

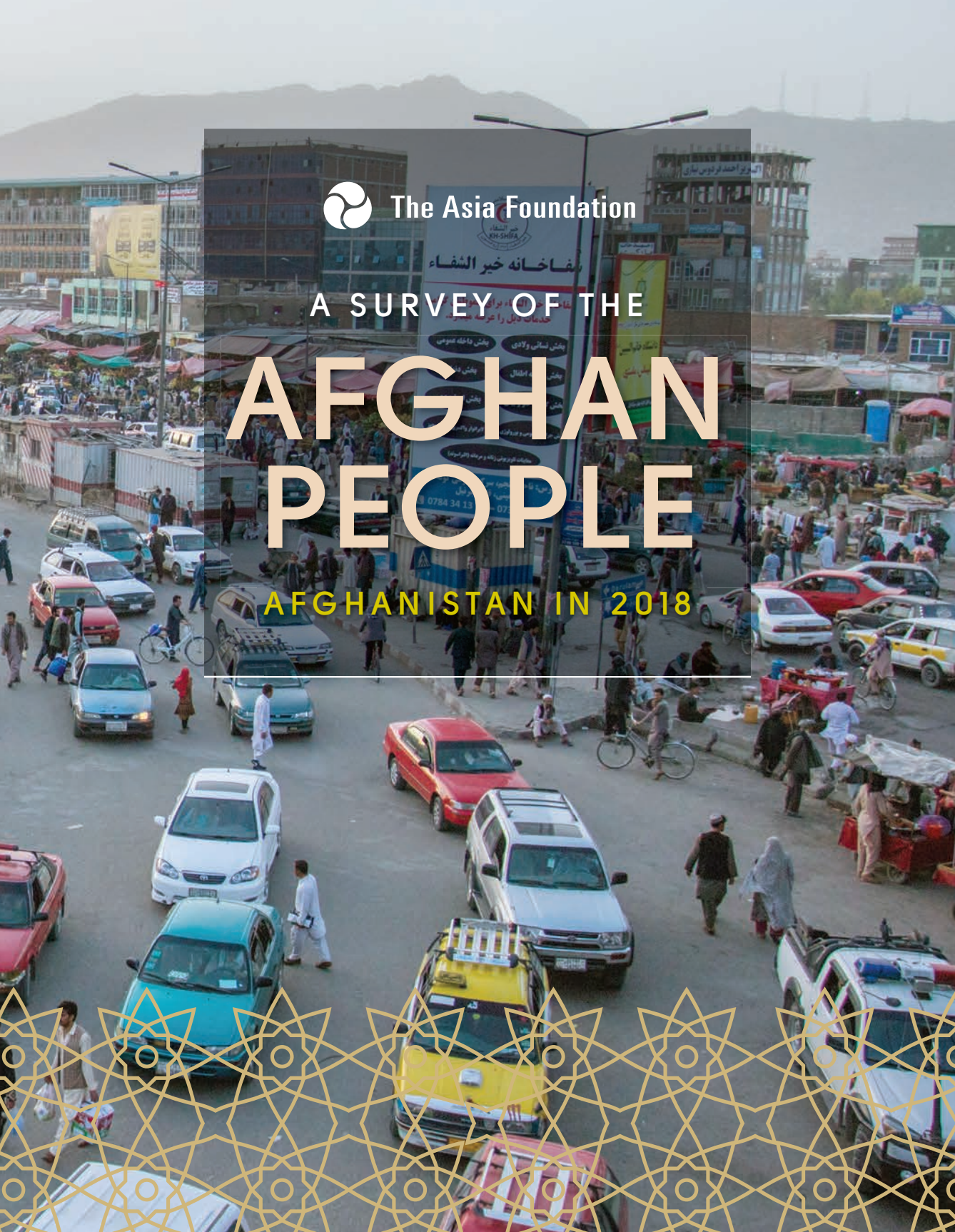


The Asia Foundation

A SURVEY OF THE

# AFGHAN PEOPLE

AFGHANISTAN IN 2018





A SURVEY OF THE

# AFGHAN PEOPLE

AFGHANISTAN IN 2018



**The Asia Foundation**

AFGHANISTAN IN 2018  
A SURVEY OF THE AFGHAN PEOPLE

PROJECT DIRECTION  
The Asia Foundation

EDITORS  
Tabasum Akseer and John Rieger

AUTHORS  
Tabasum Akseer, Mohammad Shoaib Haidary, Charlotte Maxwell-Jones,  
Sayed Masood Sadat, David Swift, Kris Veenstra, Fahim Ahmad Yousufzai

FIELDWORK AND MONITORING  
Afghan Center for Socio-Economic and Opinion Research (ACSOR)  
Sayara Research

BOOK DESIGN  
Kristin Kelly Colombano

ABOUT THE ASIA FOUNDATION

The Asