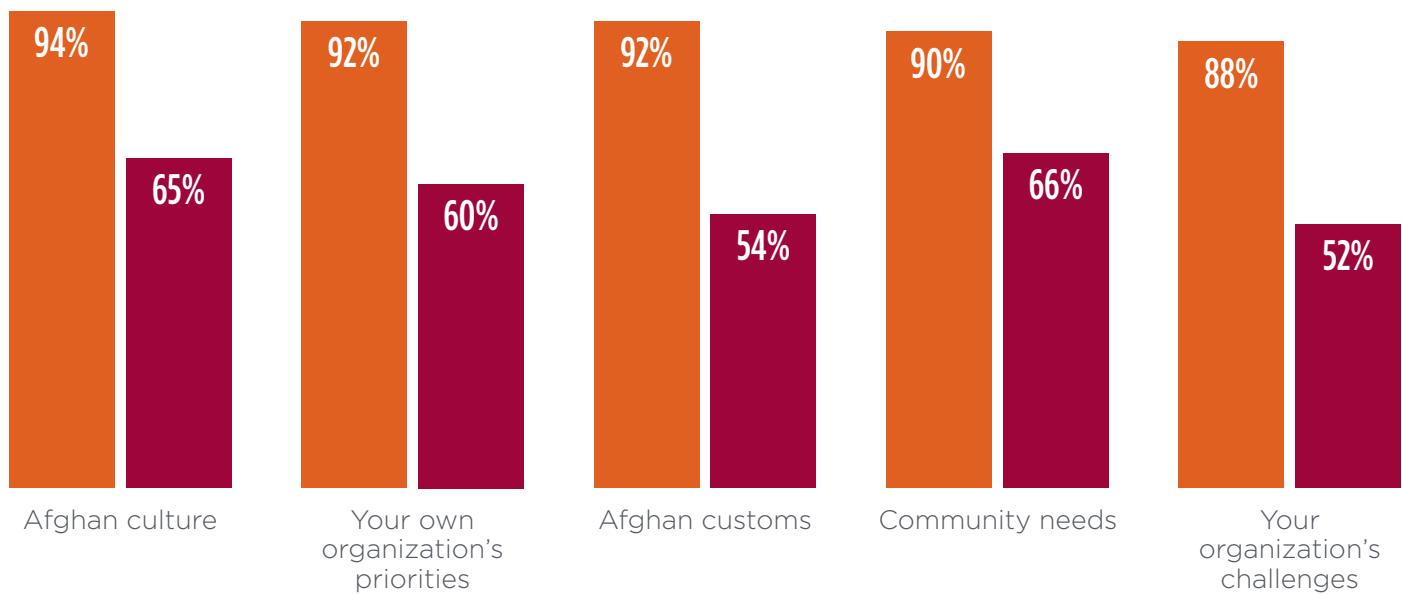
Qualitative studies cited in the desk review reported discontent among CSOs with international funders, including suggestions of a lack of understanding of Afghan traditions and local needs and differences in culture and goals. While overall results from this study do not find broad dissatisfaction with international donors, it's the case nonetheless that barely more than half of internationally funded CSOs say such donors understand their organization's challenges, or Afghan culture, "very" well, indicating substantial room for improvement.

Among those organizations that don't receive international donor support, a variety of factors are at play. A quarter say they've applied but have yet to hear back. About two in 10 say they haven't sought such funding because the process was too difficult, a similar number applied and were rejected and one in seven say they don't know how or where to apply.
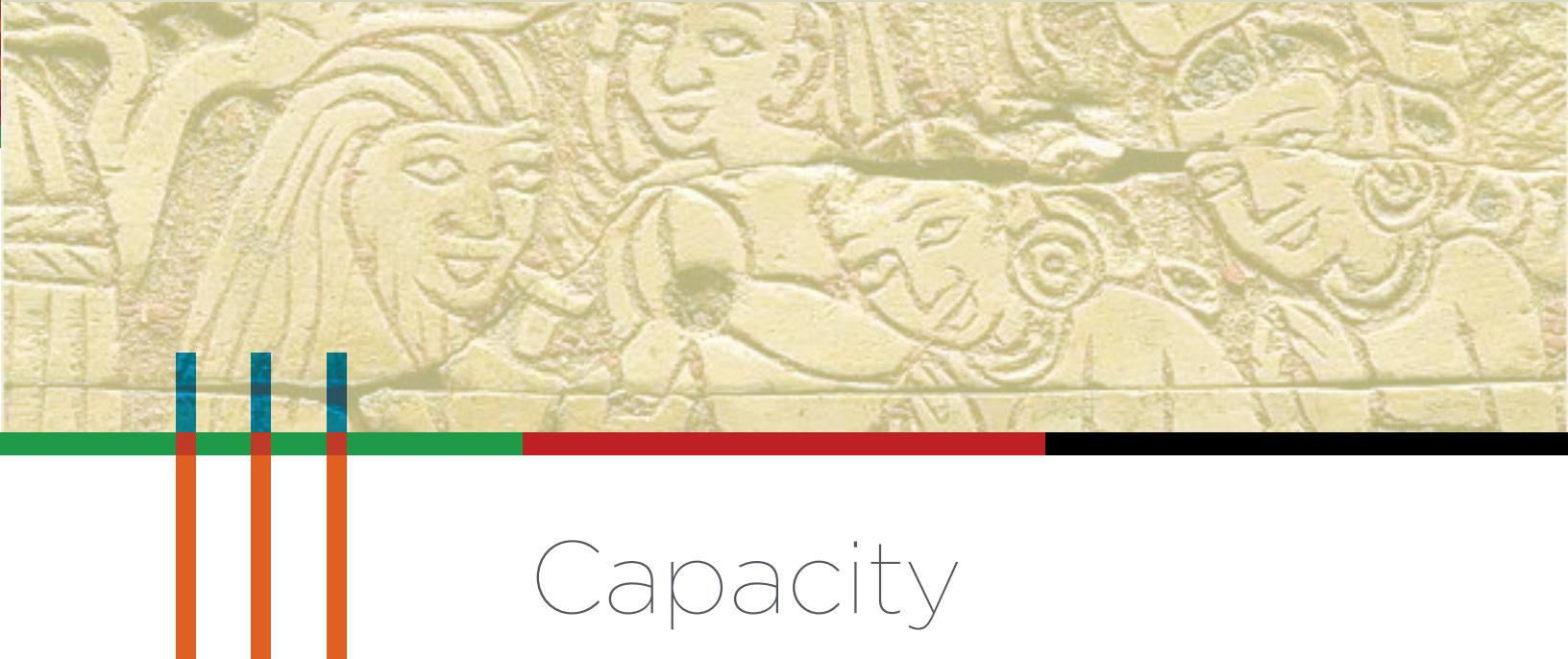
Capacity

Building capacity is a top priority within the civil society sector in Afghanistan as well as a main focus of the I-PACS II program. This study finds that the capacity of Afghan CSOs has come a long way, especially among I-PACS II CSOs – but with potential for growth in many areas.

As noted in the desk review, the Tawanmandi Initiative's 2011 mapping of CSOs found several capacity-related areas in need of improvement, including administrative systems, management plans, financial plans and fiscal management, communication and advocacy strategies, proposal writing, navigating the legal system, coordination with other CSOs and other, more prosaic concerns including office space, meeting rooms, computers and internet access.

Some of these capacity needs identified in the Tawanmandi study echoed those mentioned by I-PACS II organizations in 2010, including the need for improvements in project development and proposal writing, as well office space and equipment. In general, though, Counterpart's 2010 and 2013 results indicate that, regardless of the Tawanmandi findings, I-PACS II organizations in particular report that they are doing quite well in terms of communication plans, financial and accounting procedures and other administrative areas. These results indicate much greater needs in terms of fundraising, security plans, IT policies and external oversight.

These needs were echoed in in-depth interviews, in which increasing staff capacity was the top-mentioned non-funding need for CSOs to be successful; many said their greatest need was skilled personnel and staff capacity.

We are in need of skilled personnel, whose number in civil society organizations decreases day by day because professional personnel are easily hired by international institutions.

— Program director of a CSO promoting human rights and democracy

Out of 10 areas of organizational capacity, the survey finds some very well covered and others where greater capacity building is needed. These are summarized in a capacity index, ranging from 0 (meaning an organization has none of the 10 capacities) to 10. Overall, CSOs average nearly seven of the 10 capacities.

As noted in Section I, representatives of CSOs that report higher levels of organizational capacity are 18 points more likely to call their organizations "very" successful, compared with those that score lower on the capacity index. Beyond perceptions, these capacities are linked to other indicators of success: Organizations reporting higher overall capacity work on significantly more content areas, are 11 points more likely to say they have current projects in place (74 vs. 63 percent) and are 26 points more likely to report annual budgets of $50,000 or more.

In terms of specific capacities, nearly all CSOs report having written rules describing why they exist and how they're governed (97 percent) and a written mission statement or goals (93 percent). Most also say they have an employee handbook or manual (84 percent), a procurement and accounting policy or manual (82 percent) and financial policies or procedures in place (76 percent). (Verifying and evaluating such documentation was beyond the scope of this study.) Among I-PACS CSOs these capacities were all present at roughly the same levels in 2010, and haven't changed much since.

Percentage of organizations with...

	2013 all CSOs	2013 I-PACS	2010 I-PACS
Written rules	97%	98%	93%
A written mission statement	93%	91%	92%
An employee handbook or manual	84%	90%	88%
A procurement and accounting policy or manual	82%	81%	88%
Financial policies and procedures	76%	84%	79%
A written communication plan	59%	72%	NA
Formal assessment procedures	59%	72%	NA
An IT policy	56%	71%	52%
A security protocol	41%	67%	34%
An external governing committee	35%	58%	20%

Written rules, a mission statement and clear goals were identified in many qualitative interviews as keys to successful organizations. Many informants pointed to organizational capacity as the driver behind CSO success, including a formal structure and rules, an administrative system, a finance department, an operations manual, a long-term strategy, knowledge of management and development and management plans.

"Civil society organizations that are more successful have specific strategies and plans for the implementation of their projects and programs."

— Program director, human rights and democracy CSO

"A more successful organization is one which has a strategic plan and aims and tries to reach its goals and work better than the design set by the donors. A less successful organization is one which tried to get more projects and just be a good implementer."

— Director of a CSO focused on capacity building

The survey found that smaller majorities of CSOs say they have a written communication plan or formal procedures for ongoing performance assessment (59 percent each) or an IT policy (56 percent). On the lower end, fewer than half report having a security protocol (41 percent) or an external governing committee or board (35 percent). Each shows substantial room for improvement.

Still, weaker areas are those in which I-PACS II organizations have shown the greatest improvements from 2010 to 2013. The percentages with an external governing committee, a security protocol or an IT policy have risen by 38, 33, and 19 points, respectively.

As the desk review notes, CSOs in general may especially benefit from greater focus on implementing a written communication plan to get the message out about their activities, formal assessment procedures to improve transparency and opportunities for improvement, a security protocol to better ensure the safety of their workers and an external governing committee to reduce the possibility of corruption and increase oversight.

In a reflection of the I-PACS II program's focus on improving capacity through its grants, I-PACS II organizations significantly outperform CSOs overall in several important capacity-related areas, including having a security protocol (67 vs. 41 percent), an external governing committee (58 vs. 35 percent), an IT policy (71 vs. 56 percent), a written communication plan (72 vs. 59 percent) and formal assessment procedures (again 72 vs. 59 percent).

Separately, CSOs also are reasonably well-equipped. Eighty-six percent say they have a well-functioning computer system; 78 percent have enough office space; and 75 percent have access to the internet, the latter rising to 88 percent of I-PACS CSOs.

> *We cannot say that all civil society organizations are good or bad, but we can say that some of them do a good job and implement various projects to achieve their goals and objectives. However, many civil society organizations exist in name only and are not able to provide services to the community. They do not have any activities due to lack of projects. A number of them do not even have offices or personnel.*
>
> – Founder of a women's CSO

Percentage of organizations with...

	All CSOs	I-PACS
A well-functioning computer system	86%	94%
Enough office space	78%	83%
Access to the internet	75%	88%

Capacity-Related Training

Beyond basic material needs, training programs and workshops help build organizational capacity. Many international NGOs, donor organizations and governments, including I-PACS II, have been involved in training efforts; this study finds that many CSOs are taking advantage of these opportunities or conducting trainings of their own – but many more could benefit.

The share of organizations that have received training in any specific area in the past three years peaks at six in 10, and fewer than half of CSOs have received training in many of the areas covered in this survey.

Specifically, half or more CSOs have received recent training in administration, management planning, public communication and outreach, grant writing, financial planning and accounting, gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment and youth development and participation. Fewer than half have received recent training in conflict resolution and negotiation skills, monitoring and program evaluation, advocacy and policy making, community mobilization, registration and government regulation and networking.

These 13 capacity training items were combined into a single training index: On average, CSOs have received training in six of the 13 areas tested. Clearly, many are not getting anything near the full regimen of capacity training they can use.

Percentage of organizations whose employees have received training in…

	All CSOs	I-PACS
Administration	62%	84%
Management planning	62%	66%
Public communication and outreach	57%	62%
Writing grant proposals	57%	58%
Financial planning and accounting	54%	63%
Gender mainstreaming/women's empowerment	50%	58%
Youth development and participation	50%	58%
Conflict resolution and negotiation	46%	53%
Monitoring and evaluation	45%	66%
How to engage in advocacy/policy making	41%	43%
Community mobilization	40%	49%
Registration and government regulation	33%	44%
Networking	28%	44%

Training is strongly related to a CSO's perceived success. Organizations scoring high on the training index are 20 points more likely than others to call their organization "very" successful. Additionally, while cause and effect is unclear, CSOs with higher training index scores are 18 points more likely than others to report having current projects they're working on and 20 and 28 points more likely to say their funding and geographic coverage have increased in recent years.

It's perhaps especially important to provide greater training in monitoring and evaluation, which is on the low end of capacities Afghan CSOs already possess; advocacy and policy making, which many in-depth interviewees identified as a key aim of civil society, yet something that few actually do; and networking, given that only about a third of CSOs currently belong to a network even though those that do find it highly beneficial.

I-PACS II organizations outpace all CSOs in general in working toward improving several capacities, including administration (84 vs. 62 percent), program monitoring and evaluation (66 vs. 45 percent), networking (44 vs. 28 percent) and registration and government regulation (44 vs. 33 percent). Other differences are smaller or non-existent.

In in-depth interviews, many CSO representatives say they are making efforts to build capacity. Nearly all said their organizations have recently taken steps to build their capacity, with most citing employee

courses or workshops on topics such as report writing, management, finances, proposal writing, evaluation and monitoring, fundraising and the English language.

> *In the last couple of years, we have set up what we call the "Mercy Corp Academy." This is an internal training facility formalizing all of our training. So, all the staff is trained in things like gender, conflict resolution, program management, and then other technical areas like monitoring and evaluation, procurement, donor regulation, Afghanistan law, and human resource procedures – depending on the organization. We have a policy that for all our 400+ staff – everyone receives training at least every four months without any doubt.*
>
> – Country director for an international NGO working on local economic development

> *I am the main trainer in the organization. I have made progress in the improvement of our organization and staff. We hold workshops about proposal writing, report writing and fundraising for the capacity of our staff. There are some issues that we have no information about, such as financing and accounting. We have made contact with other organizations to hold workshops about these issues for our staff.*
>
> – Director of a CSO assisting smaller organizations

> *Yes, we have made strides to improve the organizational capacity of our organization. For instance, we organized short-course training for our administrative and finance teams…Our staff members received training in proposal writing, monitoring and so on.*
>
> – Program director of human rights and democracy CSO

Needed Improvement

As is abundantly apparent from the previous section (and highlighted in Section VIII on the Transformation Decade), concerns about funding are at the forefront for Afghan CSOs. It's also by far the capacity-related area where CSOs would most like help.

When asked to select the three areas their organization needed to have increased or improved the most, fundraising was mentioned first, significantly more often than any other. The next closest area in need of improvement is project development.

Among I-PACS II organizations, improving fundraising capacity also is the top priority, as it was three years ago, with 66 percent total mentions in 2010 and 65 percent in 2013.

Capacities most in need of improvement (total mentions)

	2013 all CSOs	2013 I-PACS	2010 I-PACS
Fundraising	63%	65%	66%
Project development/proposal-writing	28%	31%	29%
Training for staff	21%	10%	12%
Office space/equipment	20%	20%	19%
Organization management/governance/strategy/planning	18%	18%	26%
Women's participation	16%	19%	17%
Project management	15%	24%	4%
Computer use	14%	7%	13%
Security precautions	13%	11%	22%
Financial management/accounting	11%	10%	9%
Transportation means	10%	8%	13%
Community needs assessment/mobilization	9%	20%	13%
Number of staff	7%	3%	2%
Human resource (staff) management	7%	10%	2%
English language	5%	2%	4%
Public relations/comm./using the media to educate the public	4%	10%	11%
Activity monitoring/evaluation/report-writing	4%	5%	4%
Advocacy (to the gov't/private sector)	1%	1%	10%
Communications equipment	1%	1%	0%
Other	2%	0%	0%

Notably, two of the areas that are near the bottom in terms of capacity-building priorities are monitoring and evaluation and advocacy, both areas in which fewer than half of CSOs have received recent training, and ones identified in the desk review as important to the transparency and relevance of CSOs in Afghanistan.

Both these areas need development. The fact that just 11 percent of Afghan CSOs cite advocacy as the chief focus of their activities indicates room for greater training in the important role of advocacy in civil society. Greater need for training in monitoring and evaluation is apparent as well, especially for CSOs other than I-PACS II organizations. Among all CSOs, only 59 percent have formal assessment procedures in place; among I-PACS II CSOs, that rises to 72 percent.
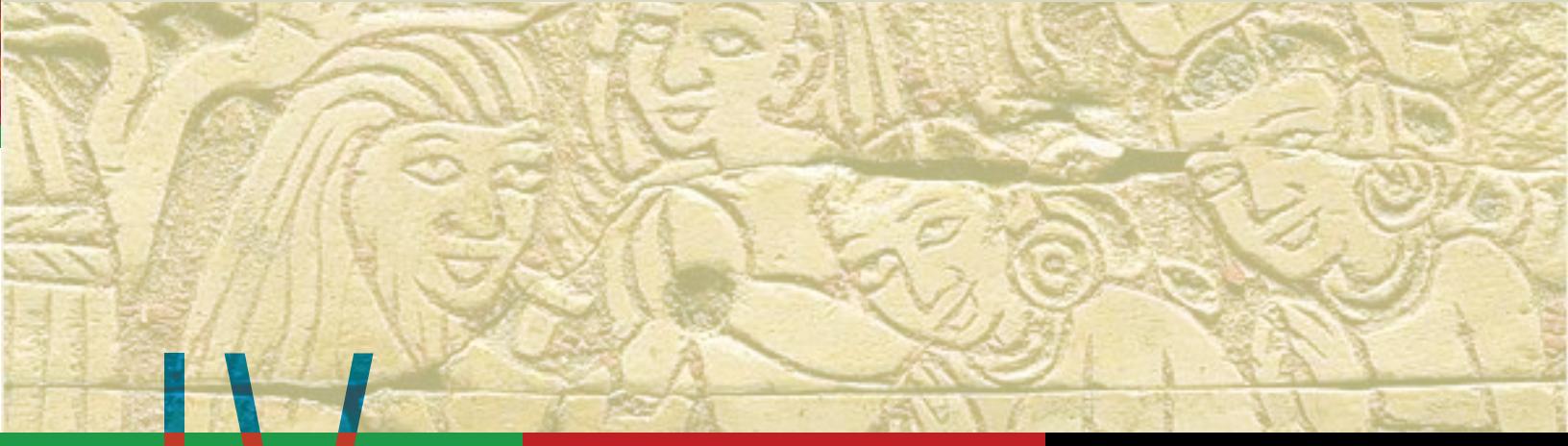
IV

The Operating Environment

The ability of Afghan civil society to operate is highly dependent on two factors, both of which are largely beyond its control: the legal and regulatory environment and the security situation.

Security of course has been a long-running challenge, and, as detailed below, many CSOs operate in an insecure environment, with more saying it's worsening than improving, albeit at a slower rate than previously.

Separately, there has been progress on the legal and regulatory front, with CSOs offering generally positive assessments of the framework under which they operate. Some CSOs, however, express frustration with official bureaucracy and corruption, and to some extent voice an adversarial view of their relations with the Afghan government.

The Security Situation

Other than funding, no issue trumps security in the ability of CSOs to operate. Civil society has dealt with dangerous levels of insecurity in the ongoing insurgency since the Taliban's ouster in 2001. Among other sources, Counterpart's 2010 desk review cited a lack of security as one of the prime difficulties faced by CSOs in Afghanistan.

The security situation remains difficult. As the desk review notes, the Integrated Regional Information Network, a service of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, rates Afghanistan as the world's most dangerous place for aid workers in 2013. The possibility of further insecurity through the drawdown of ISAF forces and the transfer of political power to a newly elected Afghan government is a major worry for civil society.

Security assessments by CSO representatives are mixed, with ratings of the current situation more positive than negative, but a substantial sense that it's worsened nonetheless.

A broad 84 percent report good security where they operate, albeit more say it's "somewhat" (51 percent) than "very" good (33 percent). Nearly half, moreover, don't name any particular province in which they operate as having the most difficult security situation. But these, of course, could mean simply that substantial numbers of CSOs are limiting their operations to relatively safe areas.

Indeed, in another measure, 44 percent of CSOs say security has become more of an impediment to their operations in the last three years, vs. just 17 percent who say it's less of one. This sense of worsening conditions is broader among CSOs that work mainly in urban areas (51 percent see security as more of an impediment) vs. those in rural or combined rural/urban areas (33 percent).

Current security situation

- Very good — 33%
- Somewhat good — 51%
- Somewhat bad — 13%
- Very bad — 3%

Change in how security affects program implementation

- 2013 all CSOs
- 2013 I-PACS
- 2010 I-PACS

More of an impediment: 44%, 46%, 64%
Less of an impediment: 27%, 28%, 17%
No change: 28%, 26%, 18%
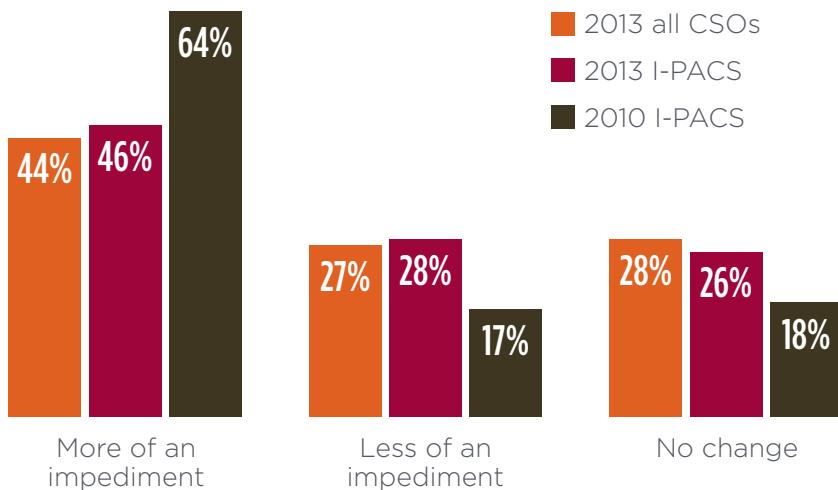
I-PACS II CSOs also are more apt to see security as more rather than less of an impediment. However, the number saying it's more of an impediment is down by 18 points from 2010 (46 vs. 64 percent). So, while conditions are apparently worsening, the rate of deterioration, at least, may have slowed.

In-depth and key-informant interviews corroborate security concerns identified in the survey, with insecurity the most-mentioned difficulty for CSOs in carrying out their activities, including connecting with local communities.

At the moment, security is the biggest concern because organizations can't carry on with their activities freely.

– CEO of a human rights CSO

As noted, CSOs are wary of possible deterioration of the security situation in 2014 and beyond. Nine in 10 of those surveyed say they're worried about the possibility of increased insecurity and violence negatively impacting their organizations in the Transformation Decade, exceeding two other concerns (reduced funding and reduced influence of CSOs in policy making) and matching another, political instability. Indeed, 55 percent are "very" worried about future insecurity. High-level worry peaks among CSOs that report decreased funding and diminished geographic coverage in the last three years, at 63 and 62 percent, respectively.

> *We are in a good state at this time, but the only concern is the issue of 2014 and the security situation that causes a lot of civil society organizations to be closed and their employees to lose their jobs.*
>
> – President of a capacity-building CSO

The Legal and Regulatory Environment

In partnership with international NGOs and Afghan CSOs, the Afghan government has made strides in improving the CSO legal and regulatory system, including the 2005 Non-Governmental Organization Act establishing a legal framework for the registration and regulation of CSOs. More recently, with the encouragement of I-PACS II CSOs and others, the government early in 2013 enacted a series of amendments to the Social Organization Law. Among other steps, these give social organizations access to donations from foreign sources and allow them to participate in policy debates, including from an advocacy standpoint.

The 2005 NGO law has a variety of benefits. Article 9 addresses the formation of two specialized kinds of NGOs – both coordinating organizations and umbrella organizations, typically established by NGOs or other legal entities to represent the interests of a specific sector. Article 11 adopts a liberal approach to the creation of NGOs, allowing domestic and foreign persons, and legal entities, as founders. Article 25 lists potential sources of income for NGOs, allowing for a diverse range of potential income to fulfill their mission purpose. Article 27 addresses financial record-keeping and financial auditing of NGOs, ensuring basic levels of accountability and transparency. And Article 30 addresses aspects of the tax treatment of NGOs, with exemption from tax and customs duty on the importation of material and equipment used for not-for-profit and charitable purposes.

These efforts have borne fruit. Eighty-nine percent of CSO representatives rate the current legal and regulatory environment positively, though they're more likely to say it's "somewhat" (56 percent) than "very" good (33 percent). Also 49 percent of CSOs say the legal and regulatory situation has improved in the last three years, far more

than the 18 percent who say it's worsened. That confirms qualitative work cited in the desk review suggesting that official registration of CSOs with government ministries and the streamlining of funding through CDCs has enhanced the legal and regulatory environment.

CSOs that say the regulatory situation has gotten better in the last few years also are more likely than others to report increased geographic coverage and higher funding for their organizations, by a broad 22 and 16 points, respectively. Encouragingly, in terms of focus areas, the number saying the legal environment has improved peaks, at 57 percent, among representatives of CSOs that work on gender equality and integration.

The current legal and regulatory environment

- 3%
- 9%
- 33%
- 56%

- Very good
- Somewhat good
- Somewhat bad
- Very bad
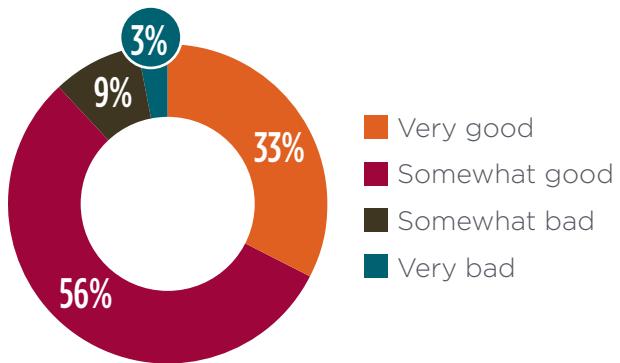
Change in the legal and regulatory environment

- 31%
- 49%
- 18%

- Improved
- Worsened
- About the same
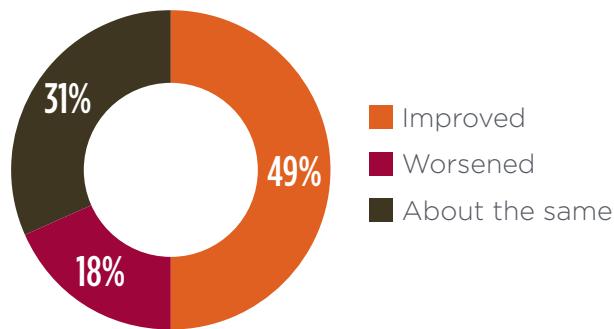
The NGO Act of 2005 requires CSOs to register with the government in order to receive donor funds, a monitoring measure meant to increase their oversight. Broad compliance is reported: Eighty-four percent of CSOs say they file reports on funding with the Afghan government; an additional three-quarters file non-funding activity reports.

In addition, nearly all in-depth interviewees said their organizations share the results of their program evaluations with donors; others said they provide results to relevant Afghan ministries and/or share them with the public in some way.

> *We file reports on progress with our donors based on our monitoring and evaluation teams. We also share our work with government in a transparent manner and they have good faith and trust in us.*
> – CEO of a CSO working on education, capacity building and civic education

> *We share information about our performance with donors through daily, weekly and monthly progress reports. … We also inform the Ministry of Economy and other relevant government agencies about our performance through reports which are submitted to them at the end of each quarter.*
> – Program director of a CSO promoting human rights and democracy

CSOs chiefly report to the Ministry of Economy (or the Ministry of Women's Affairs) – 47 percent report to these offices on funding, 41 percent on activities; or to the Department of Social Unions and Political Parties of the Ministry of Justice (24 percent on funding and 21 percent on activities). There's also a wide variety of other departments and ministries to which some CSOs report, including the Income Tax Office, the Ministry of Culture and Information and the Ministry of Education, among others.

In another positive outcome, about nine in 10 CSOs say the current legal and regulatory environment affects their ability to operate – and among those who say so, a near-unanimous 92 percent say it helps rather than hurts their organization. Overall, among all CSOs, that means 84 percent think the current legal and regulatory environment helps their organization – an overwhelmingly positive assessment. This view is notable given anecdotal reports that government reporting requirements – including semi-annual activity reports with supporting documentation, and a newly required General Information Form – are widely perceived as burdensome. The survey result suggests that difficulties in meeting these reporting requirements are offset by other benefits of the legal and regulatory environment.

Counterpart International staff with expertise in regulatory affairs have identified potential improvements to existing regulations. Among others, these include a time limit for government assessment of NGO applications; clearer procedures for re-issuing a lost or destroyed certificate of registration; a clear threshold below which organizations need not prepare a financial audit; and inclusion of other legitimate sources of income, such as government funding, contracts with individuals or legal entities, investment income and income generated from other lawful activities.

Does the legal and regulatory environment affect your organization?
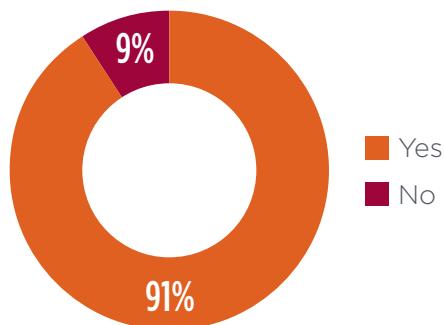
(If yes) Does it help or hurt?

9%

91%

Yes
No

8%

92%

Helps
Hurts

2013 Afghanistan Civil Society Assessment
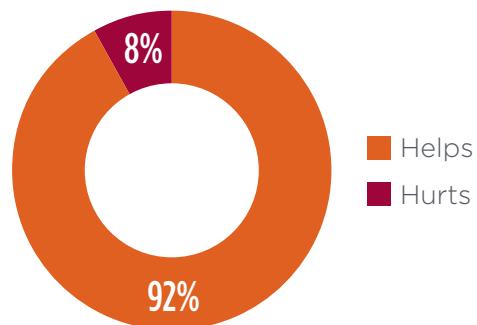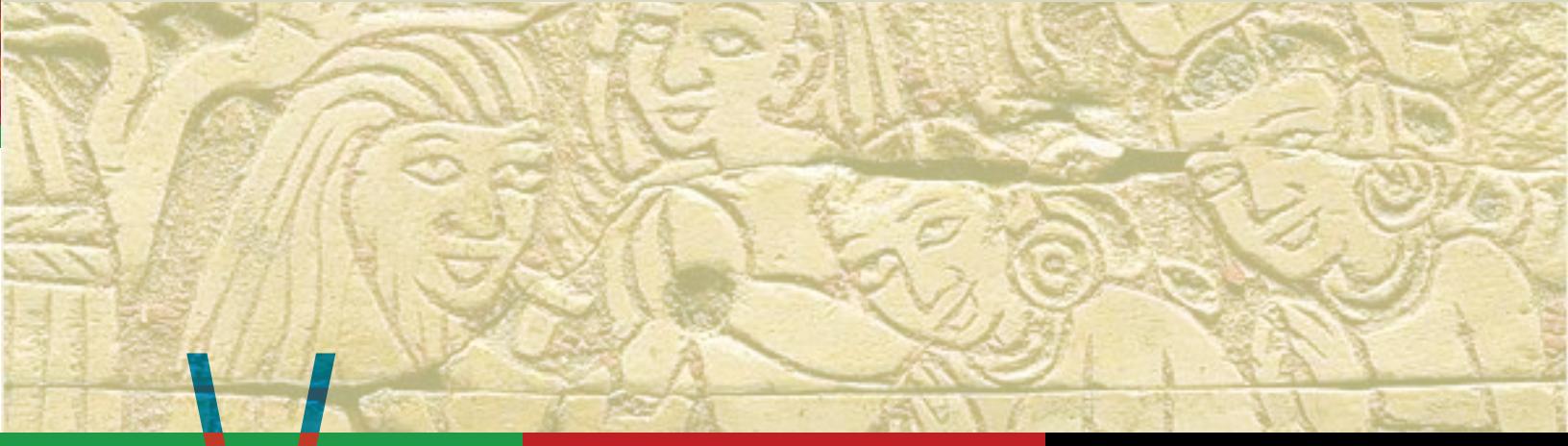
V Women's Programs and Participation

Promoting women's rights is one of the highest priorities of CSOs in Afghanistan, in terms of supporting human rights and building an inclusive, democratic society, as well as in promoting gender mainstreaming and the participation of women within the civil society sector.

These efforts are strongly reflected in the results of this study, which show that women are a key focus of CSO activities and play a significant role within CSOs themselves – with improvements in both areas in recent years. Beyond the survey results, in qualitative interviews many CSO leaders report both a focus on women's programs and issues, as well as internal efforts to accomplish gender mainstreaming.

Women's Programs

Evidence of the focus on women's rights is abundant. Eighty-one percent of CSOs overall say women benefit from their activities, second only to youth; and 72 percent say their mission "focuses primarily on women's issues." Fifty-seven percent say they promote gender equality and women's integration, ranking first among specific CSO program activities tested.

Among I-PACS II CSOs, 80 percent say women benefit from their organization's activities, up by 20 points vs. three years ago, and the number promoting gender equality and integration is up by 10 points (from 52 to 62 percent).

In-depth interviews indicate that the services and programs that CSOs provide to women run the gamut, in a range including health services, civic education, schooling, legal help, job training and efforts to prevent violence against women. Some of the most frequently mentioned areas include providing women with knowledge about their democratic rights, including voting and legal rights; and providing job training and economic opportunities, such as assistance starting artisan or other small-business enterprises.

Women's programs

- 2010 I-PACS
- 2013 I-PACS

Promote gender equality and integration
52% (2010 I-PACS)
62% (2013 I-PACS)
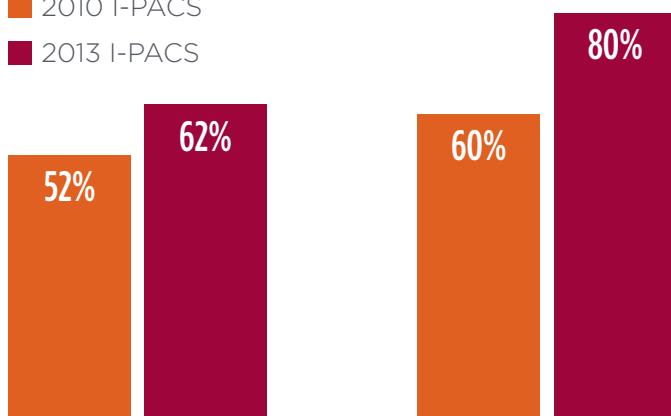
Activities benefit women
60% (2010 I-PACS)
80% (2013 I-PACS)

In one specific classification, 15 percent of CSOs identify themselves as women's unions, the second-largest organization type after community associations in general. (It's similar among re-interviewed I-PACS II organizations specifically, 18 percent, about the same now as in 2010).

Many in-depth interview participants brought up assisting women and promoting women's rights as one of the greatest needs that Afghan CSOs can help address. And indeed many CSOs are working to improve their capacity to understand and tackle women's issues. Half of all CSOs and 58 percent of I-PACS II organizations have received training in gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment in the last three years, both among the top half of capacity-building activities in which CSOs have engaged. Further, nearly three-quarters of CSOs are engaging in or planning to engage in encouraging conditions for women's participation in the 2014 elections (covered in greater detail in Section VIII).

Promoting the participation of women in the 2014 elections

73% Yes
27% No

Received training in gender mainstreaming/women's empowerment

50% Yes
49% No
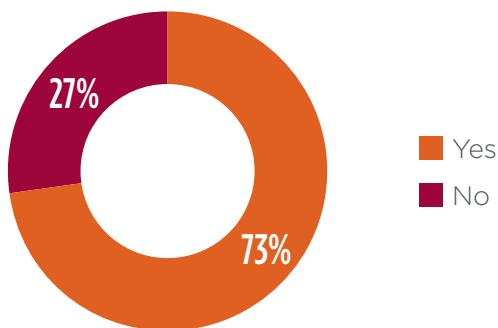
- Yes
- No
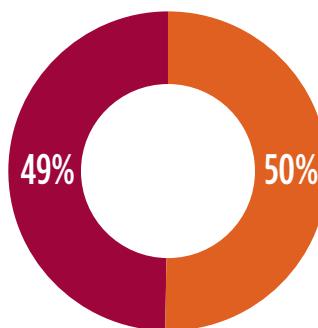
The post-2014 political landscape holds special importance for women and women's rights advocates. In several IDIs, CSOs expressed worry that any negotiated reconciliation with the Taliban could put gains in women's rights at risk. In addition to further gains, therefore, some CSOs say they are striving to cement those already achieved.

> *Afghanistan is a traditional society and women and youth are not taken care of well. I want this society to be modernized and to take care of both women and youth. I want the government and international donors to save their 12 years of achievements and provide an effective strategy for women and youth.*
>
> — Executive director of CSO working to increase women's democratic participation

> *Women make up half of society and I believe that they could lose their freedoms [in the Transformation Decade] including attending school, performing duties, etc.*
>
> — Director of a women's and youth program CSO

Women's Participation in Civil Society

Many donors and CSOs themselves have pushed for greater participation of women, especially in more prominent positions, within the civil society sector itself. While CSOs are leaders in this area, there still is much work ahead.

On average, women make up 37 percent of the full-time staff at Afghan CSOs, nearly half of the part-time staff and 42 percent of volunteers. They occupy 40 percent of management positions. Those compare favorably with women's share of, for instance, seats in the national parliament (27 percent), although women trail youth in terms of their prevalence within the civil society sector, as described in Section VI.

Almost all qualitative interviewees said women hold positions of responsibility within their organizations, with several close to exclusively run by women. Nearly all also reported greater efforts to include women, and several have affirmative action policies in place.

Percentage of staff that are women

	Management	Full-time	Part-time	Volunteers
None	32%	17%	22%	26%
1-10%	<.5%	5%	1%	2%
11-30%	8%	27%	13%	14%
31-50%	30%	26%	24%	25%
>50%	30%	26%	40%	33%
Mean	40%	37%	48%	42%

Challenges to Women's Participation

The prevalence of CSOs focused on women's issues attests to the success and effectiveness of these efforts, as found in previous USAID and Tawanmandi Initiative studies (see Appendix A) and strongly supported by programs such as I-PACS II. Nonetheless, women remain underrepresented, for a variety of reasons.

As the desk review describes, there are many challenges reconciling traditional practices with Western notions of democracy and individual rights and freedoms, particularly women's rights. Traditional groups tend to exclude women from leadership positions and to promote gender roles that bar women from activities beyond homemaking. These views are particularly prevalent in rural areas of the country, a major issue in connecting with local communities – efforts that are detailed in Section VII of this report.

> *Women have always been on a different level in our culture and beliefs. They are not considered equal to men. It is very difficult even to have their voices heard in terms of getting an education and their representation in the government, parliament and ministries.*
>
> – Director of a CSO focused on capacity building

Another challenge reflects the limitations women face in obtaining an education and job training, with some qualitative interview participants saying their organizations often can't find qualified women to fill the positions. An open question is whether, in addition to social disparities that affect women's job-readiness, this reflects either self-justification or a lack of adequate effort to build the pool of qualified female candidates.

In order to address these disparities, some in-depth respondents noted the importance of greater education for women in general, while others said that their organizations run programs in which women are hired and are provided with necessary training to increase their capacity. Both approaches could help in advancing women within civil society and Afghan society in general.

> *We always try our best to hire more women to work in important positions within the organization, but unfortunately we often are not able to find suitable and skilled female staff due to a lack of educated and skilled women. When we announce any position we give priority to women, especially to disabled ones, but as you know, historically and traditionally women in Afghanistan have limited access to education, especially to higher and vocational training and this is a problem the government and international community has not yet been able to solve.*
>
> – Deputy director of CSO focused on assisting disabled Afghans

> *We have a section that is specified and designed to increase the capacity and professional skills of our female staff members. We have a gender priority policy, which means we give priority to female candidates when we hire new personnel. Ninety-nine percent of our staff consists of women.*
>
> — Program director of a human rights and democracy CSO

> *Most civil society organizations are committed to providing women opportunities and hiring them in positions of responsibility. We prefer to hire women as finance managers, programmers and officers, but we can hardly find women for these posts, so we have to hire men.*
>
> — Executive director of a CSO promoting women's democratic participation

> *Women are working in high positions in our organization. Six women are currently working in leadership roles in our organization and most of our members are women.*
>
> — Finance officer of a Kabul-based youth organization

> *We want to expand recruitment of women in our organization because we need them so much. Other than working in our organization, women also have the work that they do at home. With these social and cultural restrictions in mind, women perform very well in their jobs.*
>
> — CEO of a CSO providing health and social services

> *Today if you take a look at every CSO's staff, you can see women present in the staff, participating in the leadership and in the decision making. But this again depends on how much the organization believes in women's rights and how much these women are interested in moving forward. This is a very difficult job to do, but it has to be done.*
>
> — Senior official at an Afghan think tank

Perhaps reflecting hiring difficulties, there's been little change from 2010 to 2013 among I-PACS II CSOs in the average proportion of women in full-time paid positions. Women's share of part-time and volunteer positions are up by 10 and 12 points, respectively. But a glass ceiling may be in place in terms of full-time positions, indicating the need for redoubled efforts.
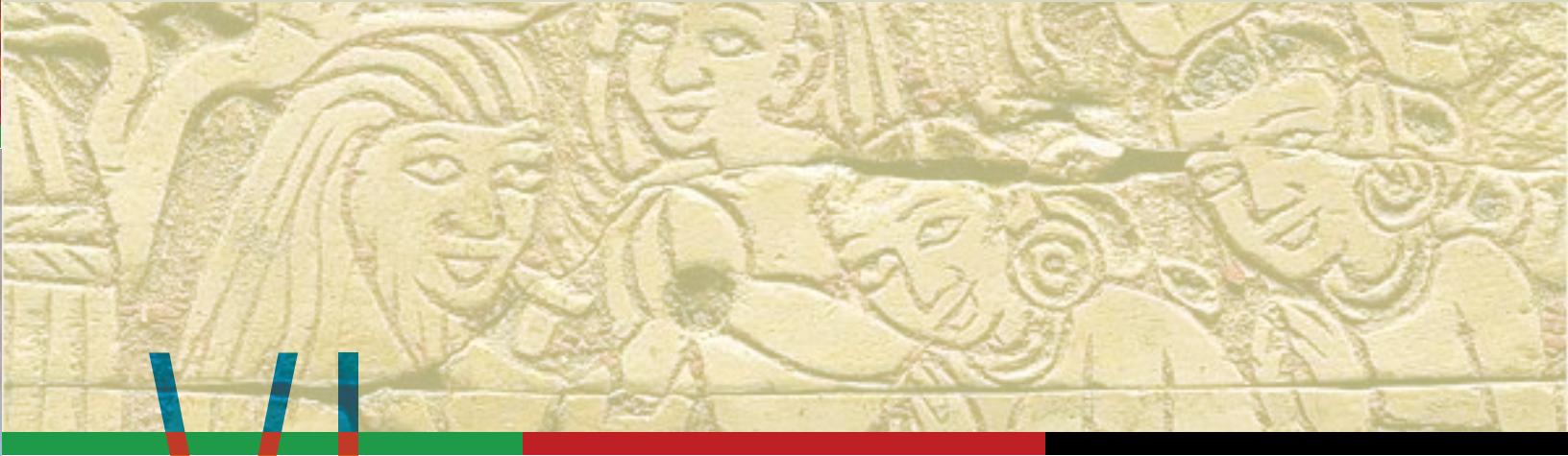
VI Youth Programs and Participation

Youth are ascendant in Afghanistan in general and a vital driving force in its civil society. As the desk review shows, young people make up the lion's share of the country's population overall (UNICEF estimates that 53 percent of Afghans are younger than age 18). Within civil society itself, Scott Worden of USAID and others have noted that youth are taking up CSO staff and leadership positions as a way to change the lack of economic opportunities they and others face.

Involving young Afghans in civil society is integral to its success and sustainability. The results of this study demonstrate that Afghan CSOs are embracing youth programs and participation. In the words of a program manager at an Afghan media organization, "In the Transformation Decade youth can change society."

Youth Programs

Eighty-six percent of CSOs say youth[3] benefit from their activities. (A third also say their activities benefit infants and children.) Eight in 10 say their mission "focuses primarily on youth issues," and just more than half say they "promote youth programs," second only to the promotion of programs for women.

> *More serious attention should be given to the problems of youth, who should be provided with access to education, because our time is the age of technological achievements and progress. Today many of our young people have access to computers and the internet, which is part of the successes achieved during the past decade.*
>
> – Deputy director of a CSO working with disabled Afghans

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3 "Youth" are defined here as Afghans younger than 35.

I-PACS II CSOs have sharply increased their attention to youth issues. In 2010 only a quarter of these organizations promoted youth programs, vs. 43 percent now. And the number of I-PACS II organizations that say their activities benefit youth has doubled over the same span, from 44 to 89 percent, a remarkable rate of growth.

Youth programs

■ 2010 I-PACS
■ 2013 I-PACS

25%	43%	Promote youth programs
44%	89%	Activities benefit youth
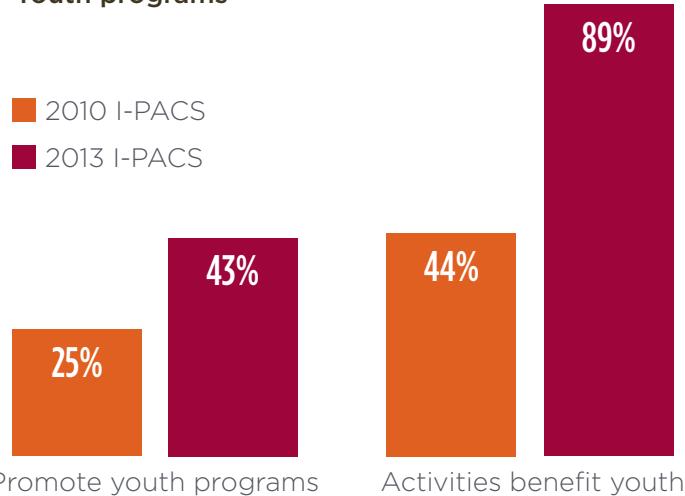
In addition, nearly three-quarters of CSOs overall say they are engaging in or planning to engage in activities that promote youth participation in the 2014 elections (as detailed in Section VIII on the Transformation Decade). And half of all CSOs, and 58 percent of re-interviewed I-PACS II CSOs, have received training in youth development and participation in the last three years, demonstrating a commitment among many organizations to improving their capacity in this area.

Promoting youth participation in 2014 elections

27%
73%

■ Yes
■ No

Received training in youth development

49%
50%
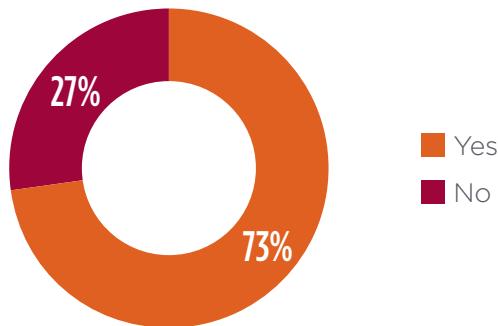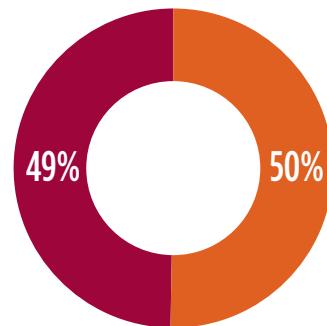
Youth Participation in Civil Society

Afghan CSOs are practically bursting at the seams with young people. Half of their full- or part-time employees and volunteers are younger than age 35. Most important, that includes 70 percent of their full-time employees (declining to 42 percent of part-time employees and 39 percent of unpaid volunteers).

Indeed, young people already occupy most of the key positions within civil society: Seven in 10 management-level staff are younger than 35. Youth in fact make up the entire management staff at half of CSOs, and all the full-time employees at 32 percent. In contrast with challenges in hiring and promoting women (see Section V), the extent of young adults in full-time and management positions in Afghan CSOs augurs well for their continued leadership role.

Percentage of staff that are youth

	Management	Full-time	Part-time	Volunteers
None	15%	0%	24%	25%
1-10%	0%	2%	7%	4%
11-30%	3%	8%	14%	15%
31-50%	15%	23%	23%	26%
>50%	68%	68%	31%	29%
Mean	68%	70%	42%	39%

These findings of a youth-dominated civil society sector resonate in in-depth discussions with CSO representatives. Nearly all said that most of their staff are young, though some said key positions are occupied by older people because of their greater experience and the respect they engender from others. Most also said their organizations are looking to hire more young staff, and many offer training programs to increase youth capacity. Several noted the important role youth play in civil society and many of the positive attributes they bring to their work, such as new ideas, familiarity with technology, proficiency in English and a high level of energy.

> *Nearly all of our staff and workers are young people. As I see, there are youth working in the leadership positions of all civil society organizations.*
>
> — President of a CSO working to build the capacity of other organizations

> *We mostly have young people on our staff. …Young people are the future of the country and they should work in government. Some of them lack experience, but we have provided the opportunity for them to gain experience.*
>
> — Vice president of a CSO that promotes Afghan mass media

Fortunately, all our staff members in Kabul and the provinces are youth under the age of 35 and this is one of the reasons for our success because we have youth who are energetic and have more potential to serve and work harder and harder. Our organization is 100 percent youth staff and this process will continue in the future as well.

– Director of a CSO focused on youth issues

It is difficult for those who are over 35 to find a job. Today, new thoughts, qualities and a creative mind are needed. In most civil society organizations, people under the age of 35 are recruited. Fortunately, many people under 35 have access and familiarity with computer programs and have skills in English. Many students from both governmental and non-governmental schools and universities have graduated and are recruited in different organizations as employees.

– Director of a CSO that provides assistance to smaller organizations

All of our members are youth. We do not have a member that is more than 35 years old. We are always in touch with youth and the majority of our employees are young. If we start a new project, we hire youth to implement it.

– Director of a CSO focused on women's and youth programs

VII Communication and Cooperation

Civil society requires the support of the public and other stakeholders to be successful, making effective communication and consultation with these groups vital. This can be increasingly complex – but ever more essential – as CSOs reach beyond basic services to higher-level efforts such as promoting civic values and human rights.

Most Afghan CSOs report that they are advocating, providing information or communicating with their constituents regularly. Two-thirds communicate with their constituents weekly or monthly, and most of the rest do so several times a year. Funding is one factor: while two in 10 overall reach out to constituents weekly, that's twice as prevalent among CSOs with budgets of $50,000 or more compared with those with smaller budgets, 31 v. 16 percent.

In particular, I-PACS II organizations, which, as noted, tend to be longer-established and better-funded, are outpacing other CSOs on this measure, with 78 percent communicating with their constituents weekly or monthly, 12 points more than CSOs overall.

CSOs use a variety of avenues to communicate with their beneficiaries, with roughly equal numbers relying mainly on word of mouth (24 percent), public or religious meetings or events (also 24 percent), radio, television or newspapers (20 percent) and the internet or cell phones (19 percent). Thirteen percent say they mainly use pamphlets or brochures.

More can be done on the communication front. As noted in Section III, six in 10 CSOs overall have a written communication plan (rising to 72 percent among I-PACS II CSOs), leaving four in 10 without such a plan. In addition, 57 percent of all organizations recently have received training in communication and outreach, leaving four in 10, again, with no such training. And the priority is comparatively low; public relations and communication were mentioned by very few organizations (5 percent) as a top need for capacity improvement.

Main methods of communicating with constituents

- 24%
- 24%
- 20%
- 19%
- 13%

- Word of mouth
- Public/religious meetings/events
- Radio/TV/newspapers
- Internet or cell phone
- Pamphlets or brochures
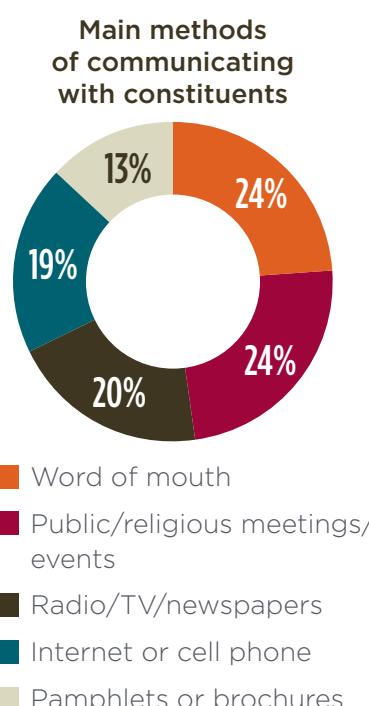
Consultation with Others

The desk review notes that cultivating close connections with constituents and fostering positive relationships with local government officials, mullahs, elders and other respected individuals is essential to winning buy-in and acceptance in local communities. As the *Signposting Success* report notes, "The most effective CSOs nurture strategic partnerships with local elites, including media, politicians and respected community members, and coordinate with other organizations."

The desk review also points to the importance of local ties. Large international NGOs may be perceived as focusing on profit or on donor priorities that may not reflect local needs and concerns. Successful CSOs can overcome this reputational risk by anchoring themselves in local communities, with connections to traditional organizations and the inclusion of community members in planning and carrying out programs. Indeed winning support from local leaders can mean the difference between whether a program succeeds or fails.

CSOs' current connections with other stakeholders generally are broad, but infrequent. Eighty-four percent communicate with community leaders at least sometimes, but just 37 percent do so frequently. Seven in 10 consult with local and national government representatives and with religious groups at the community level – but only about a quarter do this frequently.

Six in 10 CSOs are in regular contact with representatives of international donors and media organizations alike (24 and 18 percent, frequently). At the bottom, just 56 percent say they consult with non-religious community groups, just 19 percent frequently.

Consultation with stakeholders

■ At least sometimes
■ Frequently

Stakeholder	At least sometimes	Frequently
Community leaders	84%	37%
Local government reps.	71%	24%
National government reps.	70%	25%
Community-level religious groups	70%	22%
International donor organization reps.	62%	24%
Media organizations	62%	18%
Non-religious community-level groups	56%	19%

In-depth and key-informant interviewees recognized the importance of involving local leaders when implementing programs, with many saying they try to cultivate close relationships with local officials, elders and religious leaders. Several mentioned holding shura councils before beginning a project.

We connect with communities through community leaders, mullahs and imams. For instance, when we have a project for public awareness of the elections, we usually contact the communities and our beneficiaries through mullahs or imams. They announce and talk to people about the project in a mosque, usually during Friday prayer.

– Founder of an Afghan CSO focused on providing women's programs

We always try to implement our projects through tribal elders and local councils…In order to share information with the people we coordinate with leaders of the village and mullahs.

– Executive director of an economic development CSO

First we go to the village elders and share the details of our project and if they agree then we start working for their young people.

– Director of an education and job training CSO

It is part of the implementation of our programs to have contact with the elders of the local community, mullahs and tribal elders in their district and work with them in a team to implement our project…We have always tried to implement projects with the agreement and approval of the people. We want them to be cooperative with us and this way we will not have any problems.

– CEO of a CSO working on education, capacity building and civic education

I always try to get the ideas and opinions of reputable people, religious leaders and elders in the area, which has proven to be very effective.

– Director of a CSO assisting smaller organizations

All of our programs are based on our relationships with local communities. When we begin a relationship with a new community … it's generally initially through the mullah and shura, then the elders of that community, and then the wider community.

– Country director for an international economic development NGO

We talk with the mullah and elders of the area about any project. We tell them about the benefits of the project and how it will affect people. Some of the mullahs oppose these kinds of projects because they consider the projects lead women in the wrong direction. However, we try to convince the mullahs and elders in the area of the benefits of the project. Without convincing them, it is impossible to enter the area and complete the project.

— Director of an Afghan CSO focused on helping the poor

We first visit respected community members such as the mullah, the leader of the village, and also the security commanders, and we share our goals and information about our organization's activities and services. If we do not provide them with this kind of information, they never help us. When we want to build a clinic in an area, we take these things into consideration beforehand. We share our ideas with them about any issue. After establishing a collaborative atmosphere with each other we move forward with implementing our plan.

— CEO of a health and social services CSO

Many in-depth respondents spoke about how civic education programs or those that focus on democratic rights often are met with suspicion. Some said that introducing unfamiliar ideas, especially in rural communities, is challenging, and stressed the need for sensitivity to local culture and Islamic values. Only lack of security was mentioned as often.

As you know, our people have different customs. Our projects are all in women's issues and sometimes we face serious opposition to our projects, but we try to satisfy them with comprehensive talks.

— Deputy director of a CSO providing job training for women

It is obvious that there are challenges in a traditional society such as Afghanistan because there are fewer people who like modern things and they are traditional. When a new phenomenon enters a traditional society, there are some challenges, especially when our religious groups are archaic.

— Program manager at an Afghan media organization

The challenges that we are faced with are the cultural and traditional issues that stop women from participating in meetings and gatherings. Another issue is the security situation. These problems have always been in Afghanistan unfortunately.

— Program coordinator at a women's network

"Afghan society is a religious society and if you go to the districts and rural areas you see how people relate closely to their religious values. Unfortunately, the government and CSOs do not respect these religious values and try to implement ideas that are against culture and tradition, which results in disconnects between the government and CSOs and local people."

– Senior official at the Afghan Ministry of Information and Culture

Working with Government

The qualitative interviews also indicate that despite strong reviews of the legal and regulatory system, many CSO representatives are frustrated with the tone of their relationships with government officials. While nearly all in-depth interviewees said their organizations coordinate with the Afghan government, many said government corruption, lack of support or interference were some of the biggest challenges CSOs face. Some identified difficulties working with the government as their most pressing coordination problem.

"Civil society organizations in Afghanistan do not have enough support. In the leadership of the current government, there are officials and individuals who are not interested in the activities and services of Afghan civil society and they do not want to give it any value or importance because it is against their private interest."

– Lawyer for a legal-assistance CSO

"Civil society organizations do not have the position in society that they should have. The government does not cooperate with civil society organizations. …The government also tries to weaken civil society organizations in order to eliminate the groups that monitor their jobs."

– Executive director of a CSO promoting women's democratic participation

"We don't have issues with our donors, but we do have problems with government officials, especially when we need to get letters or official documents from them."

– Director of an education and job training CSO

"We have some problems in maintaining relations with the government, but don't have any problems with civil society organizations. Some challenges lay ahead for us in terms of sharing information with the government."

– Vice-president of a CSO that promotes Afghan mass media

Our organization has been successful and has achieved some of its goals. We had some periods of success, but unfortunately we have faced a lack of funding. …Also, governmental organizations do not support us, nor do they serve the people honestly.

– Director of a CSO focused on youth issues

One challenge is that the government and civil society organizations are not relying on each other. We see that the decisions of civil society organizations are not listened to by the government. For example, we choose our representative for the elections commission. However, their name was not listed. So this is a problem between the government and CSOs. The government should consider civil society organizations as one of its supporters.

– Director of a CSO assisting smaller organizations

Civil society organizations and the government do not cooperate with each other, so the situation is not great. … We have good relations with other civil society sectors, but the government treats us well when it wants to, and treats us poorly when it wants to.

– Director of a women's and youth CSO

Despite these difficulties, the in-depth interviews found few examples of anti-corruption advocacy or of attempts by CSOs to challenge government officials. This confirms findings of previous studies that anti-corruption advocacy is a weak area of activity for Afghan civil society, perhaps given the possible negative repercussions.

Improving relations between government officials and representatives of CSOs should be a priority, given the importance of these relationships in effective civil society. As the desk review notes, encouraging collaboration may include promoting and facilitating the creation of formal and informal channels for cooperation and communication, such as standing committees in ministries and parliament, and the production of regular briefing papers on development issues.

Collaboration can be made more difficult to the extent that CSOs take on government watchdog and anti-corruption roles, an area in which the desk review indicates Afghan civil society is particularly weak. Nonetheless, many in-depth interviewees identified reducing government corruption as a critical need in the years ahead.

I think the biggest challenge in terms of the government is corruption. Civil society organizations and media should try to work more at eliminating corruption.

– Program manager at an Afghan media organization

> *The biggest challenges are corruption, narcotics…and terrorism, which don't allow civil society and the government to succeed.*
>
> — Director of a women's union

> *Civil society organizations in Afghanistan today have various challenges. They include lack of security, corruption and bribery in government departments, especially in its justice mechanisms, and the existence of warlords and illegally armed individuals who are not able to tolerate those who oppose their personal interests and political objectives.*
>
> — Lawyer at a legal-assistance CSO

There is an inherent conflict between CSOs stepping up their watchdog role on one hand, yet addressing an often adversarial relationship with government on the other. The desk review suggests that CSOs have avoided confronting the government on corruption for fear of reprisals. As well as advocating for the public interest, CSOs may need to focus on convincing government officials that it's in their best interest, as well, to have a transparent and corruption-free government, encouraging them to see civil society as a partner in achieving this goal.

Reputation

The literature suggests that international NGOs have a poor reputation in Afghanistan and that Afghan CSOs may try to distance their organizations from large international players. Afghan CSOs themselves are not broadly seen as effective; a 2012 Asia Foundation public opinion survey found tepid public confidence in local and international NGOs alike (54 and 53 percent, respectively). Only about a quarter of Afghans surveyed were confident in the abilities of NGO staff and donors to serve the public interest.

In the present study, some key informants said reputation was one of the biggest challenges facing CSOs in Afghanistan, a factor highlighted as critical in the Signposting Success report.

> *Credibility and reputation are the biggest challenges.*
>
> — Program manager of CSO-support organization

> *I think [CSOs] need to have good relationship with people.*
>
> — Program manager of an international NGO

Specifically, a few in-depth interviewees expressed worry that corruption among CSOs themselves is damaging to their reputation.

> *The other reason that CSOs are not respected is corruption. Other institutions are involved in this and CSOs are as well…Civil society represents the Afghan people; they will never have the people's support until they fix this issue.*
>
> – Director of a youth engagement CSO

> *Civil society organizations, unfortunately, were not able to resolve their difficulties and challenges in accordance with established laws and procedures. Besides, many of them have political inclinations and have given the public the wrong impression about the objectives and activities of civil society. A number of them were involved in corruption, nepotism and embezzlement. They were just eager and interested in making and submitting proposals to donors to receive funding, of which only a small portion was spent on social activities and services.*
>
> – Program director of human rights CSO

Nonetheless, in this study's survey, nearly all CSOs say they believe the Afghan public views CSOs positively: Ninety-six and 91 percent, respectively, say they think Afghans have a favorable view of Afghan CSOs and international NGOs operating in Afghanistan. There is substantial room, however, for views to improve: Many fewer, 56 percent, say Afghan CSOs are regarded "very" favorably, and fewer still, 42 percent, say the same about international NGOs.

Change in the reputation of...

Afghan CSOs

26%

12%

61%

International NGOs

31%

49%

20%

- Improved
- Worsened
- About the same
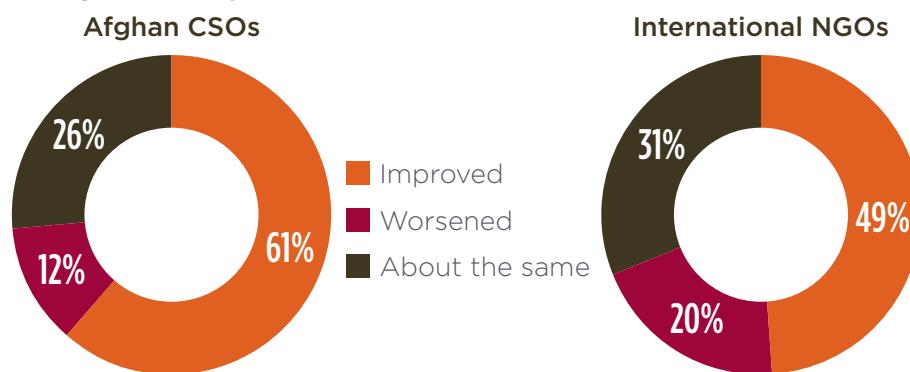
Beyond CSOs' current status in the public eye, perceived change is positive: Sixty-one percent believe the reputation of Afghan CSOs has improved in the last three years, vs. just 12 percent who think it's worsened. There's a smaller but still significant 29-point spread for international NGOs, 49 vs. 20 percent.

Contrasted with the Asia Foundation data, it's possible that CSOs enjoy less overall popularity than their leaders think – all the more cause for concerted public outreach and education.

Cooperation among CSOs

The number of CSOs working in Afghanistan, and their Kabul and urban-center focus, create the possibility for substantial overlap in geographic coverage as well as in sectors of concentration. The desk review found that enhanced coordination and cooperation among CSOs can reduce these redundancies and increase learning from one another's strengths and expertise.

Coordination among CSOs is quite broad, with 71 percent saying they consult with other CSOs at least sometimes – but, similar to other results, only 25 percent do so frequently. (Again this is higher among higher-budget CSOs, 34 vs. 22 percent.) Twenty-nine percent coordinate with other CSOs less often, including a non-trivial 17 percent that never do so.

I-PACS II organizations are more likely to coordinate at least sometimes (88 percent do so, 17 points more than CSOs overall) and to do so on a frequent basis (45 percent, 20 points better than CSOs overall). But I-PACS II CSOs have slipped in coordination with others compared with 2010, when 96 percent did so at least sometimes and 70 percent did so frequently – the latter a 25-point drop from three years ago.

Consultation with other CSOs

- ■ At least sometimes
- ■ Frequently

71%

88%

96%

45%

70%

25%

2013 All CSOs   2013 I-PACS   2010 I-PACS
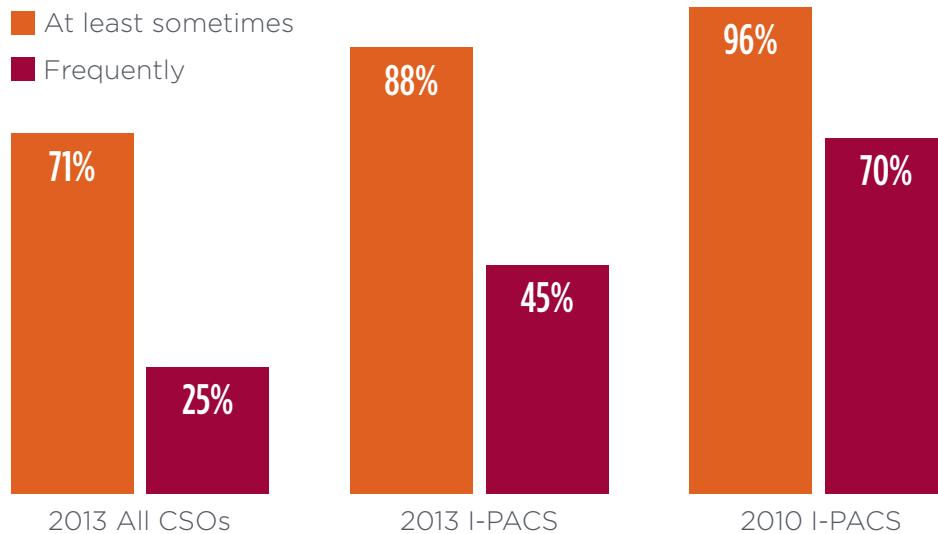
While many in-depth and key-informant interviewees said they coordinate with other CSOs, seven in 10 CSOs overall don't belong to a larger network organization. (I-PACS II CSOs are much more likely to be a part of one, 51 percent vs. 30 percent of all CSOs.) This is the case even though networking is highly valued by those who do it: Among CSOs that belong to a network, 94 percent say it's effective at helping meet their organization's goals, including two-thirds who say it's very effective.

Coordination among CSOs thus is prevalent, but not so frequent, and on the decline in terms of frequency, with many missed opportunities for the benefits of networking. When it does happen, many regard it as a positive experience, suggesting broad room to encourage greater cross-CSO contact.

There are four other organizations in the building we are working in, so the rent is cheap for us. We are working together as one group. Right now we have good cooperation with other CSOs and organizations to have a clear and fair election.

— Director of a CSO focused on capacity building

We know that some CSOs are weaker, they need to coordinate with other bigger and stronger CSOs in order to improve.

— CEO of a CSO that provides health and social services

Generally I can say that we work well with other organizations and we usually share our experiences with our partners in order to share success.

— Executive director of a CSO focused on human rights

We have very good and well–organized coordination with other organizations such as CSOs, members of our networks and with donors.

— Deputy director of a CSO providing job training for women

Organizations that belong to networks are more likely than others to say they currently are working on projects (by 12 points) and to say their funding and geographical coverage have increased in the last three years (by 23 and 30 points, respectively). While cause and effect are unclear, resources and networking may work in tandem, reinforcing one another.

Among CSOs that collaborate, coordination of political activities (a potentially sensitive activity) is relatively uncommon – 41 percent undertake it. Far more, 66 to 91 percent, report other joint activities, saying they exchange information and ideas, coordinate provision of services, help one another develop knowledge and skills, work on project partnerships, participate together in public policy debates and jointly try to obtain funds.

Among CSOs that coordinate with other CSOs

	2013 All CSOs	2013 I-PACS	2010 I-PACS
Exchange info./ideas	91%	95%	94%
Coordinate services	86%	89%	60%
Help each other develop knowledge/skills	79%	82%	NA
Work on project partnerships	77%	85%	43%
Participate together in public policy debates	69%	74%	69%
Jointly try to obtain funds	66%	60%	51%
Coordinate political activities	41%	52%	15%

I-PACS II organizations have shown big jumps in the past three years in coordination in three specific areas: project partnerships (doubling from 43 to 85 percent); political activities (up 37 points, from 15 to 52 percent); and coordinating services (up 29 points, from 60 to 89 percent). Each is a positive trend in this important area.

At the same time, several participants in in-depth interviews talked about coordination among CSOs as a significant need for CSOs at the moment, as well as one of the best ways to meet the challenges of the Transformation Decade.

I think the only thing that we need apart from funding is cooperation; cooperation doesn't exist among civil society organizations. For example, we see that many organizations are active in only one province, but other provinces don't have access to these projects…So, the only challenge that civil society faces is the lack of coordination. We tried a lot to increase coordination among these organizations and we must work like a network.

– Gender officer at a large international NGO

We know that some CSOs are weaker, they need to coordinate with other bigger and stronger CSOs in order to improve.

– CEO of a health-focused CSO

We have a great opportunity to change in the Transformation Decade. Like the political parties, it is a great opportunity for civil society organizations to be integrated with each other and work on large reconstruction projects…Civil society organizations should build a wide network.

– Director of a CSO focused on democracy and women's rights
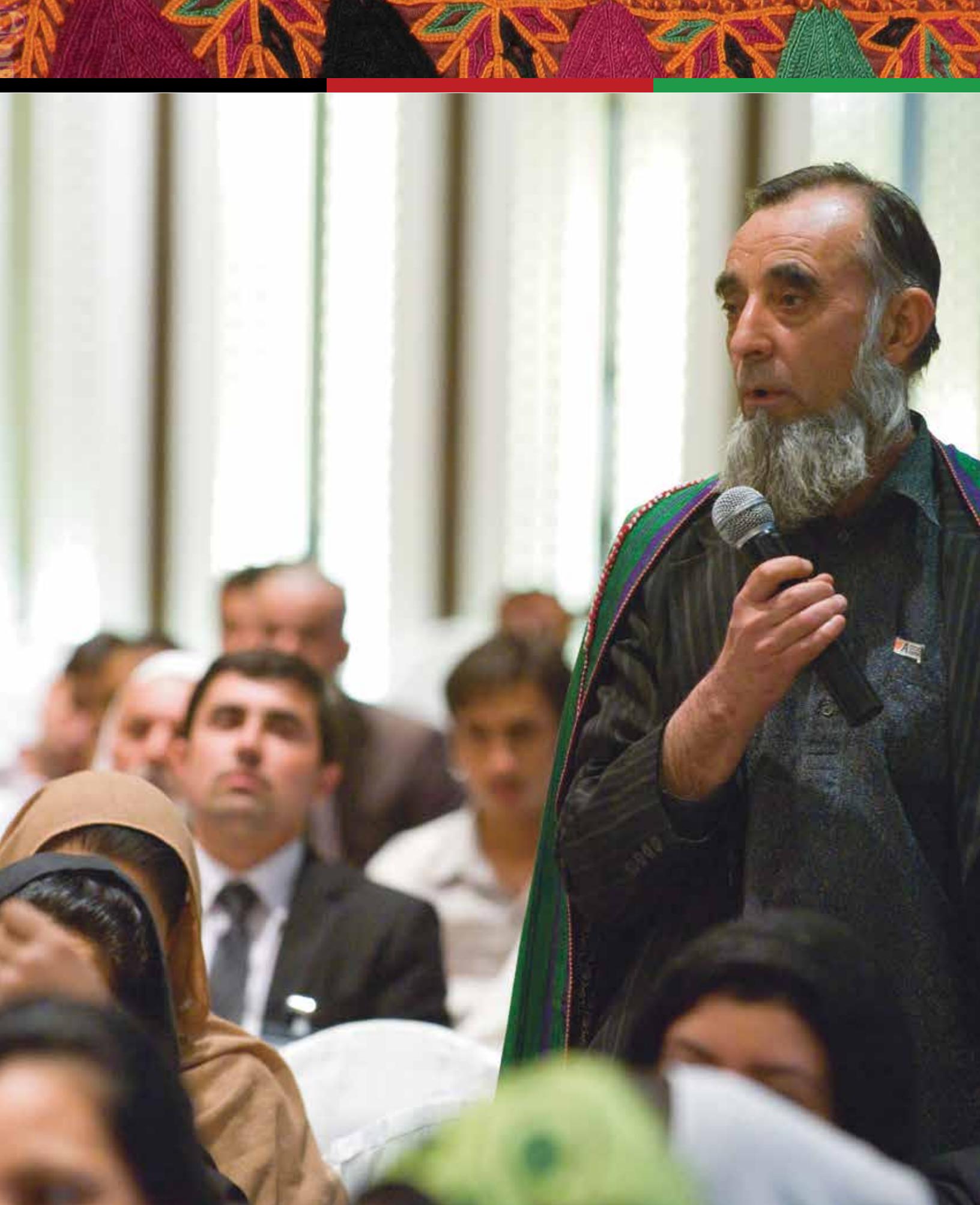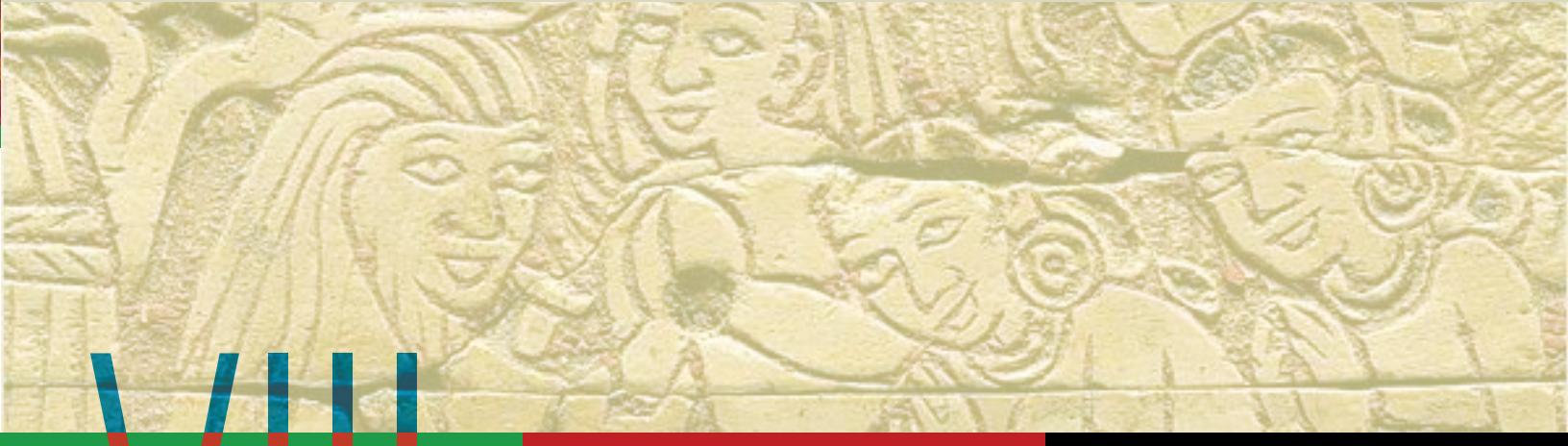
VIII The Transformation Decade

CSO representatives are cautiously optimistic about the future of Afghan civil society, yet concerned about several possible post-2014 challenges, including uncertainty about funding, security and political stability after the presidential election and the withdrawal of the bulk of international forces.

In spite of these worries, relatively few in-depth interviewees provided details of specific preparations their organizations are making for the transition. Most of those who did cited desires to find new funding sources or to establish self-sufficiency. This pattern is similar to findings reported in Section II, in which nearly all CSOs say they want new funding, yet far fewer report engaging in specific activities aimed at raising it.

The Transformation Decade

The United States and its allies are to hand over responsibility for Afghanistan's security to the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police in 2014. Next year also will see the election of a new president, marking the transfer of political power to someone other than Hamid Karzai for the first time since the ouster of the Taliban in 2001. The subsequent 10 years, Afghanistan's Transformation Decade, are seen as critical for the country's future path.

Overall confidence is high, if not particularly strong. Eighty-seven percent of CSOs in general and 93 percent of I-PACS II CSOs are optimistic about the prospects for civil society during the Transformation Decade. Among all CSOs, they split about evenly between being "very" and "somewhat" optimistic (41 vs. 46 percent), while among I-PACS II organizations more, 52 percent, are very optimistic.

Encouragingly, CSOs that interact with other organizations and therefore can be expected to be knowledgeable of the current state of civil society in Afghanistan are especially positive about the future: Among all CSOs, 51 percent of those that frequently consult or work with other organizations say they are very optimistic, compared with 30 percent of those that rarely or never engage in such activities.

Despite general optimism, 89 to 79 percent of CSOs are worried about the prospect of possible increased insecurity, increased political instability, reduced international funding and reduced influence of CSOs negatively impacting their organizations in the transition period. Strong worry is highest regarding insecurity (55 percent are "very" worried) and lowest for lost influence (36 percent), bracketing results on funding and political instability.

Possible impact on organization in the Transformation Decade:

- ■ Very or somewhat worried
- ■ Very worried

Increased insecurity/ violence	Increased political instability	Reduced international funding	Reduced influence of CSOs in policy making
89%	87%	82%	79%
55%	46%	47%	36%
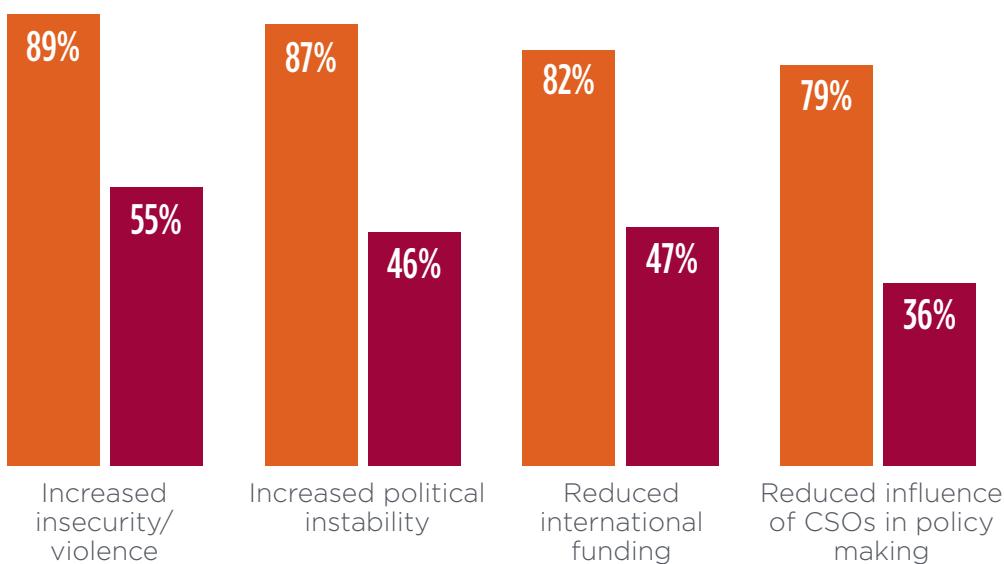
Although CSOs that frequently consult with other organizations are broadly optimistic, they also are particularly concerned about challenges in the Transformation Decade. They're 21 to 26 points more apt to be very worried about future insecurity, instability, funding and influence than are those who rarely if ever engage with other CSOs.

As mentioned in the sections on funding and security, CSO representatives think these issues will remain the two greatest challenges for civil society in the decade ahead (62 percent cite lack of funding and 32 percent select lack of security). Lack of capacity and coordination barely register when compared with these. (Though in reality, funding and capacity are closely tied, and self-reinforcing.)

Funding and security worries also dominated in-depth discussions of the Transformation Decade, even while most maintained optimism about the future of civil society and the country as a whole. Participants largely divided between lack of funding and security as the most challenging elements of the transition.

Several areas were identified in these interviews as critical if CSOs are to survive and thrive in the years ahead. These include:

→ Working to make the 2014 elections successful

→ Increasing transparency and accountability

→ Searching for new funding sources and relying less on international funding

→ Cultivating sustainable funding sources such as membership fees and fees-for-service

→ Increasing coordination and cooperation with local communities, with the Afghan government and among CSOs themselves

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"*The Transformation Decade presents some opportunities for our organization which can encourage us to move toward self-sufficiency, but in my opinion it presents more challenges for civil society organizations in various spheres, especially in the fields of security and funding. It is the greatest challenge to find new donors and sources who will support us financially. However, we will keep trying to look for new funding sources in order to continue our activities and services for our constituents after 2014.*"

– Deputy director of a CSO for the disabled

"*The Transformation Decade will create more challenges, such as insecurity, a lack of opportunities and a lack of access to funding and donor contracts. There will be some opportunities, but they will depend on the international community.*"

– Director of a capacity-building CSO

"*The first challenge that we'll face [in 2014] would be lack of funding……[but this is] a good opportunity for the Afghan people to have more responsibility for their own society.*"

– Director of a CSO focused on poverty, education and human rights

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We have a great opportunity to change in the Transformation Decade. Like the political parties, it is a great opportunity for civil society organizations to be integrated with each other and work on large reconstruction projects…Civil society organizations should build a wide network.

– Director of a CSO assisting smaller organizations

The government started from nothing and was formed with the help of the international community. Big projects were started and we had a lot of facilities within the media, but now everything is slowly being reduced. Our organization is preparing itself for the situation it might be faced with, such as financial issues, and we are making changes so our organization can serve people with fewer resources available.

– Vice-president of a CSO promoting Afghan mass media

In my opinion, the government and its leadership should try its best to convince the world that Afghanistan needs the continuing support of foreign governments and the international community in all aspects of life in order to get out of the current instability and economic and political crisis.

– Founder of a women's CSO

Civil society organizations are supported by their government in other countries, but civil society organizations in Afghanistan are supported by international donors; therefore, we hope our government will help and support civil society organizations.

– Finance officer of a Kabul youth organization

If we consider that all these projects are related to a foreign donor and if they leave Afghanistan, then all these projects will remain undone. It will create special challenges for our organization because our funds will decrease and we will face a lack of funding. The government of Afghanistan has no capability to support civil society organizations and all of their support comes from foreign donors as well.

– Director of a youth CSO

We are focusing on financial issues for our organizations after 2014…After 2014, some foreign institutions will leave Afghanistan and we have just tried to have some savings for our organization in order to continue its activities after 2014.

– Staff member of a CSO in Bamiyan province that provides services to women

"We need to get microcredit from the government or appeal to the country's wealthy for some donations. Otherwise our organization will not be able to survive without foreign donations."

– CEO of a health and social services CSO

"The Transformation Decade presents more challenges than opportunities. Most of the CSOs and governmental organizations need financial support from international organizations. Most of these organizations have decreased their funding, which will create some challenges for our organizations in the future and impact their activities and projects."

– Deputy country director of a large international NGO

The 2012 Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan focused on post-2014 planning, adopting a Mutual Accountability Framework that promises continued support from the international community provided the Afghan government achieves development goals. Worries for the future expressed by many CSOs may raise questions about the durability of that accord. At the same time, the Tokyo agreement may heighten opportunities for CSOs to play a major role in implementing and monitoring compliance with the accountability framework.

Indeed, several in-depth respondents said that one of the important roles that their organizations could fulfill moving forward is to keep tabs on the new Afghan government to help ensure that it is meeting its obligations under the Tokyo framework.

Of course, serving as an effective monitor requires credibility. Many CSO leaders express awareness that operating transparently and earning people's trust are crucial to establishing the credibility to act as a government watchdog in the Transformation Decade and beyond.

"One thing should not be forgotten — these organizations must work clearly and should be transparent in order to receive people's trust and support. It is very important for them to observe transparency in CSOs' activities."

– Deputy director of a large international NGO

"We want to continue to be transparent. We know there will be a change in government within the next 12 months, and then who knows what will happen after the transition? I think being open, honest and transparent are the best tools you can have."

– Country director of an international NGO working on local economic development

2014 Election Support

Civil society is expected to play a key role in the 2014 presidential and provincial council elections, a process seen as central to the prospects for political, security and funding stability. CSO roles include voter education and registration, monitoring the elections' legitimacy and seeking to assist the political transition that follows.

Substantial problems marred Afghanistan's presidential or parliamentary elections in 2004, 2005, 2009 and 2010, though they benefitted from voter education and monitoring efforts by CSOs. For civil society in particular, a failed election in 2014 may negatively impact the willingness of international donors to continue to support the government and civil society alike.

Qualitative interviews establish the importance placed on the next elections by Afghan civil society. Some in-depth interview respondents described supporting and monitoring the elections as one of the greatest needs CSOs can help address; others, asked the ways to meet the challenges of the Transformation Decade, raised efforts to ensure successful elections.

Civil society organizations must work and encourage people to participate in elections and show them how to use their votes for their favorite candidates.

– Director of a youth CSO

I think that the Transformation Decade is very important for the future of Afghanistan... The elections should not be postponed and an honest person should be elected. I hope that the younger generation will have an important role in the elections.

– CEO of a women's rights CSO

Currently the biggest role that civil society organizations have to play is to hold presidential elections. The elections overall will not be considered free and fair by the public without the cooperation of civil society organizations. ...In these elections we not only see symbolic changes, but we want essential changes such as maintaining and strengthening human rights, freedom of expression, media, peace in Afghanistan, government that responds to problems and services the public and decreases in corruption, poverty and smuggling. So, the most important thing for civil society is to hold fair and successful elections.

– Executive director of an Afghan media organization

> *The greatest need in Afghanistan is for civil society organizations to support the elections… I hope in this election Afghanistan will produce a good future and I hope that civil society organizations will support the election process and provide a better environment for the elections, especially for women.*
>
> — Deputy director of a CSO providing job training for women

> *I think [the chances of success for Afghanistan] depends on the election. If there isn't any problem with the election, then things will be OK.*
>
> — Director of an education and job-training CSO in Eastern Afghanistan

> *The best solution for Afghanistan is to have transparent elections and a successful withdrawal of U.S. troops.*
>
> — Director of a youth CSO

> *Holding the 2014 elections is urgent and important. If we do not take part in it, it means we do not support the government. It is our responsibility to take part in the elections. I support the 2014 elections. Our workers and employees try their best according to their power to give people understanding about the elections via newspapers, TV and radio stations. I am not interested in politics, but I have a responsibility to protect a political person from harming the people. I consider understanding and awareness of people as the great responsibility of civil society organizations. I am happy that Afghans themselves will determine their destiny and take responsibility for their country's affairs.*
>
> — Director of a CSO assisting smaller organizations

> *Currently, our biggest concern is about the elections. CSOs should make people aware about the election and our aim is that each Afghan will use their voter's card and elect their president.*
>
> — CSO gender advisor

Additionally, and positively, several key informants portrayed the elections as an opportunity for Afghanistan to demonstrate its ability to govern itself, and the political transition as giving CSOs the opportunity to become more involved as an intermediary between the government and its citizens.

Many CSOs are involved or planning to be involved in the election. Combining five election-related activities covered in the survey as an index of election activity, CSOs are involved or plan to be involved

in an average of 3.4 activities. A quarter say they're not involved in any election activities, but more than twice as many, 56 percent, say they're undertaking all five activities, and three-quarters are doing at least one.

Reflecting earlier results on the main activities of CSOs and the beneficiaries of these programs, it's no surprise that the most prevalent election-related activities are encouraging conditions for women and youth to participate (73 percent each). Sixty-seven percent also are working to increase public awareness of the elections and another two-thirds are encouraging conditions for other groups to participate. Election monitoring, an activity that may require greater expertise and resources, is less frequent than other activities, though still six in 10 organizations plan it.

Current or planned 2014 election activities

■ All CSOs
■ I-PACS

	All CSOs	I-PACS
Encouraging conditions for youth	73%	80%
Encouraging conditions for women	73%	79%
Increasing public awareness	67%	79%
Encouraging conditions for other groups	66%	72%
Elections monitoring	60%	71%
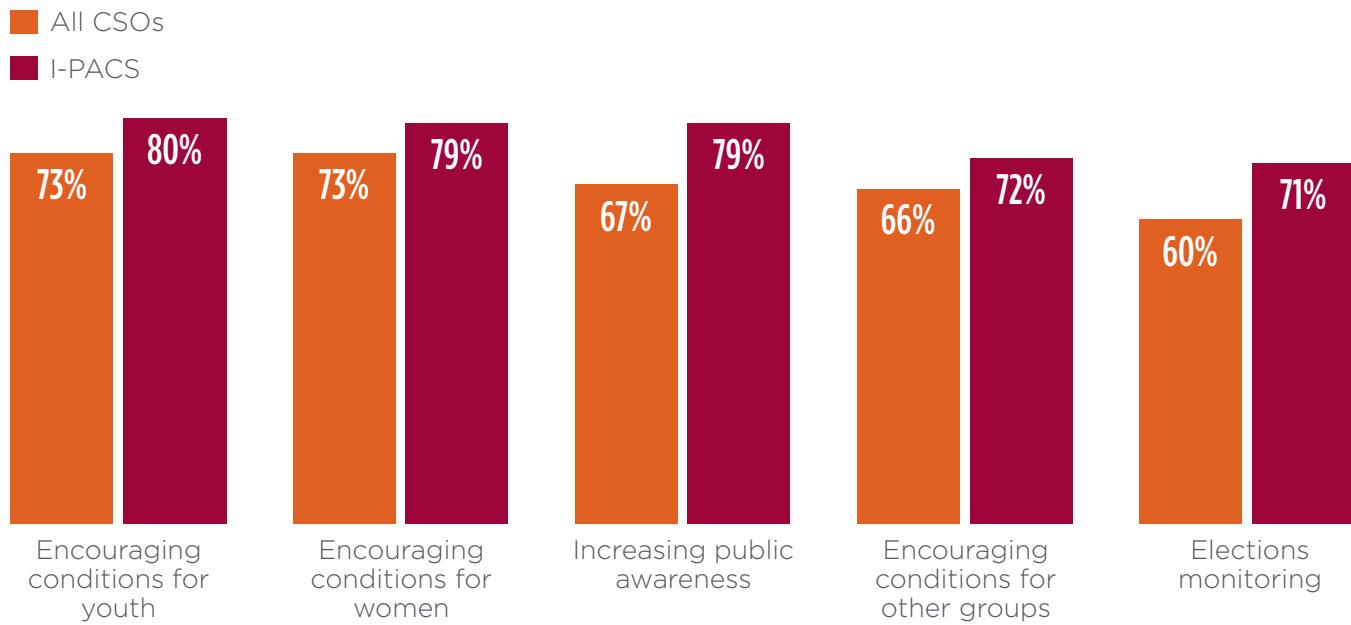
Current or intended engagement in election activities is higher by double-digit margins among CSOs that work in the areas of gender equality and minority and disabled rights, compared with CSOs in general. I-PACS II organizations, for their part, are somewhat more active in the elections than CSOs overall, especially in terms of election monitoring and increasing public awareness, by 11 and 12 points, respectively.

IX Conclusions and Recommendations

This assessment of the state of civil society in Afghanistan in 2013 finds CSOs well-positioned in key areas, with significant improvement in the past few years despite continued difficulties in funding, security and geographical coverage. Yet there are substantial needs and challenges as well, notably in capacity and sustainability alike.

Notable successes include:

→ Broad attention paid to women and youth and considerable strides over time in programs targeting these constituencies. Continuing efforts in these areas are crucial given the needs.

→ Substantial growth in overall activity, number of people served and coverage of various constituent groups, including sharp advances in activities that benefit minorities, education programs and conflict resolution.

→ High levels of organizational capacity in several areas, including having written rules and a mission statement, an employee handbook, procurement and accounting manuals and financial policies. Significant improvements have been made in other areas, alongside a good amount of capacity-related training.

→ Consultation of constituents, community leaders and government representatives and cooperation among CSOs. These connections are important to effective programs in local communities and require continued attention in order to bridge the gaps that often exist between CSOs, community leaders and government.

→ Increases in funding from individual members as well as international donors, and high satisfaction among CSOs in their relationships with international donors. The former holds promise as a self-sustaining funding resource.

→ Broad praise for the current legal and regulatory environment.

→ A keen focus on election-related activities in advance of the 2014 presidential and provincial council elections. A successful election is essential to security, political stability and international perceptions. The high level of involvement by CSOs bodes well in this regard.

Even with these accomplishments, there remain many difficulties for CSOs operating in Afghanistan, including anxieties about the post-2014 environment that is fast approaching. Among the most important:

→ Continued lack of geographical coverage in rural areas and a Kabul-centric concentration of civil society efforts. Steps are needed to reach outlying communities that currently benefit little from CSO activities.

→ Closely related to the lack of rural coverage, security problems that prevent CSOs from carrying out program activities are a persistent concern. This problem is largely out of the hands of CSOs, but as mentioned above, helping to ensure a smooth political transition next year should help the new government exert control.

→ Significant difficulties collaborating with government officials and a lack of attention to combating corruption within the government.

→ Inadequate action to diversify funding. Though nearly every organization claims it is looking for new funds, there's little evidence of specific fundraising activities that could bring in new resources.

→ Lack of sufficient levels of training and capacity building in some areas.

→ Limited membership in civil society networks, even though most organizations who do belong to one find it very useful. Cooperation among CSOs reduces redundancies and shares skills and resources, making the civil society sector more efficient and effective.

Overall, as Afghan civil society looks forward to the Transformation Decade, it's important to maintain and build upon its accomplishments to date, as well as addressing the continued shortcomings identified above.

In sum, the results of this study encourage a continued focus on women and youth, sustained work to build organizational capacity, cultivation of relationships at the community level and efforts to create a positive working relationship with the government, albeit with a watchdog component. Greater efforts are required, as well, at expanding rural coverage, diversifying funding sources, increasing participation in networks and deepening communication with stakeholders across the board.

Much will depend on conducting free and fair elections that can ensure a smooth transition of power, and the continued commitment of international stakeholders. After years of great strides, Afghan civil society is positioned to play an especially critical role in the Transformation Decade ahead.
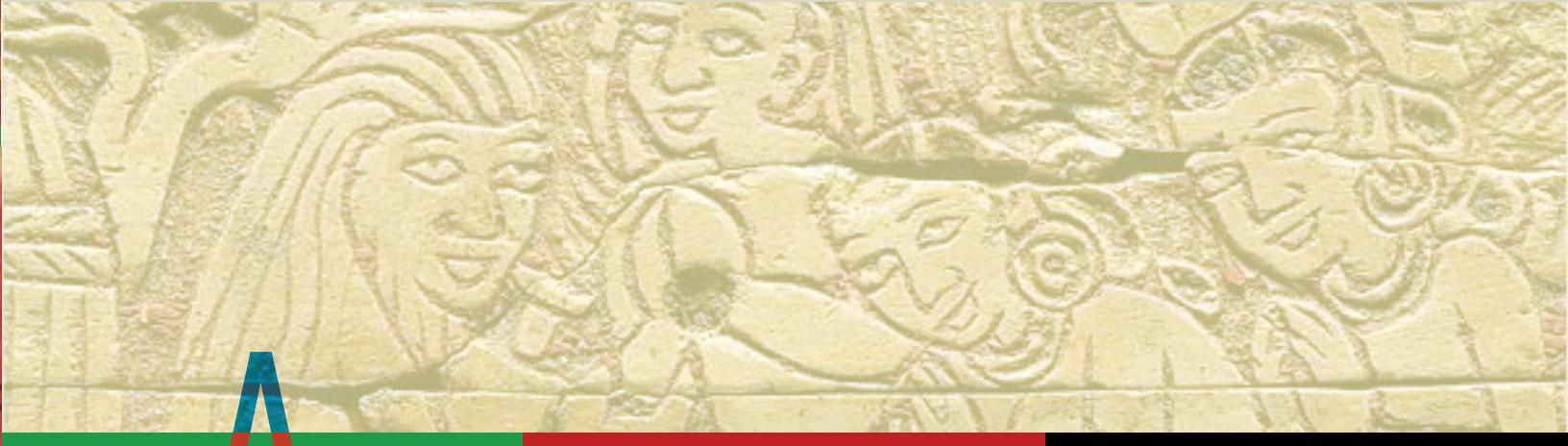
A Literature Review

This literature review was conducted to support Counterpart International's 2013 assessment of the current state and future development of civil society organizations (CSOs) in Afghanistan. Updating a 2010 Counterpart review, we have evaluated more than 40 recent research reports on the development of CSOs in the country, paying special attention to the 2014 elections, the "transformation decade" beyond and their implications for Afghan civil society.[1]

Counterpart International has directed the Initiative to Promote Afghan Civil Society (I-PACS) in Afghanistan since 2005. Funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), IPACS provides technical and capacity-building assistance and grants to Afghan CSOs. The second phase of the program, I-PACS II, initiated in October 2010, focuses on improving CSO accountability, developing legal and regulatory frameworks and increasing civilian mobilization and policy engagement, with an emphasis on the participation of women in CSOs and programs that focus on issues important to women.

This review is presented in five sections:

1 This report focuses almost exclusively on studies produced since 2010. For a review of previous literature, see Counterpart International's 2010 I-PACS desk review.

I. Civil Society in Afghanistan

While there is no single accepted definition of "civil society," one summary description in the literature is "the public realm of voluntary collective action around shared interests and values that lie between the state, the market, and family" (Van den Boogaard, 2011, p. 31). This broad concept incorporates most of the varied forms and functions of CSOs.

CSOs in Afghanistan fall under three categories – international and Afghan non-governmental organizations (NGOs); registered social organizations (SOs); and unregistered, traditional CSOs such as councils of elders known as shuras and jirgas. CSOs can include charities, faith-based organizations, professional associations, trade unions, business associations, social movements, peace groups, community groups, youth centers or clubs and women's organizations, among others.

The 2013 *Directory of Non-Governmental Organizations and Social Organizations* published by Counterpart International lists 726 registered CSOs, including 333 local and 58 international NGOs registered with the Ministry of Economy and 335 SOs registered with the Department of Social Unions and Political Parties of the Ministry of Justice.[2] Naturally, there are uncounted unregistered CSOs and SOs in the country, including many traditional local groups.

Among their purposes and goals, one important function of CSOs and SOs in Afghanistan has been to aid the government with service delivery, a particularly important role during the creation and development of governmental capacity. Such efforts have included:

→ Humanitarian assistance and emergency relief

→ Health care

→ Water and sanitation

→ Education and vocational training

→ Income generation, job creation and microfinance

→ Community development

→ Rural development, including infrastructure, agriculture and livestock support

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2   Counterpart's 2011 *Afghanistan Civil Society Assessment* reported 3,175 such organizations (1,468 NGOs registered with the Ministry of Economy and 1,707 SOs registered with the Ministry of Justice). United States International Grantmaking (at http://www.usig.org/countryinfo/afghanistan.asp) reports that as of February 2013 there were approximately 6,151 registered CSOs in the country, including 2,151 registered NGOs and approximately 4,000 registered SOs. USAID's May 22, 2013, RFA for its PACE program (p. 9) reports 4,729 registered CSOs (3,022 NGOs and 1,707 SOs). The reason for the discrepant estimates is unclear.

→ Urban reconstruction

→ Reintegration for returnees, internally displaced persons and demobilized soldiers

→ Natural resource management

Service delivery was an initial priority after the fall of the Taliban and continues to be a main area of activity. Nonetheless Counterpart's 2010 review found a shift in attention from service delivery in the first half of the decade to education, gender equality, youth and human rights in the latter half. Some such efforts include:

→ Free and independent mass media

→ Media training and outreach

→ Civic and voter education

→ Liaison between citizens and government

→ Government accountability and transparency

→ Monitoring government progress on international commitments and policy implementation

→ Proposing legislation and policy reform

→ Addressing members of parliament and policy making committees

→ Advocacy for public issues

→ Human rights in general, and specifically, women's rights, youth rights and the rights of the disabled and ethnic and religious minorities

→ Youth and women's participation and engagement

→ Democracy, democratic rights and elections

→ Anti-corruption

→ Peace-building, reconciliation and negotiation

Along with media organizations, civil society also includes other organizations that engage in research and encourage public discussion, such as universities and colleges, think tanks and organizations that carry out public opinion polls and other socially relevant research.

A significant challenge in developing indigenous Afghan CSOs has been the predominance of better-funded international NGOs, often with extensive logistical experience and specialization in service provision. The dominance of large international NGOs focused on service delivery has led to an under-emphasis of traditional Afghan civil society; left areas such as civic education, gender-based empowerment and advocacy underserved; and left more informal, traditional and loosely structured CSOs underfunded, even though they may be more in touch with the needs of local communities and have greater credibility with the population.

Indeed, Van den Boogaard (2011) suggests that shuras, jirgas, tribal leaders, village elders and mosques generally have been shunned by international donors because they don't fit typical Western definitions of civil society. Yet these individuals and organizations have existed in Afghanistan throughout its history; they are essential elements of the nation's civil society fabric, regardless of their departure from formally structured, Western-style NGOs. For example, traditional Afghan CSOs long have provided venues for local conflict resolution, application of law and justice, community development projects, social welfare initiatives and political decisions, among others.

While the religious nature of many traditional Afghan CSOs has been an impediment in terms of some international donor support, Battiston (2011) argues that religious-based CSOs are a fundamental part of Afghan society, have been instrumental in preventing social fragmentation and are necessary for reconciliation. As one of her interviewees noted, "The Afghan society is an Islamic society. We must not forget this."

It's also the case that Afghan religious civil society is more diverse than is widely recognized, with legitimacy few other institutions in Afghanistan enjoy (Borchgrevink, 2007). Winter (2010) agrees, arguing that donors thus need to engage religious organizations. Reconciling donors' liberal values with support for traditional Afghan civil society institutions is a key goal moving forward, one stressed by the World Economic Forum's 2012 report on the future role of civil society, described in more detail below.

There's no doubt there are challenges reconciling the practices of traditional Afghan CSOs with Western notions of democracy and individual rights and freedoms. Most notably, traditional Afghan CSOs tend to exclude women from leadership positions and to promote traditional views of gender roles that bar women from activities beyond homemaking. Western funders and CSOs need to find ways to connect with the grassroots level of Afghan civil society while at the same time promoting a more inclusive view of women's roles.

Evaluating Civil Society in Afghanistan

The Signposting Success report on CSOs in Afghanistan (Davin, Malakooti, & Plane, 2012), conducted for the U.S. State Department, analyzes common attributes of successful CSOs compared with their less effective counterparts – important considerations in assessing the accomplishments and limitations of CSOs to date and their paths to success in the future.

Based on case studies of 40 CSOs working in human rights, media, anti-corruption, youth rights, women's rights and electoral monitoring, the study identifies seven common factors in effective CSOs in Afghanistan:

1. **Positioning:** A clear organizational plan, focus on a specific sector (e.g., women's rights) or a closely related set of sectors and a clear strategy for funding were advantages for many organizations, especially those working in areas in which large international NGOs have little presence.

2. **Organizational structure:** Strong leadership, concentrated on motivating and building staff capacity, creates a resilient, decentralized organizational model. Larger CSOs often are better positioned to retain staff over time and invest in building their capacity.

3. **Reputation:** Large international NGOs may be perceived as focusing on profit or on donor priorities that may not reflect local needs and concerns. Successful CSOs overcome this reputational risk by anchoring themselves in local communities, with connections to traditional organizations and the inclusion of community members in planning and carrying out programs. Alawi (2007) notes that communities themselves demonstrate substantial energy, initiative and interest in working with CSOs to address local issues.

4. **Financial sustainability:** Financial support is one of the primary worries for CSOs as the country transitions to greater independence. Successful organizations speak the language of donors, structuring proposals in ways donors expect and often require. But uncertainty about future funding from large international donors suggests a need for adaptability. Some successful organizations are able to generate some of their own revenue and to count on volunteerism. Decreasing reliance on single-source funding by turning to a larger number of smaller donors is another approach. Indeed many small CSOs have operated successfully on low budgets with little international funding (Alawi, 2007).

5. **Geographic coverage:** Coverage often is constrained by security, especially in rural areas. CSOs can expand their coverage areas by partnering with local organizations and individuals, efforts that in turn can enhance security. Relationships with media organizations and, more recently, use of social media help spread messages.

6. **Influence in advocacy:** The most effective CSOs nurture strategic partnerships with local elites, including media, politicians and respected community members, and coordinate with other organizations. Successful advocacy enhances a CSO's reputation for effectiveness, increasing its attractiveness to communities, partners and donors alike.

7. **Cooperation and networking:** Focusing on cooperation rather than competition, CSOs can enhance their impact by networking to share resources and strategies, helping each other build capacity, establish secure operations and communicate with the public.

The literature reviewed for this report identifies improvements by CSOs in each of these areas, but also continued challenges that are crucial for them to address in the transition period ahead.

II. Accomplishments to Date

Conditions since the fall of the Taliban in 2001 have been difficult. An active insurgency has created insecurity. National and international participants have struggled, at times contentiously, to build a functioning central government, improve infrastructure, deliver basic services, promote economic development and combat corruption. Yet a wide array of accomplishments has been achieved nonetheless, with substantial contributions by CSOs.

General Improvements and Service Delivery

International aid to Afghanistan, including support for CSOs, has encouraged sizable gains on several fronts. Per capita GDP increased nearly fivefold from 2001 to 2011, per capita income has increased threefold, the economy has averaged 10 percent annual growth since 2002 and life expectancy has increased by 15 years, with reductions in infant and maternal mortality alike (Steinberg, 2012).

Afghan government statistics indicate that access to primary health care has vaulted from 9 percent to 57 percent of the population. More than 8 million children (39 percent of them girls) are enrolled in school, 157,000 graduated from high school in 2011 and 41,000 have been trained in technical and vocational schools. Access to electricity has risen by 250 percent. Phone service, near zero in 2001, now covers 86 percent of residential areas. Irrigated land has increased from 1.2 to 1.8 million hectares, wheat production has more than doubled (from 1.5 to 3.2 million tons) and total horticultural area has grown from 75,000 to 120,000 hectares. Eight-thousand kilometers of national highways, regional highways and provincial roads have been built.[3]

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3 All figures are from the Afghan government's 2012 post-Tokyo Conference report, *Towards Self-Reliance: Strategic Vision for the Transformation Decade.*

Despite these improvements, Afghanistan remains a poor country with weak governance. Thirty-six percent of the population lives in poverty, 30 percent of school-aged children are not enrolled in school and infrastructure remains woefully underdeveloped. Extending past gains faces challenges in light of ebbing international attention and questions about future development aid as military involvement winds down.

Legal and Regulatory Environment

After the 2012 Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan, the Afghan government expressed its commitment to CSOs in the following statement:

> "*The Government recognizes the importance of involvement of civil society in implementation of the development strategy and looks forward to strengthen the working relationships during the transition and transformation periods. The civil society can play an important role in: delivery of services through the government and non–government programs; providing inputs in the policy formulation especially with regard to needs on the ground; strategically communicating the messages and content of the government programs to the society at the grass–roots level; and becoming the eyes and ears of the government by providing feedback on how the government programs are affecting the population.*"
>
> (Towards Self-Reliance: Strategic Vision for the Transformation Decade, p. 22)

Government efforts have included the creation of Community Development Councils (CDCs) in 2003 as part of the National Solidarity Programme and the 2005 Non-Governmental Organization Law, which established a legal framework for the registration and regulation of CSOs. Aid for carrying out local development projects is channeled through CDCs, currently estimated to number around 20,000, some of which are associated with officially registered CSOs, others not (Nijssen, 2012).

Nonetheless, these legal and regulatory improvements have streamlined funding and produced a clearer working environment for CSOs, the government and donors. The new regulatory system also is believed to have helped reduce corruption by weeding out organizations that were not truly non-profit and providing oversight of legitimate CSOs (Smeltz, 2010).

At the same time, increased regulation has raised questions about the extent of government involvement in CSOs and possible new avenues for corruption. Several studies indicate low trust in government and wariness about government interference among civil society representatives (see Section III). Highly regulated CSOs may find it harder to act as neutral liaisons between Afghan citizens and the government and to criticize the government's provision of services, accountability or transparency, all critical functions of civil society (Battiston, 2011).

Howell and Lind (2009) suggest that aid to the Afghan government currently is not "sowing the seed for the establishment of a deliberative, more politically engaged civil society. Ironically, the co-option of civil society into state-building strategies in Afghanistan as a way of strengthening the state has actually undermined the legitimacy of civil society and contributed to negative popular attitudes of NGOs" (p. 732).

In a more positive take, the World Economic Forum's (2013) report on the future role of civil society suggests a new paradigm in which government, civil society and businesses are merging into a complex, overlapping network, where coordination across institutions leads to more collaboration, understanding and targeted activity. If handled properly, the intertwining of government and CSOs thus could provide greater benefits to Afghan citizens, overcoming concerns about corruption and conflicting interests. However, before such benefits might be realized, difficulties must be resolved, widespread distrust of government among them.

While challenges remain, the overall legal and regulatory environment for CSOs has improved. Registration has provided CSOs with greater perceived legitimacy and a more streamlined process to obtain funding. A major goal of the I-PACS II program has been to further build a "legal enabling environment that protects and supports civil society" (USAID, 2013, p. 8).

CSOs cannot become complacent. According to the NGO Law Monitor, the Afghan government has proposed amendments to its NGO law that would restrict the formation, activities and funding of CSOs (International Center for Not-for-Profit Law, 2013). Therefore it is vital that CSOs and donors continue to press the case for a more enabling environment, not an unduly restrictive one.

Mass Media

Assisted by CSOs and international donors, Afghanistan has developed a functioning independent media, able to act as a government watchdog, inform Afghans on important topics, provoke social debate and help increase civic engagement. Today more than eight in 10 Afghans say radio or television is their main source of information (USAID, 2013).

From virtual non-existence in 2001, the country has seen the birth of a "commercially profitable, increasingly professional media that's playing a role in cultural and political life" (BBC, 2012). A Tawanmandi Initiative (2011) study described media as one of the most active civil society sectors. And it's one that often has worked closely with other CSOs to highlight social issues.

Problems exist within this nascent industry. The BBC report points out that there currently is no national media outlet capable of providing all Afghans with a commonly accepted source of information. While the

quantity of new media organizations is high, the Tawanmandi report says quality often is lacking. Most outlets are local, and many are seen as serving political, religious or other agendas. Many experience pressure to self-censor given their dependence on local benefactors and fear of retaliation from political leaders, local commanders and others.

The development of media in Afghanistan has been heavily dependent on foreign donors, support that may decrease sharply after 2014. Unless replaced by other funding sources, this could lessen the sector's viability and influence during the transformation decade, a period in which it may be needed most.

Women's Rights and Human Rights

The CSO sector focused on human rights in general, and women's rights in particular, has grown dramatically, as has women's participation in CSOs (Tawanmandi Initiative, 2011; USAID, 2011). Women's CSOs have been seen by USAID and the Tawanmandi mapping exercise as among the most effective at engaging and working with the government on their issues of concern, in contrast with frequently contentious relationships between government and CSOs in other sectors.

Women remain underrepresented in CSOs and government alike (they now hold 27 percent of seats in the national parliament). Nonetheless, in evidence of progress, nearly half of participants in the I-PACS II program are run by women or focus on women's issues (USAID, 2012). (See Sections III and IV for details on the limitations women face now and in the coming years.)

Beyond women's rights, CSOs in Afghanistan have made progress advancing broader human rights issues, including increasing awareness and advocacy efforts for the disabled, ethnic and religious minorities and youth (Tawanmandi Initiative, 2011).

Elections

While substantial problems existed, Afghanistan's presidential elections in 2004 and 2009, and parliamentary elections in 2005 and 2010, represent important milestones in the country's development. These efforts benefited from guidance and assistance from CSOs in the form of voter education and mobilization efforts, consultation with the Independent Election Commission (IEC) and election-day observation (Democracy International, 2010).

The presidential election in 2014 will be another important test of Afghan democracy, with implications for the legitimacy of the next government and the level of support the international community will be willing to provide in the future (see Section IV). As in the past, support and assistance from CSOs dedicated to increasing democratic participation should increase the chances of success in this fundamental exercise of self-governance.

III. Limitations and Challenges

Counterpart's 2010 review noted three main difficulties CSOs faced: limited capacity, security concerns and a clouded image. (Funding, clearly, was and continues to be another.) More recent reports, outlined in the following section, indicate that these challenges, as well as others, remain to be addressed in the transition era.

Dependence on Foreign Aid

The overwhelming amount of foreign aid that has poured into Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban has both addressed problems and created them. The aid has been integral in helping Afghans and their government recover and rebuild, but it has also created a high level of dependency on a continued flow of outside assistance.

Not only CSOs but the Afghan government itself is reliant on this assistance. Foreign aid nearly equals the country's nominal GDP and accounts for more than 90 percent of government's expenditures (Hogg, Nassif, Osorio, Byrd, & Beath, 2013). Thirty percent of government revenue comes from customs and import duties, most of which is closely tied to foreign aid and the operation of international NGOs.

NGOs and CSOs

Much of the initial international aid provided to Afghanistan was funneled through international NGOs, a preference for many donor organizations. But, as noted, these international NGOs have focused primarily on service delivery, especially in the initial years of working in the country,[4] sometimes without full assessment of local needs.

According to Winter (2010), donors have tended to conflate NGOs and CSOs, believing that support for international NGOs translates into support for all Afghan civil society. But the Tawanmandi report finds that Afghan CSOs see themselves alone as grassroots, locally focused voluntary organizations, while often viewing international NGOs as corrupt and/or profit-driven.

Echoing this, some funders have worried that CSOs may succeed on the basis of their grant-writing skills, rather than their results (Tawanmandi Initiative, 2011). Representatives of CSOs, in turn, worry that a disproportionate amount of government funding is based on political considerations or connections, rather than merit (Tawanmandi Initiative, 2011).

Beyond perceived profit motive, donors are often seen as having military or strategic goals in mind as well as humanitarian aims based on assessment of actual needs (Winter, 2010). Howell and Lind (2010) call this the "securitization of aid and development," subordinating aid

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4 No doubt these services have been sorely needed. Nonetheless, the focus on service delivery has left other vital aspects of civil society not prioritized.

goals to those of security interests. They point to the creation of U.S. Provincial Reconstruction Teams – mixed civilian-military units that carry out quick development projects after securing an area – as evidence of this convergence.

The perceived legitimacy of international NGOs and of CSOs in Afghanistan is impacted by these views (Van den Boogaard, 2011). International NGOs have a poor reputation among Afghan citizens and Afghan CSOs (Smeltz, 2010). Many Afghan CSOs actively try to distance themselves from NGOs. But Afghan CSOs themselves are not broadly seen as effective; the Asia Foundation (2012) found tepid public confidence in Afghan and international NGOs alike (54 and 53 percent, respectively). And only about a quarter of Afghans surveyed were confident in the abilities of NGO staff and donors to serve the public interest.

Maximal transparency and accountability among international NGOs, and CSOs more generally, could enhance their reputations, bolstering confidence that money is being spent honestly and effectively on worthwhile endeavors. In addition, enhanced coordination and collaboration between larger NGOs and smaller CSOs would combine the resources and strength of the former with the local approach of the latter (see Section IV).

Coordination and Networking
Large numbers of CSOs have worked in Afghanistan since 2001, with many concentrating on the same sector or working in the same region. Without coordination and cooperation, these overlaps can lead to redundancies and inefficiency.

One of the main recommendations of the Tawanmandi Initiative's (2011) mapping of CSOs was to foster coordination through regional and provincial networks, and USAID has prioritized funding for these kinds of networks. Increasing coordination among CSOs will most directly improve advocacy efforts, resource sharing and the ability to learn from each other's strengths and specializations (Davin, Malakooti, & Plane, 2012).

Geographic Reach
Coverage has been a prime challenge for CSOs in Afghanistan. Seventy-five percent of the population lives in rural areas, yet CSOs are located and mainly operate in urban centers, where needs and sensibilities can differ from those in the countryside.

Nearly all major international and Afghan CSOs have their headquarters in Kabul. As one civil society representative commented, "the forces of conservatism are much more in the provinces – unlike Kabul where you are preaching to the converted" (Tawanmandi Initiative, 2011, p. 25).

The problem is not particular to CSOs; the local ethnic and kinship ties at the heart of Afghan society also challenge central governance. Indeed the Kabul-based government's diminished influence away from urban centers contributes to the administrative and security challenges that make it difficult for CSOs to operate in rural areas. As Howell and Lind (2009) point out, the geographic distribution of aid often reflects military and security-based considerations as well as political ones, pushing aid patterns away from a purely needs-based model.

Limited CSO Capacity

Despite major gains, a great deal of room remains for improving the capacity of Afghan CSOs. It's a main area of concern among CSOs themselves; according to Winter (2010), the key request among these organizations was for help in capacity development. The lack of adequate skills, management structures and procedures informed the decision to focus I-PACS II on training, technical assistance and grants to build CSOs' capacity (USAID, 2013).

Specific capacity limitations are varied, ranging from shortages of office space to a lack of knowledge of how to engage in advocacy activities. Comprehensively covered in the Tawanmandi Initiative's (2011) mapping of CSOs, these include deficiencies in:

→ Offices, meeting rooms, computers and internet facilities

→ Administrative systems

→ Management plans

→ Financial plans and fiscal management

→ Communication and advocacy strategies

→ Proposal writing

→ Navigating the legal system

→ Coordination with other CSOs

There is a critical need to build an enabling environment for CSOs by promoting collaboration among stakeholders to improve accountability, legislative safeguards and operational capacity (Tawanmandi Initiative, 2011). For example, government officials, lawmakers, the private sector, international NGOs and Afghan CSOs can work together to craft legislative reforms that expand civic space, decrease obstacles for civic association and increase gender sensitivity and integration. They also can pursue initiatives providing opportunities for civil and public servants to learn about CSOs and improve collaboration with them, as outlined in the following section on government capacity.

Limited Government Capacity

As the World Bank's report on transition in Afghanistan emphasizes, it's not just the capacity of CSOs that needs to grow, but the capacity of the Afghan government as well (Hogg et al., 2013). The Afghan civil service requires improved training and efficiency; in government more broadly, corruption needs to be curbed and security and economic opportunity have to be enhanced. These, in turn, should benefit CSOs through improved flow of funds, better coordination, a more permissive operating environment and a renewed ability to focus on the country's most pressing civic needs.

Counterpart International officials working in Afghanistan note that strengthening CSO capacity also requires complementary initiatives to develop government's ability to work with CSOs. The Afghan government itself likewise recognizes this deficit (Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2012). Support can be provided directly, by organizing training activities; or by promoting government collaboration with CSOs more generally. For example, Afghan CSOs and government officials alike can benefit from assistance with methods and mechanisms to improve transparency, accountability, citizen discourse and public access to information.

There also is a need to encourage collaboration between Afghan government agencies and CSOs on national strategies and policy. This can include promoting and facilitating the creation of formal and informal channels for cooperation and communication, such as standing committees in ministries and parliament, and the production of regular briefing papers on development issues for general distribution.

Counterpart officials also suggest developing a set of outreach activities that help to bring the government in closer contact with CSOs. This could include district- and province-level tours, organizational visits and the creation of locally based offices to work with constituent communities.

Government Corruption, Accountability and Transparency

Corruption, as noted, is a persistent problem and source of public frustration. The country is tied for last place (with North Korea and Somalia) out of 176 countries in Transparency International's 2012 Corruption Perception Index. Lack of transparency and accountability exist both in government and within CSOs themselves.

At the Tokyo Conference, CSOs pointed to corruption as the source of weak governance and an ineffective judiciary alike (Afghan Civil Society, 2012). All major recent reports note slow if any progress combatting corruption; the Tawanmandi Initiative (2011) found anti-corruption to be by far the least developed and least effective sector it investigated. The Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (2012) noted numerous instances of government corruption.

CSOs have shown a general inability to challenge the government on this issue. Doing so risks retaliation in a relationship that already often is rocky. Some CSOs feel they have been treated as antagonists and politically marginalized; at the same time, government officials feel they have been unfairly criticized without any suggestions for constructive solutions (Tawanmandi Initiative, 2011).

Given these difficulties, civil society participants at a 2013 Heinrich Böll Institute conference suggested focusing anti-corruption efforts more on awareness and reduction than on accusation and punishment. A positive focus on strengthening transparency and accountability, rather than a punitive one, may be more effective in getting political elites on board.

CSO Corruption, Accountability and Transparency

As noted, corruption also is a problem within CSOs themselves. Various sources point to the presence of corrupt practices within the field, as well as a more general lack of monitoring and evaluation (e.g., Mohib & Mohib, 2012; Tawanmandi Initiative, 2011; Winter, 2010). Some progress was made via the Non-Governmental Organization Act in 2005, requiring formal registration with the Ministry of Economy in order to receive donor funds. As a further step, the Tawanmandi report recommends increased monitoring of CSO activities to ensure quality of work and lack of corruption.

Counterpart International's officials in Afghanistan note that promoting accountability is essential to help structure the evolving relationships among CSOs, the government and other stakeholders. Afghan CSOs confront multiple, overlapping obligations, including accountability to donors, governments and foundations; to their constituencies and beneficiaries; to their missions, values and staff; and to their CSO peers.

Beyond a shared understanding of accountability is the need for its practical application. Codes of conduct and participatory reviews of Afghan CSOs can strengthen communication among constituencies and organization representatives, encouraging agreement on a common set of ethics, norms and standards for operations. International NGOs can strengthen their own accountability and that of their partners by creating representative advisory boards to oversee their work with national constituents.

Civic Engagement

CSOs are effective only to the extent that space for civic participation is available or can be created. As Counterpart officials in Afghanistan point out, if participation is not collective, representative and to some extent initiated by Afghans themselves, efforts will be one-sided and result in top-down activities with little buy-in from the groups they are intended to involve.

There are different entry points throughout the policy process to create and increase the degree of collective civic participation in Afghanistan. These largely follow the stages of designing policy-making goals based on Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) (see Howell & Lind, 2009, for details on the ANDS). For each, the main objective is to establish, foster and formalize self-sustaining channels for engagement.

Specifically, to create optimal space for civic engagement, it's suggested that CSOs focus on:

→ Organizing periodic meetings on national development and policy topics. These could be institutionalized at the municipal, regional and national levels.

→ Inviting CSOs to participate in the design of reform initiatives to achieve ANDS goals.

→ Encouraging Afghan CSOs and their networks to become involved in the monitoring and oversight of sector-specific and cross-sector policies.

→ Establishing channels to keep CSOs and their constituents informed on budgetary and policy decisions, for example via public hearings and periodic briefings to systematize the disclosure of budgets.

→ Promoting the creation of public institutions mandated to work with CSOs, and formal channels for state-civil society relations to legitimize the role of Afghan CSOs in government decisions.

→ Supporting reforms aimed at making national political systems more inclusive and transparent.

→ Encouraging the adoption of conflict resolution and mediation models, such as ombudspersons, to mitigate potential conflicts.

Security

Insecurity continues to be a major problem for Afghan CSOs, especially in rural areas where military forces are more thinly spread and the Taliban insurgency has been active. Attacks on CSO workers and threats by armed insurgents if CSOs are "interfering" in local communities are far too common. Many workers face daily threats to their security, making it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to carry out activities in some areas of the country. Indeed, the Integrated Regional Information Network, a service of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, rates Afghanistan as the world's most dangerous place for aid workers (Integrated Regional Information Network, 2013). As such, the drawdown of international forces in 2014 is a chief worry (see Section IV).

While security is out of the hands of CSOs, in many cases it's a precondition for their ability to accomplish their goals. The 2011 impact assessment of the Counterpart-Support to the Electoral Process (STEP) program found that local security and living conditions is a prime independent predictor of success in training on democratic values and civic engagement.

Security also is closely related to the chances of holding free and fair elections in 2014, crucial to the perceived legitimacy of the new government. As noted by the Heinrich Böll Institute, women's participation in the 2014 elections is particularly at risk if security is absent.

Women's Participation, Gender Integration and Domestic Violence

As in other areas, there has been considerable progress – but with many as yet unmet needs – in addressing women's rights. Such rights still are lacking in much of the country. Women are underrepresented in leadership positions, lack access to women's health care, face restricted access to education and are limited in their freedom of movement and economic opportunity. Civil society representatives note that violence against women is common and an especially important area for CSOs to address (Heinrich Böll Institute, 2013).

As on-the-ground workers for Counterpart International report, despite a July 2009 law banning violence against women, women's physical security and their rights more broadly continue to be undermined. Challenges include inconsistent and weak law enforcement, widespread gender discrimination, fear of abuse and corruption in the judicial system.

According to the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (2013): "Despite a robust framework for the guarantee of Afghan women's rights as enshrined in the Constitution and included in the National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), both endorsed by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, most women in Afghanistan do not enjoy the most fundamental rights or have access to the most basic of services."

The case of the public beating of a woman for allegedly eloping – shown on private TV stations in Kabul – underscored the issue (Integrated Regional Information Network, 2010). In another of many examples, according to the governor of Ghor province, Mohammad Iqbal Munib, in January 2013 domestic violence forced two young women to flee their homes. A week later they were arrested in neighboring Herat province and sent back to their village (Integrated Regional Information Network, 2010).

For these reasons, many civil society programs in Afghanistan, I-PACS II among them, include a specific focus on women's rights, increasing

the participation of women in civil society, and seeking to expand the number of women in leadership positions (USAID, 2011). Regardless, the development of women's rights, in a manner sensitive to traditional values, remains one of the most important tasks for CSOs in the transformation decade ahead.

IV. Looking Forward: 2014 and the Transformation Decade

The 2014 presidential election and the accompanying transition of security from the international community to the Afghan government have created significant anticipation and anxiety. The success of this transition will depend a great deal on the strength of Afghan civil society and the extent to which the international community continues to support its efforts.

International funding for civil society in Afghanistan is on the decline and expected to decrease further with the lessening of an international presence in the country. Along with worries about financial sustainability, insecurity and capacity limitations likely will continue to be CSOs' prime concerns moving toward the transition, and may well be exacerbated as the United States and other international actors reduce their presence in Afghanistan.

Before examining specific areas of concern about the upcoming transition in Afghanistan, it's useful to summarize the lessons learned from other transitional countries that also experienced declining international support – Mozambique, Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste (Nijssen, 2012). Echoing several key takeaways from the Signposting Success report summarized in Section I, among the most important recommendations are:

→ Diversify funding sources, so that CSOs are less dependent on key international stakeholders for funds and capacity building.

→ Increase coordination and collaboration among CSOs, which better enables coherent and complementary activities. The creation of national umbrella organizations is one way to encourage greater cooperation and networking.

→ Integrate women, who remain underrepresented in CSOs and are crucial to the success of Afghan civil society.

→ Enhance understanding and awareness of traditional and informal civil society groups so that they can become more fully engaged with registered CSOs, donors and agencies. Rural residents especially prefer indigenous forms of civil society; perceived legitimacy through local connections should foster greater success by CSOs in achieving their goals.

→ Consider simplifying funding requirements. Complex funding requirements can result in a concentration of financial support among only the few sophisticated international NGOs and Afghan CSOs with experience attracting grants.

These lessons resonate in the current situation in Afghanistan and therefore merit consideration in how best to advance civil society in the years ahead, as discussed in the following section.

The Tokyo Conference and the Future of Funding

The main focus of the Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan in 2012 was to plan for the "transformation decade" after the 2014 transition of power. Civil society was a prominent topic in panels, with CSOs represented. Conferees adopted the Mutual Accountability Framework, which promises continued support from the international community provided that the Afghan government is held accountable for achieving development goals.

A key topic at the conference, funding from the United States and other countries, undoubtedly is the most pressing issue for Afghan CSOs (Friedman, Haqbeen, & Grossman, 2012). Gains may be lost and further advances put at risk without continued, sufficient investment from the international community.

The Afghan government and CSOs' reliance on foreign aid has resulted in a "rentier" state based on external resources (Battiston, 2011; Howell & Lind, 2009). In a recent speech at the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), Scott Worden, senior policy advisor in the Office of Afghanistan and Pakistan Affairs at USAID, highlighted Afghans' concerns about donor nations losing interest or giving up on the country (Gienger, 2013). Other sources (e.g., Asia Foundation, USIP and BBC) concur that decreased funding is by far the biggest worry, shared by Afghan citizens, CSOs and the government alike.

There is reason for this concern. Relative to other countries, foreign aid to Afghanistan already is low, averaging $57 per capita in the first two years after the Taliban were overthrown, compared with $679 and $526 per capita in the initial years of reconstruction for Bosnia and Kosovo, respectively (Howell & Lind, 2009). According to D'Souza (2013), U.S. funding to support democracy, governance and civil society in Afghanistan fell by more than half from 2010 to 2011, from $231 to $93 million (Nijssen, 2012).

U.S. expenditures have been focused on military operations rather than development aid. As of 2011, $286 billion (85 percent of total expenditures) had been spent on military needs vs. $30 billion (9 percent) on development projects (Battiston, 2011). The balance likely will shift toward development as military involvement winds down, but with no assurance of the absolute level of development aid.

According to the Tawanmandi Initiative's (2012) report, CSOs are not equally worried. Larger and better-established organizations, as well as small ones not dependent on foreign donors, are less concerned about the transition. Mid-sized CSOs with heavy dependence on donor funding are the most anxious about their viability in the years to come.

One of Nijssen's (2012) main recommendations is that CSOs establish greater financial independence. For example, the Aga Khan Foundation's programs have had some success in training smaller Afghan-based CSOs to raise funds by improving their proposal-writing skills, building relations with possible donors and creating community development councils (Aga Khan Foundation Afghanistan, 2011). Nijssen also urges simplifying the grant application process, which currently favors larger organizations that are better-versed in navigating the funding system (see also Alawai, 2007).

Funding, of course, falls short without the capacity to use it, and, as discussed above, current capacity problems are expected to continue to need corrective action, through training, improved management and enhanced monitoring and evaluation processes.

Security and Reconciliation

Security, naturally, is another key element in the future of CSO operations. There is preliminary evidence that the drawdown of international forces in Afghanistan is emboldening insurgents to carry out attacks on Afghan forces (Nordland & Sahak, 2013). On-and-off movement toward peace talks, on the other hand, indicates a possible avenue of progress. Either way, the indeterminate security situation in 2014 and beyond is at the forefront of the country's concerns.

Afghan civil society has generally been excluded from taking part in the peace process, most notably the 2010 Peace Jirga in Kabul and the subsequent High Peace Council (Gossman, 2011). Instead, high-level talks have included the U.S. government, Afghan government and armed groups. Afghan CSOs made it known after the Tokyo Conference that they support reconciliation with the Taliban, but have not yet been involved to any significant degree in a peace process.

The involvement of Afghan civil society is important in forging a lasting peace. As position papers by the USIP and Peaceworks (Schirch, 2011; Schirch, Rafiee, Sakhi, & Wardak, 2011) point out, a negotiated settlement requires national consensus, including non-combatants whose interests are best represented by civil society groups.

The USIP suggests that the peace process engage local leaders in order to build public support for reconciliation. It urges four steps for involving civil society in the process, including direct participation by civil society organizations in negotiations, a national civil society assembly, representation for civil society at the national negotiating table and a public referendum on a final agreement.

Accountability and Transparency

Among other concerns, progress improving government transparency and accountability has been slow, with citizens' frustrations well documented. The position paper by CSOs following the Tokyo Conference marked this area as one in need of significant improvement (Afghan Civil Society, 2012). As the government assumes greater responsibility and power after the transition, CSOs' ability to hold the government accountable will become even more essential.

The Afghan government has committed itself to greater transparency and accountability through the Mutual Accountability Framework. But concrete actions are crucial. To ensure progress, CSOs will need to increase their monitoring activities and to engage with the public to foster demand for transparency, accountability and fair dealing. Sector specialization among CSOs may be helpful in achieving these goals by alerting key stakeholders to problems. Independent media also will be crucial in keeping the public informed about concerns and progress in this area.

The 2014 Elections

Several of the important factors already mentioned – security, funding and capacity – are closely tied to the 2014 elections. While most of the focus has been on the security transition, Andrew Wilder (2013), president of USIP, and Scott Worden, of USAID, stress the equal importance of political transition.

A credible election and a successful change of administration will legitimize the resulting civilian government and its authority to direct the armed forces and other institutions of power.

Conversely, a failed election may negatively impact the willingness of international donors to continue to support the Afghan economy, government and civil society.

A policy paper based on workshops with Afghan CSOs in November 2012 and March 2013 notes the importance of a peaceful and stable transition of power as a "litmus test of Afghanistan's progress" (Heinrich Böll Institute, 2013). Afghan CSOs have a role to play, by helping to monitor the election, encouraging participation, and, along with the Independent Election Commission, operating an impartial election complaints mechanism.

Further on civil society's role, Wilder (2013) recommends that CSOs actively support civic education efforts in advance of the 2014 election in order to educate voters (especially women), generate civic "demand" for the elections and promote transparency and accountability, all of which will be important in international perceptions of the new government's legitimacy. Even beyond specific election-related education efforts, there is a great need for civic education efforts focused on the roles and functions of civil society.

According to a USIP study of Afghan public perceptions of the electoral process, Afghans are less concerned about the process than are international observers, and more concerned with the outcome (Coburn & Larson, 2013). Afghans do object to fraud and lack of security in elections, but it's most important from their perspective for elections to promote greater inclusiveness, act as a symbol of breaking from past corrupt regimes and address the more immediate requirements of the transition (Coburn & Larson, 2013). Again, CSOs can assist.

Work laying the foundation for an effective political transition is under way. In April, a network of 25 civil society organizations provided their recommendations for ensuring a credible election in 2014 (United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, 2013). And the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and the UN Development Programme's Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow II project are actively building capacity and providing technical assistance to Afghan institutions involved in the electoral process (United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, 2013).

Women's Rights and Youth Participation

As noted in Section II, women's rights and participation is an area in which CSOs have been active, influential and successful. It continues to be the focus of many funding organizations and CSOs, and the Afghan government has noted its progress expanding women's rights and participation in government. Sustained and expanded efforts will be necessary to solidify the gains made and produce further progress.

For instance, CSOs argue that the language contained in the Tokyo Declaration on women's rights needs improvement, saying it lacks specific benchmarks for improvement (Afghan Civil Society, 2012).

USAID continues to prioritize women's rights, and the Signposting Success report notes that it's a sector with ample opportunities for success. But as the Tawanmandi Initiative's mapping exercise found, promoting women's rights is particularly difficult in rural areas, so future programs in this sector will need to work to expand their geographic reach.

Counterpart International's Afghan experts note that many CSO projects are designed in a way that allows donors and recipients to "tick the gender box" without substantively incorporating gender integration strategies. As well as being ineffective, such approaches may contribute to "gender fatigue," creating an opportunity for stakeholders with other interests to point to a perceived imbalance in the relative amount of resources being directed toward women. This can undermine any gains made in gender integration and contribute to its being seen as a Western-imposed notion.

Successful efforts depend on the input of women themselves. It's necessary to create space for women to be heard across different levels within the government, civil society and their own communities, recognizing that women in more traditional societies such as Afghanistan often have very different ways of communicating in comparison to men (see Hassan & Silong, 2008). While many Afghan women may not have the experience or expertise to articulate issues in technical terms, they often communicate issues pertinent to projects in experiential terms, and this information can be valuable and relevant to meeting overall project objectives.

Work also remains to be done to create opportunities for women's voices to be heard in high-level deliberations in peace, reconciliation and state building. Counterpart officials suggest CSOs should push to strengthen women's participation in the National Consultative Peace Jirga, as well as strongly support women's effective participation in national and international conferences. CSOs also can play a role in encouraging women's active participation in elections, providing them with current information on issues and referring them to the appropriate authorities to address any concerns.

Separately, Scott Worden of USAID (Gienger, 2013) has cited evidence that youth are becoming more active in Afghan civil society, taking up staff and leadership positions within CSOs as a means to change the lack of economic opportunities they and others face. According to Mohib and Mohib (2012), "Educated youths, mainly residing in urban areas, make up a cadre of young intellectuals and professionals that populate a large part of the public and private sector, from Afghan media, governmental bureaucracy, and diplomatic circles to, most importantly, civil society."

As in many developing countries, young people make up a large share of Afghanistan's population (53 percent of Afghans are younger than age 18, per UNICEF). The extent to which CSOs are able to involve young Afghans in their organizations, and reach out to youth with their programs, likely will impact their sustainability in the years ahead, as the country moves toward greater reliance on its own people and resources.

Conclusion

The reports cited in this review underscore the continued, substantial challenges facing civil society organizations in Afghanistan, but also take note of progress to date, and, most important, point to concrete measures by which CSOs operating in Afghanistan can secure their future in the transformation decade ahead. International donors and NGOs, the Afghan government and Afghan CSOs themselves all have crucial roles to play. More diversified funding, effective capacity building, enlightened oversight, improved transparency and accountability, enhanced networking among organizations, effective partnerships with local leaders and traditional organizations and broader communications outreach to the Afghan public all are among the steps toward sustainability for Afghan CSOs, and through their efforts, progress in supporting the development of a vibrant, inclusive and effective civil society in Afghanistan.

B Topline Survey Results

This survey was conducted Aug. 25-Sept. 14, 2013, through interviews with senior staff members at a random sample of 483 civil society organizations (CSOs) in Afghanistan, including re-interviews with 89 I-PACS-affiliated CSOs previously interviewed in 2010. Field work was carried out by the Afghan Center for Socio-Economic Research in Kabul, with sampling, field work oversight and data tabulation by D3 Systems of Vienna, Va., and sample design, questionnaire design, data analysis and report writing by Langer Research Associates of New York, N.Y.

In the tables below, "All" refers to all CSOs sampled in this survey, from 4,632 such organizations listed as registered with the Afghan government. "I-PACS" refers to CSOs affiliated with the I-PACS program that were interviewed in 2010 and re-interviewed for this survey. Results for the full sample have a 4.5-point margin of sampling error. See Appendix C, Methodology, for details.

Asterisks in numerical columns signify less than 0.5 percent.

1. What type of association, union or organization are you?

	2013		2010
	All	I-PACS	I-PACS
Union NET	26	25	21
Teachers' union	3	2	4
Women's union	15	18	17
Student union	1	1	0
Trade union	3	1	0
Service union	*	0	NA
Farmers/agricultural union	3	1	NA
Charity union	2	1	NA

	2013		2010
	All	**I-PACS**	**I-PACS**
Youth association	6	2	4
Community association/organization	24	31	21
CSO support organization	12	11	27
Shura NET	7	4	3
Tribal shura	5	2	2
Elders' shura	*	2	1
Peace shura	1	0	0
Ulema/religious shura	1	0	0
Community Development Committee	5	3	3
Education committee/council	5	4	2
Association of professionals	3	1	3
Culture/sports organization	3	3	10
Microfinance organization	*	0	0
Social movement	1	2	0
Political movement	0	0	0
Support/defense of journalists' rights/media organization	1	3	2
Services provider organization for disabled persons	1	3	0
Mine action organization	*	1	1
Stock and animal breeding union	*	0	0
Human rights organization	1	0	NA
Independent Association of Afghan Lawyers	1	2	NA
No opinion	1	1	0

2. What year was the organization established?

	Pre-2001	**2001-05**	**2006-10**	**2011-13**
2013 All	8	15	47	29
I-PACS	20	47	30	2

3. What does your organization do? (MULTIPLE RESPONSE)

	2013		2010
	All	**I-PACS**	**I-PACS**
Promote gender equality/integration	57	62	52
Promote rights of minorities	39	49	12
Promote rights of the disabled	35	37	22
Strengthen independent media	27	29	21
Implement religious activities (incl. educ.)	20	22	9
Promote political party development	16	17	4
Coordinate other organizations	27	36	17
Protect environment/ecology	31	26	22
Provide voter/civic education	40	38	27
Conflict resolution	39	38	16
Promote culture/science/history/arts/sports	38	31	36
Education NET	46	51	28
Education/provision of educational materials	38	38	20
Build/rehabilitate schools/educ. facilities	26	21	15
Health NET	33	22	18
Provide health services/education	28	19	13
Build/rehabilitate health clinics/hospitals	17	8	4
Water/irrigation NET	17	12	12
Build/rehabilitate drinking water/sanitation infrastructure	13	8	9
Operate drinking water systems/deliver water	11	9	6
Build/rehabilitate irrigation systems	10	7	6
Operate irrigation systems	9	8	6
Housing/roads/electricity NET	12	11	7
Build/rehabilitate housing	7	6	2
Build/rehabilitate roads	8	7	3
Build/rehabilitate electricity supply networks and facilities	7	4	1
Deliver food	14	8	8
Develop agriculture	25	15	12
Develop alternative livelihood/promote income generation/microcredit	10	7	8
Promote youth programs	52	43	25

| | 2013 | | 2010 |
	All	**I-PACS**	**I-PACS**
Influence policy development	21	26	NA
Mining activities	3	4	1
Capacity building	50	44	4
Skills/vocational training	1	0	NA
Training program for women	2	4	NA
Children's support	*	0	NA
Solidarity	*	0	NA
Other	0	0	1

NET number of activities per organization:

	None	**One**	**Two-three**	**Four-five**	**Six-ten**	**>Ten**	**Mean**	**Median**
2013 All	1	9	21	16	30	24	7.19	6.00
I-PACS	0	4	22	20	36	17	6.72	6.00
2010 I-PACS	0	27	30	20	17	6	3.84	3.00

4. Does your organization perform work at the community level, do you provide support to other organizations that do community-level work, do you do both of these, or neither of these?

	Community level	**Support other organizations**	**Both**	**Neither**	**No opinion**
2013 All	64	7	27	*	2
I-PACS	55	20	24	0	1

5. Which of these is your organization's chief focus: providing services to those in need; providing advocacy on issues of concern or on behalf of a particular group; providing a social forum; taking a role in policy development; promoting or addressing religious issues; or something else?

	Services	**Advocacy**	**Social forum**	**Policy**	**Religious issues**	**Something else**	**No opinion**
2013 All	74	11	10	1	2	2	*
I-PACS	65	11	18	2	1	2	0

6. Now I will read you a statement: A women's organization is an organization whose mission focuses primarily on women's issues. Is your organization a women's organization?

	Yes	**No**	**No opinion**
2013 All	72	28	0
I-PACS	60	40	0
2010 I-PACS	67	30	2

7. A youth organization is an organization whose mission focuses primarily on youth issues. Is your organization a youth organization, or not?

	Yes	No
2013 All	81	19
I-PACS	81	19

8. How many projects are currently underway?

	None	One	Two	Three or more
2013 All	32	24	17	27
I-PACS	25	13	19	43
2010 I-PACS	31	24	13	31

9. How many projects have been completed in the past 12 months?

	None	One	Two	Three or more
2013 All	23	29	20	28
I-PACS	15	18	18	49
2010 I-PACS	25	18	21	36

10. Which of the following groups of people benefit from this organization's current activities or projects? (MULTIPLE RESPONSE)

	2013		2010
	All	I-PACS	I-PACS
Youth	86	89	44
The elderly	49	54	16
Women	81	80	60
The poor	67	66	20
Veterans/retired military	13	16	3
Disabled	46	45	11
Returnees/internally displaced persons	40	36	9
Government employees	20	25	9
Whole communities/all members in the community	68	73	55
Members of the organization	43	53	7
Other	NA	NA	0
No opinion	2	0	0

11. And how about these other groups – do any of these following groups of people benefit from this organization's current activities or projects? (MULTIPLE RESPONSE)

	2013	
	All	I-PACS
Infants/children	33	35
Sick people	38	46
Those in need of literacy/other education	65	64
Those in need of job skills	53	52
Farmers	36	25
People trying to start small businesses	22	30
Policy makers – local	36	51
Policy makers – national	27	44
Other	*	1
No opinion	10	6

12. How successful would you say your organization has been in achieving its goals in the past three years – very successful, somewhat successful, not so successful or not at all successful?

	Successful			Not successful			
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Not so	Not at all	No opinion
2013 All	94	60	34	4	4	1	1
I-PACS	97	63	34	3	3	0	0

13. How many people benefit from the on-going projects or activities of this organization – either directly or indirectly?

	<100	100-500	501-1,000	1,001-5,000	>5,000	No opinion
2013 All	15	21	15	20	26	3
I-PACS	11	11	8	29	39	1
2010 I-PACS	9	22	11	20	26	11

14. How many offices, including main and site offices, does the organization have?

	One	Two	Three-five	Six or more	No opinion
2013 All	60	22	11	6	0
I-PACS	43	26	22	9	0
2010 I-PACS	26	15	26	24	10

15. And where are they located?

Main office (IF ORGANIZATION HAS ONE OR MORE OFFICES):

	2013		2010			2013		2010
	All	I-PACS	I-PACS		All	I-PACS	I-PACS
Kabul	61	55	63	Balkh	7	6	5
Kapisa	1	0	0	Samangan	1	2	4
Parwan	1	0	0	Jawzjan	1	0	2
Wardak	1	0	0	Sari Pul	*	0	0
Logar	*	0	0	Faryab	1	6	0
Ghazni	1	4	2	Badghis	1	0	0
Paktia	0	0	0	Herat	5	6	5
Paktika	*	0	0	Farah	*	1	0
Khost	*	0	0	Nimroz	*	0	0
Nangarhar	4	6	9	Helmand	1	0	0
Laghman	1	1	0	Kandahar	2	1	0
Kunar	1	2	2	Zabul	0	0	0
Nuristan	0	0	0	Uruzgan	0	0	0
Badakhshan	1	0	4	Ghor	1	2	0
Takhar	*	0	0	Bamiyan	2	1	0
Baghlan	1	2	4	Panjshir	1	0	0
Kunduz	1	4	2	Daykundi	1	0	0

Site offices (IF ORGANIZATION HAS MORE THAN ONE OFFICE) (MULTIPLE RESPONSE):

	2013		2010			2013		2010
	All	I-PACS	I-PACS		All	I-PACS	I-PACS
Kabul	14	18	21	Balkh	10	18	37
Kapisa	3	7	7	Samangan	3	12	12
Parwan	4	7	12	Jawzjan	3	9	11
Wardak	4	4	12	Sari Pul	2	7	12
Logar	2	7	9	Faryab	4	12	18
Ghazni	5	7	21	Badghis	2	6	9
Paktia	2	8	9	Herat	9	17	16
Paktika	2	2	7	Farah	2	4	11
Khost	3	4	5	Nimroz	2	2	7

| | 2013 | | 2010 | | | 2013 | | 2010 |
	All	I-PACS	I-PACS			All	I-PACS	I-PACS
Nangarhar	13	28	33	Helmand		3	3	4
Laghman	3	9	21	Kandahar		4	9	12
Kunar	3	6	12	Zabul		1	1	5
Nuristan	2	6	11	Uruzgan		2	1	2
Badakhshan	4	7	16	Ghor		2	6	7
Takhar	3	6	19	Bamyan		6	7	7
Baghlan	4	8	18	Panjshir		1	4	9
Kunduz	6	10	16	Dehkondi		4	2	5
				No opinion		0	0	5

16. Are your offices mainly in urban centers, mainly in rural areas or equally in both?

	Urban centers	Rural areas	Both equally
2013 All	63	16	22
I-PACS	70	12	18

17. In which of the following provinces are your organization's activities implemented? (MULTIPLE RESPONSE)

| | 2013 | | 2010 | | | 2013 | | 2010 |
	All	I-PACS	I-PACS			All	I-PACS	I-PACS
Kabul	58	47	40	Balkh		16	25	31
Kapisa	5	9	6	Samangan		5	13	11
Parwan	7	12	9	Jawzjan		6	9	15
Wardak	6	8	4	Sari Pul		3	9	10
Logar	4	4	4	Faryab		6	18	16
Ghazni	8	13	15	Badghis		4	4	6
Paktia	4	10	7	Herat		18	17	17
Paktika	2	2	4	Farah		3	8	4
Khost	4	3	3	Nimroz		3	4	1
Nangarhar	14	24	17	Helmand		5	4	1
Laghman	6	13	6	Kandahar		9	11	8
Kunar	5	13	3	Zabul		2	2	2
Nuristan	3	6	3	Uruzgan		3	3	0
Badakhshan	7	15	13	Ghor		3	8	3
Takhar	6	9	16	Bamyan		9	13	4
Baghlan	7	10	15	Panjshir		4	7	7
Kunduz	9	18	13	Dehkondi		6	6	1
				No opinion		0	0	18

18. Are your organization's activities implemented only in provincial capitals, mostly in provincial capitals, mostly in districts beyond the provincial capitals, or only in districts beyond the provincial capitals?

	Provincial capitals			Other districts		
	NET	Only	Mostly	NET	Mostly	Only
2013 All	60	32	29	40	31	8
I-PACS	67	27	40	33	30	2

19. Within the last three years has the geographic area that your organization covers increased, decreased or stayed about the same?

	Increased	Decreased	About the same	No opinion
2013 All	54	15	31	1
I-PACS	48	15	37	0
2010 I-PACS*	63	10	25	2

*2010: within the last five years

20. (IF INCREASED, Q19) Have you expanded to cover more areas in provinces in which you already operated, expanded to operate in additional provinces, or both?

	Same provinces	Additional provinces	Both	No opinion
2013 All	64	12	24	*
I-PACS	58	21	21	0

19/20 NET:

	Increased				Decreased	About the same	No opinion
	NET	Same	Additional	Both	Decreased	About the same	No opinion
2013 All	54	34	6	13	15	31	1
I-PACS	48	28	10	10	15	37	0

21. (IF DECREASED, Q19) Is that mostly due to lack of funding, lack of security, lack of capacity/staff, or for some other reason?

	Lack of funding	Lack of security	Lack of capacity/staff	Some other reason	No opinion
2013 All	80	10	2	4	4
I-PACS	50	8	8	8	25

19/21 NET:

	Inc.	NET	funding	security	cap./staff	Other reason	DK/Ref.	About the same	No opin.
			Lack of						
2013 All	54	15	12	2	*	1	1	31	1
I-PACS	48	15	7	1	1	1	4	37	0

Table header: "Decreased" spans NET, funding, security, cap./staff, Other reason, DK/Ref.

22. How many full-time paid employees are on staff?

	None	1-5	6-10	11-25	>25	No opinion
2013 All	2	22	30	25	21	0
I-PACS	2	15	21	34	28	0
2010 I-PACS	1	26	22	29	19	2

23. (IF 1 OR MORE, Q22) And how many of these are women?

	None	1-10%	11-30%	31-50%	>50%	Mean	Median
2013 All	16	5	27	26	26	37	33
I-PACS	3	3	31	31	31	40	33
2010 I-PACS	7	5	31	34	23	37	33

24. (IF 1 OR MORE, Q22) Let's define young people as being younger than age 35. How many of your full-time staff are young people?

	None	1-10%	11-30%	31-50%	>50%	Mean	Median
2013 All	0	2	8	23	68	70	75
I-PACS	0	5	7	17	71	70	77

25. How many part-time paid employees are on staff?

	None	1-5	6-10	>10	No opinion
2013 All	51	27	11	10	0
I-PACS	55	26	11	8	0
2010 I-PACS	31	34	9	13	12

26. (IF 1 OR MORE, Q25) And how many of these are women?

	None	1-10%	11-30%	31-50%	>50%	Mean	Median
2013 All	22	1	13	24	40	48	43
I-PACS	15	0	15	25	45	55	50
2010 I-PACS	20	2	16	28	34	45	37

27. (IF 1 OR MORE, Q25) And how many of your part-time staff are young people?

	None	1-10%	11-30%	31-50%	>50%	Mean	Median
2013 All	24	7	14	23	31	42	33
I-PACS	13	10	13	31	33	49	50

28. How many unpaid volunteers work for your organization?

	None	1-5	6-10	11-25	>25	No opinion
2013 All	38	24	18	12	9	*
I-PACS	31	26	17	15	11	0
2010 I-PACS	33	26	11	15	16	0

29. (IF 1 OR MORE, Q28) And how many of these are women?

	None	1-10%	11-30%	31-50%	>50%	Mean	Median
2013 All	26	2	14	25	33	42	40
I-PACS	13	5	20	28	34	46	38
2010 I-PACS	24	7	22	24	24	34	25

23/26/29 NET:

	None	1-10%	11-30%	31-50%	>50%	Mean	Median
2013 All	9	7	26	25	33	41	40
I-PACS	0	0	24	32	44	49	45
2010 I-PACS	3	0	46	31	20	37	31

30. (IF 1 OR MORE, Q28) And how many of your unpaid volunteers are young people?

	None	1-10%	11-30%	31-50%	>50%	Mean	Median
2013 All	25	4	15	26	29	39	35
I-PACS	12	15	18	22	33	42	33

24/27/30 NET:

	None	1-10%	11-30%	31-50%	>50%	Mean	Median
2013 All	0	2	19	32	46	50	50
I-PACS	0	0	17	42	42	54	48

31. How many members of your organization's staff have management responsibilities?

	None	One	Two-five	Six or more	No opinion
2013 All	3	8	74	15	*
I-PACS	5	3	67	25	0

32. (IF 1 OR MORE, Q31) Among those who have management responsibilities, how many, if any, are women?

	None	1-10%	11-30%	31-50%	>50%	Mean	Median
2013 All	32	*	8	30	30	40	33
I-PACS	21	0	10	36	33	46	40

33. (IF 1 OR MORE, Q31) And how many of your management-level staff are young people?

	None	1-10%	11-30%	31-50%	>50%	Mean	Median
2013 All	15	0	3	15	68	68	80
I-PACS	6	0	1	18	75	75	93

34. Which of the following on this card is closest to your overall 2012 annual budget?

	<$50K			$50-$100K			>$100K				
	NET	<$25K	$25K-$50K	NET	$50K-$75K	$75K-$100K	NET	$100K-$500K	$500K-1 mill.	>$1Mill.	No op.
2013 All	68	56	13	11	4	7	13	6	3	4	8
I-PACS	61	44	17	9	5	5	28	16	8	5	1

Compare to:

	<$100K	$100K-$500K	$500K-1 million	>1 million	No opinion
2010 I-PACS	73	13	1	8	6

35. In 2012, did your organization receive resources (cash or in-kind) from (ITEM)?

	2013 All			2013 I-PACS			2010 I-PACS		
	Yes	No	No op.	Yes	No	No op.	Yes	No	No op.
a. Afghan national government	10	90	0	10	90	0	13	83	3
b. Afghan provincial government	4	96	0	4	96	0	12	84	3
c. Afghan local government	5	95	0	7	93	0	6	91	3
d. Contributions from individual members	55	45	0	47	53	0	29	69	2
e. Contributions from non-members/communities	25	75	0	25	75	0	17	80	3
f. For-profit businesses/businesspeople	21	79	0	13	87	0	19	76	4
g. Fees for services	21	79	0	11	89	0	16	80	4
h. Other Afghan CSOs	6	94	0	19	81	0	27	70	3
i. International donors	41	59	0	62	38	0	27	73	0
j. Other	5	95	0	2	98	0	4	96	0

36. (IF REVENUE RECEIVED FROM SOURCE, Q35) For each of these, please tell me if it was a new source of resources for your organization in 2012, or if your organization received resources from them prior to 2012.

	2013 All		
	New	Past	No opinion
a. Afghan national government	31	59	10
b. Afghan provincial government	19	69	12
c. Afghan local government	33	27	39
d. Contributions from individual members	21	46	34
e. Contributions from non-members/communities	36	47	17
f. For-profit businesses/businesspeople	36	45	19
g. Fees for services	43	39	18
h. Other Afghan CSOs	24	57	19
i. International donors	40	52	8
j. Other	78	22	0

37. (IF PAST REVENUE SOURCE, Q36) Specifically, in the last three years, has your funding from (ITEM) increased a great deal, increased somewhat, stayed about the same, decreased somewhat or decreased a great deal?

	2013 All							
	Increased			About the same	Decreased			No op.
	NET	Grt. deal	Smwt.		NET	Smwt.	Grt. deal	
a. Afghan nat'l gov't	29	4	25	37	29	28	1	5
b. Afghan prov. gov't	19	0	19	35	35	35	0	11
c. Afghan local gov't	22	0	22	20	35	35	0	22
d. Individual members	25	5	20	52	20	17	3	3
e. Non-members/communities	18	0	18	54	21	17	4	7
f. For-profit businesses/business people	16	0	16	43	27	27	0	14
g. Fees for services	28	0	28	35	24	21	3	13
h. Other Afghan CSOs	45	0	45	24	23	21	2	9
i. International donors	24	2	22	37	32	21	11	8
j. Other	0	0	0	80	20	20	0	0

38. In the past three years has your overall funding increased, decreased or stayed about the same?

	Increased	Decreased	About the same	No opinion
2013 All	30	37	32	1
I-PACS	30	38	31	0
2010 I-PACS*	52	25	24	0

*2010: within the last five years

39. (IF FUNDED BY INTERNATIONAL DONORS, Q35I) You mentioned that your organization receives funding from international donors. How easy or difficult has it been for your organization to obtain this funding – very easy, somewhat easy, somewhat difficult or very difficult?

| | Easy | | | Difficult | | | |
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Very	No opinion
2013 All	36	8	28	62	38	24	3
I-PACS	38	7	31	60	29	31	2

40. (IF FUNDED BY INTERNATIONAL DONORS, Q35I) To what extent do you think that your international donors understand (ITEM) – very well, somewhat well, not so well or not well at all?

| | Well | | | Not well | | | |
	NET	Very	Smwt.	NET	Not so	Not at all	No op.
a. Afghan culture							
2103 All	94	65	29	5	4	1	1
I-PACS	96	67	29	4	2	2	0
b. The customary ways of doing things in our country							
2013 All	92	54	38	6	5	1	2
I-PACS	93	65	27	5	5	0	2
c. The needs of the communities or groups you serve							
2013 All	90	66	24	8	8	1	1
I-PACS	89	67	22	9	7	2	2
d. Your own organization's priorities							
2013 All	92	60	32	7	6	1	1
I-PACS	89	67	22	9	5	4	2
e. The challenges your organization faces							
2013 All	88	52	36	11	9	1	1
I-PACS	80	62	18	18	13	5	2

41. (IF NOT FUNDED BY INTERNATIONAL DONORS, Q35I) You mentioned that your organization is not funded by international donors. What's the main reason – is that because it's too difficult to apply for this funding, because you think you do not qualify for this funding, because you have applied and were rejected, because you're not interested, or because you don't know how or where to apply?

	Too diff.	Do not qualify	Applied/ rejected	Not interested	DK how/where to apply	Not heard yet (vol.)	No op.
2013 All	18	1	19	5	14	25	19
I-PACS	21	0	15	9	3	9	44

42A. Do you file reports on your funding with the government of Afghanistan, or not?

	Yes	No
2013 All	84	16
I-PACS	88	12

42B. (IF FILE REPORTS ON FUNDING, Q42A) To what particular office do you file these reports?

	2013	
	All	**I-PACS**
Afghan federal government NET	94	91
Ministry of Economy and Women's Affairs	47	50
Department of Social Unions and Political Parties of the Ministry of Justice	24	13
Income Tax Office	8	12
Ministry of Culture and Information	3	10
Ministry of Education	3	1
Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled	2	1
Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock	3	0
Ministry of Public Health	1	0
Ministry of Rural Development and Rehabilitation	1	1
Youth Department	*	1
Ministry of Commerce and Industries	*	0
Ministry of Hajj	*	0
Ministry of Mines	*	1
Directorate of Environmental Protection	*	1
Local-/Provincial-related government NET	3	6
Provincial office	2	4
Local government	1	3
Municipality Department	1	0
Other NET	2	1
Afghanistan Investment Support Agency	1	0
United States Embassy	*	0
Lawyers union	*	0
United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan	*	1
No opinion	1	1

43A. Apart from your funding, do you file reports on your activities with the government of Afghanistan, or not?

	Yes	No
2013 All	74	26
I-PACS	75	25

43B. (IF FILE REPORTS ON ACTIVITES, Q43A) To what particular office do you file these reports?

	2013	
	All	I-PACS
Afghan federal government NET	89	97
Ministry of Economy and Women's Affairs	41	43
Department of Social Unions and Political Parties of the Ministry of Justice	21	15
Income Tax Office	7	12
Ministry of Culture and Information	3	13
Ministry of Education	5	1
Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled	2	4
Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock	3	1
Ministry of Public Health	2	1
Ministry of Commerce and Industries	1	1
Ministry of Interior	*	0
Ministry of Border Affairs	*	0
Ministry of Communication and Technology	*	1
Ministry of Hajj	*	0
Ministry of Mines	*	0
Youth Department	*	0
National Security Department	*	0
Directorate of Environmental Protection	*	1
Olympic Directorate	*	0
Local-/Provincial-related government NET	6	3
Local government	3	0
Provincial office	1	3
Municipality Department	1	0
Other NET	2	0
Donors	1	0
Lawyers union	1	0
United States Embassy	*	0
World Health Organization	*	0
Afghan Women's Educational Center	*	0
No opinion	3	0

44A. Over the past 12 months, has your organization conducted activities designed to get additional funding, or not?

	Yes	No	No opinion
2013 All	32	68	*
I-PACS	37	63	0
2010 I-PACS	18	82	0

44B. (IF SOUGHT ADDITIONAL FUNDING, Q44A) How many of the following types of fundraising activities has your organization completed in the past 12 months?

	None	One or more
a. Special events		
2013 All	82	18
I-PACS	73	27
2010 I-PACS	81	19
b. Corporate contributions		
2013 All	79	21
I-PACS	90	10
2010 I-PACS	81	19
c. Membership dues		
2013 All	74	26
I-PACS	73	27
2010 I-PACS	56	44
d. Private foundation grants		
2013 All	86	14
I-PACS	90	10
2010 I-PACS	75	25
e. Government grants		
2013 All	90	10
I-PACS	93	7
2010 I-PACS	88	12
f. Government contracts		
2013 All	91	9
I-PACS	100	0
2010 I-PACS	100	0
g. Personal solicitations		
2013 All	86	14
I-PACS	100	0
2010 I-PACS	69	31

	None	One or more
h. Capital campaigns		
2013 All	60	40
I-PACS	77	23
2010 I-PACS	94	6
i. Other		
2013 All	87	13
I-PACS	67	33
2010 I-PACS	94	6

45. Are you currently seeking new funding sources, or not?

	Yes	No
2013 All	96	4
I-PACS	94	6

46. (IF NOT SEEKING NEW FUNDING, Q45) Is that because you are satisfied with your current funding sources, or because you don't have the staff to seek other funding sources?

	Satisfied with current funding	No staff to seek other funding
2013 All	62	38
I-PACS	60	40

47. How often does your organization communicate with its constituents about its activities – weekly, monthly, several times a year or less often than that?

	Monthly or more			Several times/year or less			
	NET	Weekly	Monthly	NET	Several times/year	Less often	No opin.
2013 All	66	20	47	33	28	5	1
I-PACS	78	20	57	21	18	3	1

48. What is the main way your organization seeks to communicate with its constituents – is it through media such as radio, television or newspapers; through public or religious meetings or events; through pamphlets or brochures; by internet or cell phone; or by word of mouth?

	Media	Public/religious meetings/events	Pamphlets/ brochures	Internet/ cell phone	Word of mouth	No opin.
2013 All	20	24	13	19	24	1
I-PACS	24	19	14	23	20	0

49. Overall, what do you think is the reputation of (ITEM) among Afghans – very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or very unfavorable?

	Favorable			Unfavorable			
	NET	Very	Smwt.	NET	Smwt.	Very	No op.
a. Afghan civil society orgs.							
2013 All	96	56	40	4	3	1	0
I-PACS	99	46	53	1	1	0	0
b. Int'l NGOs operating in Afghanistan							
2013 All	91	42	50	8	6	2	*
I-PACS	90	39	51	10	9	1	0

50. Thinking about the past three years, would you say the reputation of (ITEM) among Afghans has improved, worsened or stayed about the same?

	Improved	Worsened	About the same	No op.
a. Afghan civil society orgs.				
2013 All	61	12	26	0
I-PACS	47	17	36	0
b. Int'l NGOs operating in Afghanistan				
2013 All	49	20	31	1
I-PACS	39	20	40	0

51. How often does your organization work or consult with other CSOs – frequently, sometimes, rarely or never?

	More often			Less often			
	NET	Frequently	Sometimes	NET	Rarely	Never	No opinion
2013 All	71	25	46	29	12	17	*
I-PACS	88	45	43	12	10	2	0
2010 I-PACS*	96	70	26	4	1	3	0

*2010: "contact"

52. (IF CONSULT WITH OTHER CSOs, Q51) What is the nature of your relations with these CSOs, do you (ITEM)? (MULTIPLE RESPONSE)

	2013 All			2013 I-PACS			2010 I-PACS		
	Yes	No	No op.	Yes	No	No op.	Yes	No	No op.
a. Work on project partnerships	77	23	0	85	15	0	43	55	2
b. Exchange information and ideas	91	9	0	95	5	0	94	3	2
c. Participate together in public policy debates	69	30	1	74	26	0	69	31	0
d. Jointly try to obtain funds for your orgs.	66	34	*	60	40	0	51	48	1
e. Coordinate your political activities	41	58	1	52	48	0	15	83	2
f. Coordinate provision of services	86	14	1	89	11	0	60	36	3
g. Help each other develop knowledge/skills	79	21	0	82	18	0	NA	NA	NA
h. Other	17	83	0	29	71	0	7	92	1

53. How often does your organization work or consult with (ITEM) – frequently, sometimes, rarely or never?

	More often			Less often			No op.
	NET	Freq.	Smtimes.	NET	Rarely	Never	
a. Reps. of the nat'l gov't							
2013 All	70	25	45	30	14	16	*
I-PACS	73	24	49	26	12	13	1
b. Reps. of the local gov't							
2013 All	71	24	47	28	15	13	*
I-PACS	79	30	48	21	15	7	0
c. Reps. of int'l donor orgs.							
2013 All	62	24	38	38	14	23	0
I-PACS	78	31	46	22	12	10	0
d. Religious groups at the community level							
2013 All	70	22	48	30	11	19	*
I-PACS	76	25	52	22	11	11	1
e. Non-religious community grps.							
2013 All	56	19	38	43	14	29	1
I-PACS	56	26	30	44	20	24	0
f. Community leaders							
2013 All	84	37	47	16	7	9	0
I-PACS	89	36	53	11	9	2	0
g. Media organizations							
2013 All	62	18	44	38	16	22	0
I-PACS	64	20	44	36	22	13	0

54. Does your organization belong to any larger network organization that represents civil society organizations working in the same sector, or not?

	Yes	No	No opinion
2013 All	30	70	*
I-PACS	51	49	0

55. (IF BELONG TO A NETWORK, Q54) How effective, if at all, would you say this network is at helping your organization meet its goals – very effective, somewhat effective, not so effective or not effective at all?

	Effective			Not effective		
	NET	Very	Smwt.	NET	Not so	Not at all
2013 All	94	65	29	6	6	0
I-PACS	98	73	24	2	2	0

56. Does your organization have (ITEM)?

	2013 All			2013 I-PACS			2010 I-PACS		
	Yes	No	No op.	Yes	No	No op.	Yes	No	No op.
a. Written rules describing why it exists and how it's governed	97	3	*	98	2	0	93	6	1
b. Written mission statement/goals	93	7	*	91	9	0	92	7	1
c. Procurement and accounting policy/manual	82	17	*	81	19	0	88	11	1
d. Employee handbook/manual	84	16	*	90	10	0	88	12	0
e. Financial policies and procedures	76	24	*	84	16	0	79	19	2
f. IT policy	56	44	*	71	29	0	52	48	0
g. Security protocol	41	58	1	67	33	0	34	64	2
h. An external governing committee/boards	35	65	*	58	42	0	20	74	6
i. Formal procedures to assess your performance on an ongoing basis	59	41	*	72	28	0	NA	NA	NA
j. A written communication plan	59	39	2	72	25	3	NA	NA	NA

57. Which three of the following does this organization need to have increased or improved the most?

	2013 All				2013 I-PACS				2010 I-PACS			
	Mention				Mention				Mention			
	1st	2nd	3rd	Tot	1st	2nd	3rd	Tot	1st	2nd	3rd	Tot
Fundraising	36	16	12	63	30	26	9	65	39	19	8	66
Project development/ proposal-writing	14	11	4	28	14	13	5	31	11	13	4	29
Office space/equipment	3	9	7	20	3	8	9	20	2	2	15	19
Training for staff	6	6	9	21	0	2	8	10	0	6	7	12
Organization management/ governance/strategy/planning	14	3	1	18	17	0	1	18	19	2	4	26
Project management	3	7	5	15	15	6	3	24	0	2	2	4
Women's participation in the org.'s projects and activities	2	5	9	16	5	3	11	19	3	6	8	17
Security precautions	4	4	5	13	3	8	0	11	4	6	12	22
Computer use	2	7	5	14	1	3	2	7	2	7	4	13
Financial management/ accounting	3	4	3	11	1	3	6	10	1	6	2	9
Community needs assessment/ mobilization	2	5	3	9	5	10	6	20	1	7	6	13
Transportation means	2	3	5	10	1	2	5	8	3	7	3	13
Number of staff	2	4	1	7	0	3	0	3	1	1	0	2
Human resource (staff) management	3	3	1	7	2	2	6	10	1	1	0	2
Public relations/comm./ using the media to educate the public	*	2	1	4	2	5	3	10	2	6	3	11
Activity monitoring/evaluation/ report-writing	1	2	1	4	0	2	2	5	1	1	2	4
English language	1	2	3	5	0	1	1	2	0	1	3	4
Advocacy (to the gov't/ private sector)	*	*	1	1	1	0	0	1	4	3	2	10
Communications equipment	*	*	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Other	1	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No opinion	*	5	23	23	0	1	22	22	2	4	12	12

58. In the last three years, have any employees of your organization received training in (ITEM), or not?

	2013 All			2013 I-PACS		
	Yes	No	No op.	Yes	No	No op.
a. Writing grant proposals	57	43	0	58	42	0
b. How to engage in advocacy/policy making	41	59	*	43	57	0
c. Management planning	62	38	*	66	34	0
d. Financial planning and accounting	54	46	1	63	36	1
e. Administration	62	37	*	84	16	0
f. Public communication and outreach	57	42	1	62	37	1
g. Conflict resolution/negotiation skills	46	53	1	53	46	1
h. Registration and gov't regulation	33	66	1	44	55	1
i. Monitoring/evaluation of your programs	45	54	1	66	33	1
j. Gender mainstreaming/women's empowerment	50	49	1	58	40	1
k. Youth development/participation	50	49	1	58	40	1
l. Community mobilization	40	58	2	49	48	2
m. Networking	28	69	2	44	53	3

59. How would you rate the current legal and regulatory environment for civil society organizations in Afghanistan? Is it very good, somewhat good, somewhat bad or very bad?

	Good			Bad		
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Very
2013 All	89	33	56	11	9	3
I-PACS	87	39	47	13	9	4

60. Thinking about the past three years, would you say the legal and regulatory environment has improved, worsened or stayed about the same?

	Improved	Worsened	About the same	No op.
2013 All	49	18	31	1
I-PACS	52	15	34	0

61A. Does the legal and regulatory environment affect your organization's ability to operate, or not?

	Yes	No	No opinion
2013 All	91	9	1
I-PACS	93	6	1

61B. (IF LEGAL/REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT HAS AN EFFECT, Q61A) Overall, does the legal and regulatory environment help or hurt your organization's ability to operate?

	Helps	Hurts	No opinion
2013 All	92	8	*
I-PACS	92	8	0

62. Overall, how would you rate the security situation in the places where your organization operates? Is it very good, somewhat good, somewhat bad or very bad?

	Good			Bad		
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Very
2013 All	84	33	51	16	13	3
I-PACS	88	34	54	12	6	7

63. Which province where you operate has the most difficult security situation?

	2013			2013			2013	
	All	I-PACS		All	I-PACS		All	I-PACS
Kabul	3	1	Nuristan	1	2	Farah	1	1
Kapisa	2	1	Badakhshan	1	1	Nimroz	*	0
Parwan	*	0	Takhar	*	1	Helmand	2	1
Wardak	5	7	Baghlan	1	0	Kandahar	3	2
Logar	1	1	Kunduz	2	2	Zabul	0	0
Ghazni	3	3	Balkh	*	2	Uruzgan	1	0
Paktia	*	1	Samangan	0	0	Ghor	1	1
Paktika	1	1	Jawzjan	*	0	Bamyan	*	0
Khost	1	0	Sari Pul	*	3	Panjshir	0	0
Nangarhar	3	0	Faryab	1	8	Daykundi	1	0
Laghman	1	2	Badghis	*	0	Equal. (vol.)	13	16
Kunar	1	6	Herat	1	1	None (vol.)	48	34
						No opinion	2	0

64. In your opinion, do you think that over the past three years security has become more of an impediment to implementing civil society and NGO programs, less of an impediment, or has there been no change?

	More of an impediment	Less of an impediment	No change	No opinion
2013 All	44	27	28	*
I-PACS	46	28	26	0
2010 I-PACS*	64	17	18	1

*2010: within the last five years; "increasing" and "decreasing" impediment

65. Thinking about the decade ahead, are you very optimistic, somewhat optimistic, somewhat pessimistic or very pessimistic about the future development of civil society organizations in Afghanistan?

	Optimistic			Pessimistic			
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Very	No opinion
2013 All	87	41	46	11	10	1	2
I-PACS	93	52	42	7	6	1	0

66. In your view, what is the greatest challenge facing civil society organizations operating in Afghanistan in the decade ahead – lack of funding, lack of security, lack of capacity, lack of coordination among organizations, or something else?

	Lack of funding	Lack of security	Lack of capacity	Lack of coordination	Something else	No opinion
2013 All	62	32	2	2	*	1
I-PACS	58	38	1	2	0	0

67. How much, if at all, are you worried about the possibility of (ITEM) negatively impacting your organization in the transformation decade – very worried, somewhat worried, not so worried or not worried at all?

	More worried			Less worried			
	NET	Very	Smwt.	NET	Not so	Not at all	No opin.
a. Reduced int'l funding							
2013 All	82	47	35	18	14	4	0
I-PACS	87	40	46	13	9	4	0
b. Increased insecurity/violence							
2013 All	89	55	34	11	8	2	0
I-PACS	87	44	43	13	12	1	0
c. Increased political instability							
2013 All	87	46	41	12	10	3	*
I-PACS	84	38	46	16	15	1	0
d. Reduced influence of CSOs in policy making							
2013 All	79	36	44	21	17	4	0
I-PACS	75	30	45	25	18	7	0

68. With regard to the presidential and provincial council elections in 2014, is your organization engaging in or planning to engage in (ITEM), or not?

	2013 All			2013 I-PACS	
	Yes	No	No opinion	Yes	No
a. Elections monitoring	60	40	*	71	29
b. Increasing public awareness of the elections	67	33	0	79	21
Encouraging conditions for (ITEM) to participate in the elections					
c. Women	73	27	0	79	21
d. Youth	73	27	0	80	20
e. Other groups	66	34	*	72	28

69. Is your organization currently a participant in the I-PACS II program, the USAID funded Initiative to Promote Civil Society that is being implemented by Counterpart International?

	Yes	No	No opinion
2013 All	17	82	1

70. Does your organization have (ITEM) or not?

	2013 All			2013 I-PACS	
	Yes	No	No opinion	Yes	No
a. A well-functioning computer system	86	14	*	94	6
b. Access to the internet	75	25	*	88	12
c. Enough office space	78	22	*	83	17

Methodology

This study was conducted in three sections: a desk review of recently published relevant literature; qualitative interviews with 45 experts in the civil society sector in Afghanistan; and a quantitative survey of officials at 483 registered civil society organizations in Afghanistan. This appendix describes the approach in each case.

Desk Review

The desk review (Appendix A) is based on our evaluation of 43 individual reports, journal articles, working papers and presentations on the state of civil society and challenges facing CSOs in Afghanistan. (References are listed in Appendix E.) To move the evaluation forward and avoid repetition from earlier reviews, we focus almost exclusively on work published since 2010. Context provided by the desk review informed the qualitative interview guides, survey questionnaire design and analytical approach used in this report.

Qualitative Interviews

Ten key informant interviews (KIIs) were conducted with individuals identified by Counterpart as senior thought leaders in the development of Afghan civil society, and 35 in-depth interviews (IDIs) were conducted with officials of Afghan CSOs and related organizations. Interviews were conducted in person by trained interviewers employed by the Afghan Center for Socio-economic and Opinion Research (ACSOR), following printed interview guides. Audio recordings of interviews were transcribed by ACSOR, reviewed by Langer Research Associates and Counterpart and clarified where necessary.

The 10 KIIs included four interviews with representatives of international donor organizations, three with Afghan CSOs, two with Afghan think tanks and two with Afghan government officials. Participants received invitation letters inviting their participation and follow-up calls scheduling in-person appointments. Interviews were conducted in Dari or Pashto at

respondents' offices in Kabul from July 30 to Aug 28, 2013, averaging 48 minutes in length. Respondents included two women and eight men, ranging in age from 28 to 62.

The 35 IDIs were selected from three sources: recommendations from Counterpart, references from previews interviewees and randomly selected registered CSOs drawn from registration lists. As with KIIs, participants received invitation letters inviting their participation and follow-up calls scheduling in-person appointments. Interviews were conducted in Dari, Pashto or (in two cases) English, at respondents' offices in Balkh, Bamiyan, Farah, Herat, Kabul and Logar provinces from Aug. 21 to Sept. 17, 2013, again averaging 48 minutes in length. Respondents included 11 women and 24 men, ranging in age from 22 to 68.

Quantitative Interviews

Quantitative interviews were produced in two components: Interviews with senior-level representatives of a random sample of 394 CSOs drawn from government lists, provided by Counterpart, of 4,632 such organizations (including 2,565 social organizations, 1,782 Afghan non-governmental organizations and 285 international NGOs) ; and re-interviews with 89 I-PACS II grantees that previously were interviewed in 2010. The former was produced to obtain a representative sample of all CSOs on the registration lists; the latter, to measure change over time among the I-PACS II-affiliated interviewees. Re-interviews were included in the full sample, weighted to their correct proportion of all registered CSOs, for a total sample of 483.

The survey questionnaire was pre-tested among 10 CSO officials (five female and five male) in Kabul. Survey interviews were conducted by trained ACSOR interviewers, in Dari or Pashto, via telephone (410) or in person (73), from Aug. 25 to Sept. 14, 2013, averaging 35 minutes in length. Respondents included 79 women and 404 men.

Thirty percent of interviews were back-checked by interviewers and, during data entry, a random 10 percent of questionnaires were double-entered for quality control.

ASCOR used available information from the registration lists to seek to contact sampled CSOs, including telephone numbers, e-mail addresses, websites and physical addresses. The survey had an estimated contact rate of 44 percent (assuming conservatively that all noncontacted organizations were in fact active and eligible as registered CSOs); and, among contacted organizations, a cooperation rate of 96 percent, for a combined response rate of 42 percent. In terms of its representativeness of the full list, the survey has a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 4 percentage points.

D

Full Questionnaire

This appendix reproduces the English-language version of the full, formatted questionnaire for Counterpart International's 2013 assessment of civil society organizations in Afghanistan. Please contact Counterpart International for the Dari and Pashto versions.

Introduction

READ: *Hello, my name is_____, I am here to conduct the interview on civil society in Afghanistan previously arranged by my employer, the Afghan Center for Socio-economic and Opinion Research. Thank you for agreeing to meet with me to talk about your organization and its experiences working in civil society in Afghanistan.*

We value your opinion and appreciate your answering the questions in this interview to the best of your ability. Your answers are completely confidential and any data will only be reported at the aggregate level, not on an individual level. A summary of this information will be shared with other Afghan civil society organizations and donors to help enhance their understanding of the civil society sector in the country.

There are just a few things I'd like to confirm with you before we begin.

C-1. First, your name is _____, correct?

1. Yes
2. No

[If NO, write down correct name: _____]
_____
8. Refused (vol.)
9. Don't Know (vol.)

C-2. Your phone number is _____, right?

1. Yes
2. No

[If NO, write down correct number: _____]

_____
8. Refused (vol.)
9. Don't Know (vol.)

C-3. And your email address is _____, yes?

1. Yes
2. No

[If NO, write down correct email address: _____]

_____
8. Refused (vol.)
9. Don't Know (vol.)

C-4. The organization you work for is called _____, correct?
(NEW)

1. Yes
2. No

[If NO, write down correct organization name: _____]

_____
8. Refused (vol.)
9. Don't Know (vol.)

C-5.   **INTERVIEWER**: Enter address at which interview is being conducted.
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

C-6. Is your organization registered with the Afghan government, or not?

1. Yes
2. No

_____
8. Refused (vol.)   **(SEE NOTE BELOW)**
9. Don't Know (vol.)   **(SEE NOTE BELOW)**

(IF RESPONDENT ANSWERS '8' or '9' on C-6, ASK TO SPEAK TO SOMEONE WHO KNOWS AND START THE INTERVIEW WITH THE NEW PERSON FROM BEGINNING. IF THE PERSON WHO KNOWS IS NOT AVAILABLE, RESCHEDULE INTERVIEW.)

C-7. Is your organization for-profit or not-for-profit?

1. For-profit　　　　　**(TERMINATE INTERVIEW)**
2. Not-for-profit

_____
8. Refused (vol.)　　　**(SEE NOTE BELOW)**
9. Don't Know (vol.)　**(SEE NOTE BELOW)**

(IF RESPONDENT ANSWERS '8' or '9' on C-7 ASK TO SPEAK TO SOMEONE WHO KNOWS AND START THE INTERVIEW WITH THE NEW PERSON FROM BEGINNING. IF THE PERSON WHO KNOWS IS NOT AVAILABLE, RESCHEDULE INTERVIEW.)

C-8. What is your job title in the organization?
(ASK IF JOB TITLE IS NOT 'DIRECTOR' OR 'DEPUTY DIRECTOR') Is this a senior, management-level position, or not?

1. Director
2. Deputy Director
3. Other senior management – **SPECIFY POSITION:** _____
4. Not a director, deputy director or other senior management **(RESCHEDULE INTERVIEW WITH A SENIOR MANAGEMENT-LEVEL EMPLOYEE)**

_____
8. Refused (vol.)　　　**(SEE NOTE BELOW)**
9. Don't Know (vol.)　**(SEE NOTE BELOW)**

(IF RESPONDENT ANSWERS '8' OR '9' RESCHEDULE INTERVIEW WITH A SENIOR-LEVEL MANAGER)

C-9. INTERVIEWER, IN THE TABLE BELOW SPECIFY GENDER OF THE RESPONDENT.

IF RESPONDENT IS DIRECTOR, ASK ABOUT GENDER OF DEPUTY DIRECTORS, IF ANY. IF RESPONDENT IS A DEPUTY DIRECTOR, ASK ABOUT GENDER OF THE DIRECTOR AND THE SECOND DEPUTY DIRECTOR, IF ANY.

	Male	Female	Don't have this position (vol.)	Refused (vol.)	Don't Know (vol.)
a. Director	1	2	3	8	9
b. Deputy Director One	1	2	3	8	9
c. Deputy Director Two	1	2	3	8	9

Main questionnaire

Q-1. **(ASK ALL)** What type of association, union, or organization are you? **(SHOW CARD — ONE RESPONSE ONLY)**

1. Teachers' union
2. Women's union
3. Student union
4. Trade union
5. Youth association
6. Community association or community organization
7. CSO support organization
8. Tribal shura
9. Elders' shura
10. Peace shura
11. Ulema/religious shura
12. Community development committee (development shura)
13. Education committee or council
14. Association of professionals (e.g., doctors)
15. Culture and/or sports organization
16. Microfinance organization
17. Social movement
18. Political movement
19. Support and defense of journalists' rights organization
20. Services provider organization for disabled persons
21. Mining organization
22. Stock and animal breeding union

_____
95. Other **SPECIFY:** _____   **(OPEN END — RECORD RESPONSE)**
97. Company or Business   **(SEEK TO CLARIFY THE APPOINTMENT WAS MADE WITH REGISTERED NOT-FOR-PROFIT NGO OR NSO. IF THIS IS A PRIVATE BUSINESS/COMPANY TERMINATE.)**
98. Refused (vol.)   **(SEE NOTE BELOW)**
99. Don't know (vol.)   **(SEE NOTE BELOW)**

(IF RESPONDENT ANSWERS '98' OR '99' ON Q-1, ASK TO SPEAK TO SOMEONE WHO MIGHT KNOW AND START THE INTERVIEW WITH A NEW PERSON FROM THE BEGINNING. IF PERSON WHO KNOWS IS NOT AVAILABLE, RESCHEDULE INTERVIEW.)

Q-2. What year was the organization established? **(OPEN END — RECORD NUMERIC RESPONSE)**

_____ _____ _____ _____

9998. Refused (vol.)
9999. Don't Know (vol.)

Q-3. What does your organization do? **(SHOW CARD – SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)**

	Yes	No
1. Promote gender equality or gender integration (women's rights)	1	2
2. Promote rights of minorities	1	2
3. Promote rights of the disabled	1	2
4. Strengthen independent media	1	2
5. Implement religious activities, including education	1	2
6. Promote political party development	1	2
7. Coordinate other organizations	1	2
8. Protect environment, ecology	1	2
9. Provide voter education and civic education	1	2
10. Do conflict resolution	1	2
11. Promote culture, science, history, arts, sports	1	2
12. Education and provision of educational materials (books, publications)	1	2
13. Build/rehabilitate schools or other educational facilities	1	2
14. Provide health services and health education (no construction)	1	2
15. Build/rehabilitate health clinics or hospitals	1	2
16. Build/rehabilitate drinking water and sanitation infrastructure	1	2
17. Operate drinking water systems and/or deliver water	1	2
18. Build/rehabilitate irrigation systems	1	2
19. Operate irrigation systems	1	2
20. Build/rehabilitate housing	1	2
21. Build/rehabilitate roads	1	2
22. Build/rehabilitate electricity supply networks and facilities	1	2
23. Deliver food	1	2
24. Develop agriculture	1	2
25. Develop alternative livelihood and promote income generation and microcredit	1	2
26. Promote youth programs	1	2
27. Influence policy development	1	2
28. Mining activities	1	2
29. Capacity building	1	2
95. Other: _____ **(OPEN END – RECORD RESPONSE)**	95	95
98. Refused (vol.)	98	98
99. Don't know (vol.)	99	99

Q-4. Does your organization perform work at the community level, do you provide support to other organizations that do community-level work, do you do both of these, or neither of these? **(SHOW CARD)**

1. Perform work at the community level
2. Provide support to other organizations that do community-level work
3. Both of these
4. Neither of these

_____
8. Refused (vol.)
9. Don't know (vol.)

Q-5. Which of these is your organization's chief focus: providing services to those in need; providing advocacy on issues of concern or on behalf of a particular group; providing a social forum; taking a role in policy development; promoting or addressing religious issues; or something else (**specify**)? **(SHOW CARD – SELECT ONE)**

1. Providing services to those in need
2. Providing advocacy on issues of concern or on behalf of a particular group
3. Providing a social forum
4. Taking a role in policy development
5. Promoting or addressing religious issues

_____
95. Something else (**SPECIFY**: _____)
98. Refused (vol.)
99. Don't know (vol.)

Q-6. Now I will read you a statement: A women's organization is an organization whose mission focuses **primarily** on women's issues. Is your organization a women's organization?

1. Yes
2. No

_____
8. Refused (vol.)
9. Don't know (vol.)

Q-7. A youth organization is an organization whose mission focuses **primarily** on youth issues. Is your organization a youth organization, or not?

1. Yes
2. No

_____
8. Refused (vol.)
9. Don't know (vol.)

Projects

READS: *Next I would like to ask about projects and activities that your organization carries out.*

Q-8. How many projects are currently underway? **(OPEN END — RECORD NUMERIC RESPONSE)**

_____   **(READ ALOUD TO CONFIRM AFTER WRITING)**

998. Refused (vol.)
999. Don't Know (vol.)

Q-9. How many projects have been completed in the past 12 months? **(OPEN END — RECORD NUMERIC RESPONSE)**

_____   **(READ ALOUD TO CONFIRM AFTER WRITING)**

998. Refused (vol.)
999. Don't Know (vol.)

Q-10. Which of the following groups of people benefit from this organization's current activities or projects? **(SHOW CARD — SELECT ALL THAT APPLY. NOTE: DO NOT ACCEPT VOL. "OTHER" IN Q10. THIS OPTION IS OFFERED IN Q11.)**

	Yes	No
1. Youth	1	2
2. The elderly	1	2
3. Women	1	2
4. The poor	1	2
5. Veterans – retired military	1	2
6. Disabled	1	2
7. Returnees or internally displaced persons	1	2
8. Government employees	1	2
9. Whole communities/all members in the community	1	2
10. Members of the organization	1	2
98. Refused (vol.)	98	98
99. Don't know (vol.)	99	99

Q-11. And how about these other groups – do any of these following groups of people benefit from this organization's current activities or projects? **(SHOW CARD — SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)**

	Yes	No
1. Infants and children	1	2
2. Sick people	1	2
3. Those in need of literacy training or other education	1	2
4. Those in need of job skills	1	2
5. Farmers	1	2
6. People trying to start small businesses	1	2
7. Policy makers at the local level	1	2
8. Policy makers at the national level	1	2
95. Other **(Specify: _____)**	95	95
98. Refused (vol.)	98	98
99. Don't know (vol.)	99	99

Q-12. How successful would you say your organization has been in achieving its goals in the past three years – very successful, somewhat successful, not so successful or not at all successful?

1. Very successful
2. Somewhat successful
3. Not so successful
4. Not at all successful

_____
8. Refused (vol.)
9. Don't know (vol.)

Q-13. How many people benefit from the **on-going** projects or activities of this organization – either directly or indirectly? **(OPEN END — RECORD NUMERIC RESPONSE)**

_____ **(READ ALOUD TO CONFIRM AFTER WRITING)**

9999998. Refused (vol.)
9999999. Don't Know (vol.)

Geography

READ: *Now I would like to ask about the locations your organization operates in.*

Q-14. How many offices, including main and site offices, does the organization have? **(OPEN END — RECORD NUMERIC RESPONSE)**

IF NEEDED: *An office is the main place where the organization's staff regularly works.*

_____ **(READ ALOUD TO CONFIRM AFTER WRITING)**
IF ONLY '1' OFFICE ASK Q15A AND SKIP Q15B

____
9998. Refused (vol.)
9999. Don't Know (vol.)

Q-15. And where are they located? **(SEPARATELY SELECT ONE PROVINCE FOR MAIN OFFICE, SELECT ALL THAT APPLY FOR SITE OFFICES)**

	Province			
a) Where is your main office located? **(Single Response)**	1. Kabul 2. Kapisa 3. Parwan 4. Wardak 5. Logar 6. Ghazni 7. Paktia 8. Paktika 9. Khost	10. Ningarhar 11. Laghman 12. Kunar 13. Nooristan 14. Badakhshan 15. Takhar 16. Baghlan 17. Kunduz 18. Balkh	19. Samangan 20. Juzjan 21. Sar-I-Pul 22. Faryab 23. Badghis 24. Herat 25. Farah 26. Nimroz 27. Helmand	28. Kandhar 29. Zabul 30. Uruzgan 31. Ghor 32. Bamyan 33. Panjshir 34. Dehkondi 98. Refused (vol) 99. Don't know (vol)
b) **[ASK IF MORE THAN '1' in Q14]** Where are your site offices located **(Multiple Response)**	1. Kabul 2. Kapisa 3. Parwan 4. Wardak 5. Logar 6. Ghazni 7. Paktia 8. Paktika 9. Khost	10. Ningarhar 11. Laghman 12. Kunar 13. Nooristan 14. Badakhshan 15. Takhar 16. Baghlan 17. Kunduz 18. Balkh	19. Samangan 20. Juzjan 21. Sar-I-Pul 22. Faryab 23. Badghis 24. Herat 25. Farah 26. Nimroz 27. Helmand	28. Kandhar 29. Zabul 30. Uruzgan 31. Ghor 32. Bamyan 33. Panjshir 34. Dehkondi 96. Not asked 98. Refused (vol) 99. Don't Know (vol)

Q-16. Are your offices mainly in urban centers, mainly rural areas or equally in both?

1. Mainly urban centers
2. Mainly rural areas
3. Equally in both

____
8. Refused (vol)
9. Don't Know (vol)

Q-17. In which of the following provinces are your organization's activities implemented? **(SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)**

1. Kabul	10. Ningarhar	19. Samangan	28. Kandhar
2. Kapisa	11. Laghman	20. Juzjan	29. Zabul
3. Parwan	12. Kunar	21. Sar-I-Pul	30. Uruzgan
4. Wardak	13. Nooristan	22. Faryab	31. Ghor
5. Logar	14. Badakhshan	23. Badghis	32. Bamyan
6. Ghazni	15. Takhar	24. Herat	33. Panjshir
7. Paktia	16. Baghlan	25. Farah	34. Dehkondi
8. Paktika	17. Kunduz	26. Nimroz	98. Refused (vol.)
9. Khost	18. Balkh	27. Helmand	99. Don't Know (vol.)

Q-18. Are your organization's activities implemented only in provincial capitals, mostly in provincial capitals, mostly in districts beyond the provincial capitals, or only in districts beyond the provincial capitals? **(SHOW CARD)**

1. Only in provincial capitals
2. Mostly in provincial capitals
3. Mostly in districts beyond the provincial capitals
4. Only in districts beyond the provincial capitals

_____
8. Refused (vol.)
9. Don't know (vol.)

Q-19. Within the last three years has the geographic area that your organization covers increased, decreased or stayed about the same?

1. Increased   **CONTINUE TO Q-20**
2. Decreased   **SKIP TO Q-21**
3. Stayed about the same   **SKIP TO Q-22**

_____
8. Refused (vol.)   **SKIP TO Q-22**
9. Don't know (vol.)   **SKIP TO Q-22**

Q-20. **(If '1' "INCREASED" in Q-19)** Have you expanded to cover more areas in provinces in which you already operated, expanded to operate in additional provinces, or both?

1. Expanded to cover more areas in provinces already operated
2. Expanded to operate in additional provinces
3. Both

_____
6. Not Asked
8. Refused (vol.)
9. Don't know (vol.)

Q-21. **(If '2' "DECREASED" in Q-19)** Is that mostly due to lack of funding, lack of security, lack of capacity/staff, or for some other reason (**SPECIFY**)?

1. Lack of funding
2. Lack of security
3. Lack of capacity/staff
4. For some other reason (**SPECIFY**: _____)
_____
6. Not Asked
8. Refused (vol.)
9. Don't know (vol.)

Staff

READ: *Now I would like to ask you about the staff you have in your organization.*

Q-22. (**ASK ALL**) How many full-time paid employees are on staff? **(OPEN END — RECORD NUMERIC RESPONSE; IF NONE, RECORD 0)**

_____ **(READ ALOUD TO CONFIRM AFTER WRITING)**
_____
9998. Refused (vol.)
9999. Don't know (vol.)

Q-23. **(ASK if said 1 or more at Q-22)** And how many of these are women? **(OPEN END — RECORD NUMERIC RESPONSE; IF NONE, RECORD 0)**

_____ **(READ ALOUD TO CONFIRM AFTER WRITING)**
_____
9996. Not asked
9998. Refused (vol.)
9999. Don't know (vol.)

Q-24. **(ASK if said 1 or more at Q-22)** Let's define young people as being younger than age 35. How many of your full-time staff are young people? **(OPEN END — RECORD NUMERIC RESPONSE; IF NONE, RECORD 0)**

_____ **(READ ALOUD TO CONFIRM AFTER WRITING)**
_____
9996. Not asked
9998. Refused (vol.)
9999. Don't know (vol.)

Q-25. **(ASK ALL)** How many part-time paid employees are on staff? **(OPEN END — RECORD NUMERIC RESPONSE; IF NONE, RECORD 0)**

_____ **(READ ALOUD TO CONFIRM AFTER WRITING)**

_____
9998. Refused (vol.)
9999. Don't know (vol.)

Q-26. **(ASK if said 1 or more at Q-25)** And how many of these are women? **(OPEN END — RECORD NUMERIC RESPONSE; IF NONE, RECORD 0)**

_____ **(READ ALOUD TO CONFIRM AFTER WRITING)**

_____
9996. Not asked
9998. Refused (vol.)
9999. Don't know (vol.)

Q-27. **(ASK if said 1 or more at Q-25)** And how many of your-part time staff are young people? **(OPEN END — RECORD NUMERIC RESPONSE; IF NONE, RECORD 0)**

_____ **(READ ALOUD TO CONFIRM AFTER WRITING)**

_____
9996. Not asked
9998. Refused (vol.)
9999. Don't know (vol.)

Q-28. **(ASK ALL)** How many unpaid volunteers work for your organization? **(OPEN END — RECORD NUMERIC RESPONSE; IF NONE, RECORD 0)**

_____ **(READ ALOUD TO CONFIRM AFTER WRITING)**

_____
9998. Refused (vol.)
9999. Don't Know (vol.)

Q-29. **(ASK if said 1 or more at Q-28)** And how many of these are women? **(OPEN END — RECORD NUMERIC RESPONSE; IF NONE, RECORD 0)**

_____ **(READ ALOUD TO CONFIRM AFTER WRITING)**

_____
9996. Not asked
9998. Refused (vol.)
9999. Don't know (vol.)

Q-30.**(ASK if said 1 or more at Q-28)** And how many of your unpaid volunteers are young people? **(OPEN END — RECORD <u>NUMERIC</u> RESPONSE; IF NONE, RECORD 0)**

_____ **(READ ALOUD TO CONFIRM AFTER WRITING)**

_____
9996. Not asked
9998. Refused (vol.)
9999. Don't know (vol.)

Q-31. **(ASK ALL)** How many members of your organization's staff have management responsibilities? **(OPEN END — RECORD <u>NUMERIC</u> RESPONSE; IF NONE, RECORD 0)**

_____ **(READ ALOUD TO CONFIRM AFTER WRITING)**

_____
9998. Refused (vol.)
9999. Don't know (vol.)

Q-32. **(ASK if said 1 or more at Q-31)** Among those who have management responsibilities, how many, if any, are women? (**OPEN END — RECORD <u>NUMERIC</u> RESPONSE; IF NONE, RECORD 0)**

_____ **(READ ALOUD TO CONFIRM AFTER WRITING)**

_____
9996. Not asked
9998. Refused (vol.)
9999. Don't know (vol.)

Q-33.**(ASK if said 1 or more at Q-31)** And how many of your management-level staff are young people? **(OPEN END — RECORD <u>NUMERIC</u> RESPONSE; IF NONE, RECORD 0)**

_____ **(READ ALOUD TO CONFIRM AFTER WRITING)**

_____
9996. Not asked
9998. Refused (vol.)
9999. Don't know (vol.)

Budget

READ: *Now I would like to ask some questions about your organization's finances.*

Q-34. Which of the following on this card is closest to your overall 2012 annual budget? **(SHOW CARD — READ ALOUD TO CONFIRM AFTER WRITING.)**

	USD Dollars	AFG Afghanis[5]
1	Less than $25,000	Less than 1,400,000 Afghanis
2	$25,000-$50,000	1,400,000 Afghanis to 2,800,000
3	$50,001-$75,000	2,800,056 Afghanis to 4,200,000
4	$75,001-$100,000	4,200,056 Afghanis to 5,600,000
5	$100,001-$500,000	5,600,56 Afghanis to 28,000,000
6	$500,001-$1,000,000	28,000,056 Afghanis to 56,000,000
7	More than $1,000,000	More than 56,000,000 Afghanis
8	Refused (vol)	Refused (vol)
9	Don't know (vol)	Don't know (vol)

Funding

Q-35. In 2012, did your organization receive resources (cash or in-kind) from (**ITEM**)?

(ITEM)	Yes	No	Refused (vol.)	Don't know (vol.)
a. Afghan national government	1	2	8	9
b. Afghan provincial government	1	2	8	9
c. Afghan local government	1	2	8	9
d. Contributions from individual members	1	2	8	9
e. Contributions from non-members, or communities	1	2	8	9
f. For-profit businesses or businesspeople	1	2	8	9
g. Fees for services (e.g. courses)	1	2	8	9
h. Other Afghan CSOs	1	2	8	9
i. International donors	1	2	8	9
j. Other **(IF YES) Specify:** _____	1	2	8	9

5 Exchange rate used is 56 AFG = 1 USD (8-14-2013)

Q-36. **(ASK FOR EACH SOURCE FROM WHICH REVENUE WAS RECEIVED CODE '1' in Q-35)** For each of these, please tell me if it was a new source of resources for your organization in 2012, or if your organization received resources from them prior to 2012.

(ITEM)	New revenue source	Past revenue source	Not asked	Refused (vol.)	Don't know (vol.)
a. Afghan national government	1	2	6	8	9
b. Afghan provincial government	1	2	6	8	9
c. Afghan local government	1	2	6	8	9
d. Contributions from individual members	1	2	6	8	9
e. Contributions from non-members, or communities	1	2	6	8	9
f. For-profit businesses or businesspeople	1	2	6	8	9
g. Fees for services (e.g. courses)	1	2	6	8	9
h. Other Afghan CSOs	1	2	6	8	9
i. International donors	1	2	6	8	9
j. Other **(IF YES) Specify:_____**	1	2	6	8	9

Q-37. Specifically, in the last three years, has your funding from **(ASK FOR EACH ITEM THAT IS A 'PAST REVENUE SOURCE' CODE '2' in Q-36)** increased a great deal, increased somewhat, stayed about the same, decreased somewhat or decreased a great deal?

(ITEM)	Increased great deal	Increased somewhat	Stayed same	Decreased somewhat	Decreased great deal	Not asked	Ref (vol.)	DK (vol.)
a. Afghan national government	1	2	3	4	5	6	8	9
b. Afghan provincial government	1	2	3	4	5	6	8	9
c. Afghan local government	1	2	3	4	5	6	8	9
d. Contributions from individual members	1	2	3	4	5	6	8	9
e. Contributions from non-members, or communities	1	2	3	4	5	6	8	9
f. From for-profit businesses or businesspeople	1	2	3	4	5	6	8	9
g. Fees for services (e.g. courses)	1	2	3	4	5	6	8	9
h. Other Afghan CSOs	1	2	3	4	5	6	8	9
i. International donors	1	2	3	4	5	6	8	9
j. Other **(IF YES) Specify:_____**	1	2	3	4	5	6	8	9

Q-38. **(ASK ALL)** In the past three years has your overall funding increased, decreased or stayed about the same?

1. Increased
2. Decreased
3. Stayed about the same

_____
8. Refused (vol.)
9. Don't know (vol.)

Q-39. **(IF FUNDED BY INTERNATIONAL DONORS '1' IN Q-35I)** You mentioned that your organization receives funding from international donors. How easy or difficult has it been for your organization to obtain this funding – very easy, somewhat easy, somewhat difficult or very difficult?

1. Very easy
2. Somewhat easy
3. Somewhat difficult
4. Very difficult

_____
6. Not asked
8. Refused (vol.)
9. Don't know (vol.)

Q-40.**(IF FUNDED BY INTERNATIONAL DONORS '1' IN Q-35I)** To what extent do you think that your international donors understand **(ITEM)** – very well, somewhat well, not so well or not well at all?

(ITEM)	Very well	Somewhat well	Not so well	Not well at all	Not asked	Refused (vol.)	Don't know (vol.)
a. Afghan culture	1	2	3	4	6	8	9
b. The customary ways of doing things in our country	1	2	3	4	6	8	9
c. The needs of the communities or groups you serve	1	2	3	4	6	8	9
d. Your own organization's priorities	1	2	3	4	6	8	9
e. The challenges your organization faces	1	2	3	4	6	8	9

Q-41. **(IF NOT FUNDED BY INTERNATIONAL DONORS '2' IN Q-35I)** You mentioned that your organization is not funded by international donors. What's the main reason – is that because it's too difficult to apply for this funding, because you think you do not qualify for this funding, because you have applied and were rejected, because you're not interested, or because you don't know how or where to apply?

1. Too difficult to apply
2. Do not qualify
3. Applied and rejected
4. Not interested

5. Don't know how or where to apply

_____

6. Not asked
7. Submitted request for funding but did not get a result yet (vol.)
8. Refused (vol.)
9. Don't know (vol.)

Q-42A. **(ASK ALL)** Do you file reports on your **funding** with the government of Afghanistan, or not?

1. Yes   **(GO TO Q-42B)**
2. No   **(SKIP TO Q-43A)**

_____

8. Refused (vol.)   **(SKIP TO Q-43A)**
9. Don't know (vol.)   **(SKIP TO Q-43A)**

Q-42B. **(ASK IF YES '1' IN Q-42A)** To what particular office do you file these reports?

_____ **(OPEN END – VENDOR CODES)**

_____

96. Not asked
98. Refused (vol.)
99. Don't know (vol.)

Q-43A. **(ASK ALL)** Apart from your funding, do you file reports on your activities with the government of Afghanistan, or not?

1. Yes   **(GO TO Q-43B)**
2. No   **(SKIP TO Q-44A)**

_____

8. Refused (vol.)   **(SKIP TO Q-44A)**
9. Don't know (vol.)   **(SKIP TO Q-44A)**

Q-43B. **(ASK IF YES '1' IN Q-43A)** To what particular office do you file these reports?

_____ **(OPEN END – VENDOR CODES)**

_____

96. Not asked
98. Refused (vol.)
99. Don't know (vol.)

Q-44A. **(ASK ALL)** Over the past 12 months, has your organization conducted activities designed to get additional funding, or not?

1. Yes   **(GO TO Q-44B)**
2. No   **(SKIP TO Q-45)**

_____

8. Refused (vol.)   **(SKIP TO Q-45)**
9. Don't know (vol.)   **(SKIP TO Q-45)**

Q-44B. **(Ask if answered YES '1' in Q-44A)** How many of the following types of fundraising activities has your organization completed in the past 12 months?

READ DEFINITION: *Fundraising is the process of soliciting and gathering contributions as money or in-kind resources, by requesting donations from individuals, businesses, charitable foundations, or governmental agencies.*

(OPEN END — RECORD NUMERIC RESPONSE; WRITE DOWN '0' FOR NONE)

	CODE/NUMERIC RESPONSE
a. Special events	__ __ __ __
b. Corporate contributions	__ __ __ __
c. Membership dues	__ __ __ __
d. Private foundation grants	__ __ __ __
e. Government grants	__ __ __ __
f. Government contracts	__ __ __ __
g. Personal solicitations	__ __ __ __
h. Capital campaigns	__ __ __ __
i. Other	__ __ __ __
j. Not asked	9996
k. Refused (vol.)	9997
l. Don't know (vol.)	9999

Q-45. **(ASK ALL)** Are you currently seeking new funding sources, or not?

1. Yes	**(SKIP TO Q-47)**
2. No	**(GO TO Q-46)**

8. Refused (vol.)	**(SKIP TO Q-47)**
9. Don't know (vol.)	**(SKIP TO Q-47)**

Q-46. **(ASK IF NOT SEEKING NEW FUNDING '2' IN Q-45)** Is that because you are satisfied with your current funding sources, or because you don't have the staff to seek other funding sources?

1. Satisfied with current funding sources
2. Don't have the staff to seek other funding sources

6. Not asked
8. Refused (vol.)
9. Don't know (vol.)

Communication/Outreach

READ: *Now I would like to ask questions about your organization's communication and outreach.*

Q-47. **(ASK ALL)** How often does your organization communicate with its constituents about its activities – weekly, monthly, several times a year or less often than that?

1. Weekly
2. Monthly
3. Several times a year
4. Less often than that

_____
8. Refused (vol.)
9. Don't know (vol.)

Q-48. What is the main way your organization seeks to communicate with its constituents – is it through media such as radio, television or newspapers; through public or religious meetings or events; through pamphlets or brochures; by internet or cell phone; or by word of mouth?

1. Media, such as radio, television, or newspapers
2. Public or religious meetings or events
3. Pamphlets or brochures
4. Internet or cell phone
5. Word of mouth

_____
8. Refused (vol.)
9. Don't know (vol.)

Public Image

READ: *Now I would like to ask about how the public views civil society organizations.*

Q-49. Overall, what do you think is the reputation of **(ITEM)** among Afghans – very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or very unfavorable?
(NEW)

(ITEM)	Very favorable	Somewhat favorable	Somewhat unfavorable	Very unfavorable	Refused (vol.)	Don't know (vol.)
a. Afghan civil society organizations	1	2	3	4	8	9
b. International non-governmental organizations operating in Afghanistan	1	2	3	4	8	9

Q-50. Thinking about the past three years, would you say the reputation of **(ITEM)** among Afghans has improved, worsened or stayed about the same?

(ITEM)	Improved	Worsened	Stayed about the same	Refused (vol.)	Don't know (vol.)
a. Afghan civil society organizations	1	2	3	8	9
b. International non-governmental organizations operating in Afghanistan	1	2	3	8	9

Coordination/Networking

READ: *Now I would like to ask about how your organization coordinates and networks with others.*

Q-51. How often does your organization work or consult with other CSOs – frequently, sometimes, rarely or never?

1. Frequently	**(CONTINUE ON TO Q-52)**
2. Sometimes	**(CONTINUE ON TO Q-52)**
3. Rarely	**(CONTINUE ON TO Q-52)**
4. Never	**(SKIP TO Q-53)**
_____	
8. Refused (vol.)	**(SKIP TO Q-53)**
9. Don't know (vol.)	**(SKIP TO Q-53)**

Q-52. **(ASK if answered frequently '1', sometimes '2' or rarely '3' in Q-51)** What is the nature of your relations with these CSOs, do you **[INSERT ITEM]**? **(Multiple Response – Select all that apply – SHOW CARD AND READ ALOUD)**

(ITEM)	Yes	No	Not Asked	Refused (vol.)	Don't know (vol.)
a. Work on project partnerships	1	2	6	8	9
b. Exchange information and ideas	1	2	6	8	9
c. Participate together in public policy debates	1	2	6	8	9
d. Jointly try to obtain funds for your organizations	1	2	6	8	9
e. Coordinate your political activities	1	2	6	8	9
f. Coordinate provision of services	1	2	6	8	9
g. Help each other develop knowledge and skills	1	2	6	8	9
h. Other: **(SPECIFY: _____)**	1	2	6	8	9

Q-53. **(ASK ALL)** How often does your organization work or consult with (ITEM) – frequently, sometimes, rarely or never?

(ITEM)	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Refused (vol.)	Don't know (vol.)
a. Representatives of the national government	1	2	3	4	8	9
b. Representatives of local government	1	2	3	4	8	9
c. Representatives of international donor organizations	1	2	3	4	8	9
d. Religious groups at the community level	1	2	3	4	8	9
e. Non-religious community groups	1	2	3	4	8	9
f. Community leaders	1	2	3	4	8	9
g. Media organizations	1	2	3	4	8	9

Q-54. Does your organization belong to any larger network organization that represents civil society organizations working in the same sector, or not?

1. Yes   **(CONTINUE TO Q-55)**
2. No   **(SKIP TO Q-56)**

_____
8. Refused (vol.)   **(SKIP TO Q-56)**
9. Don't know (vol.)   **(SKIP TO Q-56)**

Q-55. **(IF YES '1' in Q-54)** How effective, if at all, would you say this network is at helping your organization meet its goals – very effective, somewhat effective, not so effective or not effective at all?

1. Very effective
2. Somewhat effective
3. Not so effective
4. Not effective at all

_____
6. Not asked
8. Refused (vol.)
9. Don't know (vol.)

Capacity

READ: *Now I would like to ask about your organization's capabilities.*

Q-56. **(ASK ALL)** Does your organization have **(ITEM)? (READ ALL AND RECORD ANSWERS FOR EACH)**

(ITEM)	Yes	No	Refused (vol.)	Don't know (vol.)
a. Written rules describing why it exists and how it's governed (statutes, bylaws)	1	2	8	9
b. Written mission statement/goals	1	2	8	9
c. Procurement and accounting policy/manual	1	2	8	9
d. Employee handbook or manual	1	2	8	9
e. Financial policies and procedures	1	2	8	9
f. IT policy	1	2	8	9
g. Security protocol	1	2	8	9
h. An external governing committee or boards (this would be separate from the actual organization but directs policy)	1	2	8	9
i. Formal procedures to assess your performance on an ongoing basis	1	2	8	9
j. A written communication plan	1	2	8	9

Q-57. Which three of the following does this organization need to have increased or improved the most? **(SHOW CARD; MARK ONLY THREE MENTIONS)**

Q-57a. **First mention:** _____

Q-57b. **Second mention:** _____

Q-57c. **Third mention:** _____

1. Organization management, governance, strategy, planning
2. Project development, proposal-writing
3. Fundraising
4. Project management
5. Human resource (staff) management
6. Financial management, accounting
7. Activity monitoring, evaluation, report-writing
8. Advocacy (to the government, private sector)
9. Community needs assessment, community mobilization or working with the community
10. Public relations, communication, using the media to educate the public
11. Women's participation in the organization's projects & activities
12. Computer use
13. Communications equipment (phone/fax/email)
14. English language
15. Office space or equipment

16. Number of staff
17. Training for staff
18. Transportation means
19. Security precautions

_____

95. Other, **SPECIFY:** _____
98. Refused (vol.)
99. Don't know (vol.)

Q-58. In the last three years, have any employees of your organization received training in **(ITEM),** or not?

(ITEM)	Yes	No	Refused (vol.)	Don't know (vol.)
a. writing grant proposals	1	2	8	9
b. how to engage in advocacy and policy making	1	2	8	9
c. management planning	1	2	8	9
d. financial planning and accounting	1	2	8	9
e. administration	1	2	8	9
f. public communication and outreach	1	2	8	9
g. conflict resolution and negotiation skills	1	2	8	9
h. registration and government regulation	1	2	8	9
i. monitoring and evaluation of your programs	1	2	8	9
j. gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment	1	2	8	9
k. youth development and participation	1	2	8	9
l. community mobilization	1	2	8	9
m. networking	1	2	8	9

Government Regulation

READ: *Now I would like to ask you about government regulations.*

Q-59.How would you rate the current legal and regulatory environment for civil society organizations in Afghanistan? Is it very good, somewhat good, somewhat bad or very bad?

1. Very good
2. Somewhat good
3. Somewhat bad
4. Very bad

_____

8. Refused (vol.)
9. Don't know (vol.)

Q-60. Thinking about the past three years, would you say the legal and regulatory environment has improved, worsened or stayed about the same?

1. Improved
2. Worsened
3. Stayed about the same

_____
8. Refused (vol.)
9. Don't know (vol.)

Q-61A. Does the legal and regulatory environment affect your organization's ability to operate, or not?

1. Yes   **(CONTINUE TO Q-61B)**
2. No   **(SKIP TO Q-62)**

_____
8. Refused (vol.)   **(SKIP TO Q-62)**
9. Don't know (vol.)   **(SKIP TO Q-62)**

Q-61B. **(IF YES '1' in Q-61A)** Overall, does the legal and regulatory environment help or hurt your organization's ability to operate?

1. Helps
2. Hurts

_____
6. Not asked
8. Refused (vol.)
9. Don't know (vol.)

Security

READ: *Now I would like to ask you about the security situation in the country.*

Q-62. **(ASK ALL)** Overall, how would you rate the security situation in the places where your organization operates? Is it very good, somewhat good, somewhat bad or very bad?

1. Very good
2. Somewhat good
3. Somewhat bad
4. Very bad

_____
8. Refused (vol.)
9. Don't know (vol.)

Q-63. Which province where you operate has the most difficult security situation? **(RECORD RESPONSE FROM LIST OF PROVINCES. CODE ONE PROVINCE, READ ALOUD TO CONFIRM AFTER WRITING.)**

1. Kabul	10. Ningarhar	19. Samangan	28. Kandhar
2. Kapisa	11. Laghman	20. Juzjan	29. Zabul
3. Parwan	12. Kunar	21. Sar-I-Pul	30. Uruzgan
4. Wardak	13. Nooristan	22. Faryab	31. Ghor
5. Logar	14. Badakhshan	23. Badghis	32. Bamyan
6. Ghazni	15. Takhar	24. Herat	33. Panjshir
7. Paktia	16. Baghlan	25. Farah	34. Dehkondi
8. Paktika	17. Kunduz	26. Nimroz	95. None of them (vol.)
9. Khost	18. Balkh	27. Helmand	96. All equally (vol.)
			98. Refused (vol.)
			99. Don't know (vol.)

Q-64. In your opinion, do you think that over the past three years security has become more of an impediment to implementing civil society and NGO programs, less of an impediment, or has there been no change?

1. More of an impediment
2. Less of an impediment
3. No change

_____
8. Refused (vol.)
9. Don't know (vol.)

Transformation Decade

READ ALOUD: *The next questions look ahead to the "transformation decade" starting in 2014, when Afghanistan moves toward greater self-sufficiency and less international involvement in its affairs.*

Q-65. Thinking about the decade ahead, are you very optimistic, somewhat optimistic, somewhat pessimistic or very pessimistic about the future development of civil society organizations in Afghanistan? **(NEW)**

1. Very optimistic
2. Somewhat optimistic
3. Somewhat pessimistic
4. Very pessimistic

_____
8. Refused (vol.)
9. Don't know (vol.)

Q-66. In your view, what is the greatest challenge facing civil society organizations operating in Afghanistan in the decade ahead – lack of funding, lack of security, lack of capacity, lack of coordination among organizations, or something else **(SPECIFY)**?

1. Lack of funding
2. Lack of security
3. Lack of capacity
4. Lack of coordination

_____
95. Something else (**SPECIFY:**_____)
98. Refused (vol.)
99. Don't know (vol.)

Q-67. How much, if at all, are you worried about the possibility of **(ITEM)** negatively impacting your organization in the transformation decade – very worried, somewhat worried, not so worried or not worried at all?

(ITEM)	Very worried	Somewhat worried	Not so worried	Not worried at all	Refused (vol.)	Don't Know (vol.)
a. Reduced international funding	1	2	3	4	8	9
b. Increased insecurity and violence	1	2	3	4	8	9
c. Increased political instability	1	2	3	4	8	9
d. Reduced influence of CSOs in policy-making	1	2	3	4	8	9

2014 Election

READ: *Now I would like to ask you about the upcoming elections.*

Q-68. With regard to the presidential and provincial council elections in 2014, is your organization engaging in or planning to engage in **(ITEM)**, or not?

(ITEM)	Yes	No	Refused (vol.)	Don't know (vol.)
a. elections monitoring	1	2	8	9
b. increasing public awareness of the elections	1	2	8	9
c. encouraging conditions for women to participate in the elections	1	2	8	9
d. encouraging conditions for youth to participate in the elections	1	2	8	9
e. encouraging conditions for other groups to participate in the elections	1	2	8	9

I-PACS

READ: *Next, on IPACS...*

Q-69. Is your organization currently a participant in the I-PACS II program, the USAID funded Initiative to Promote Civil Society that is being implemented by Counterpart International?

1. Yes
2. No
_____
8. Refused (vol.)
9. Don't know (vol.)

READ: *And finally, just a few questions for our records before we finish.*

Q-70. Does your organization have **(ITEM)** or not?

(ITEM)	Yes	No	Refused (vol.)	Don't know (vol.)
a. A well-functioning computer system	1	2	8	9
b. Access to the internet	1	2	8	9
c. Enough office space	1	2	8	9

READ: *Thank you very much for your time. It's been a pleasure having a chance to talk with you. Good luck in your future activities!*

RECORD THE TIME (USING 24 HOUR CLOCK) INTERVIEW WAS COMPLETED AND THE LENGTH OF THE INTERVIEW (M-16 AND M-17)

Read Closing Statement to the Respondent:

"Thank you for participating in our survey. Do you have any questions? In the next few days my supervisor may contact you to evaluate the quality of my work and answer any other questions you may have. To help him do that, could I have your telephone number?"

Respondent Information: **Name:** _____
                                Address: _____
                                                _____
                                Telephone: _____

Interviewer Certification: "I certify that I have completed this interview according to the instructions provided me by the Afghan Center for Socio-economic and Opinion Research.

_____   _____
Signed   Date

D-1. Interviewer: Which of the following statements do you think best describes the level of comprehension of the survey questionnaire by the respondent?

1. The respondent understood all of the questions
2. The respondent understood most of the questions
3. The respondent understood most of the questions but needed some help
4. The respondent had difficulty understanding most of the questions, even with help from me

D-2. Interviewer: Which of the following statements best describes the level of comfort or unease that the respondent had with the survey questionnaire?

1. The respondent was comfortable (at ease) with the entire questionnaire
2. The respondent was comfortable with most of the questions
3. The respondent was comfortable with only some of the questions
4. The respondent was generally uncomfortable with the survey questionnaire

D-3. (Interviewer Code): Please indicate which, if any, of the questions caused this respondent any uneasiness or decreased cooperation during the interview. **(Write down no more than three question numbers, in order of mention).**

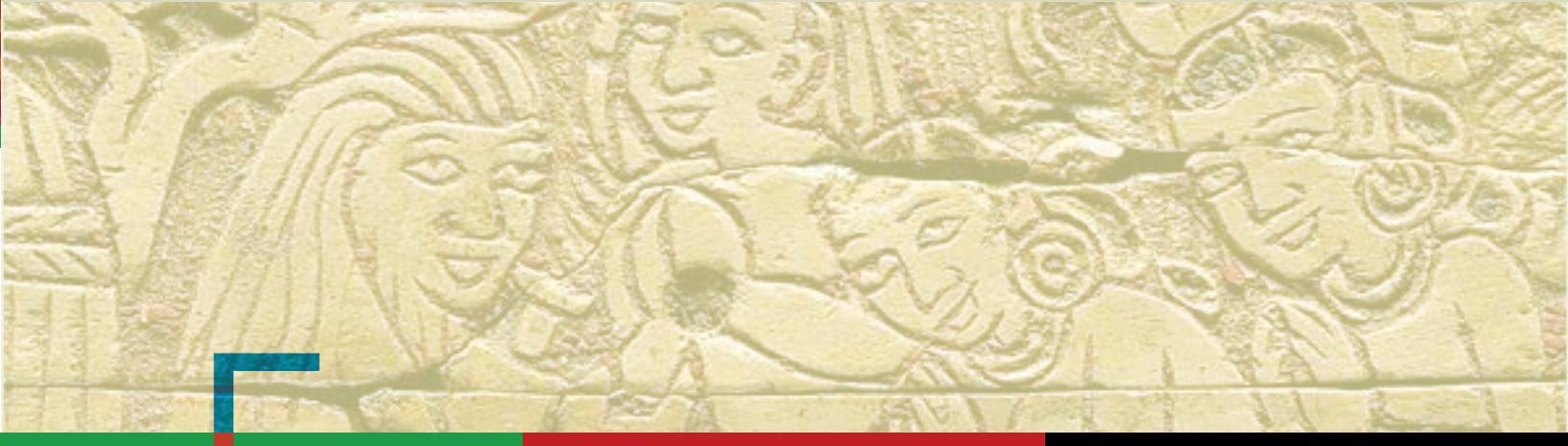a. First Mention _____
b. Second Mention _____
c. Third Mention _____

To Be Completed By The Supervisor:

D-4. Was the interview subject to quality control/back-check?

1. Yes
2. No

D-5. Method of quality control/back-check

1. Direct supervision during interview
2. Back-check in person by supervisor
3. Back-check from the central office
4. Not applicable

E References

The following sources were consulted in preparation of the literature review associated with this report (see Appendix A), which in turn informed the questionnaire design and data analysis for the 2013 assessment of civil society organizations in Afghanistan.

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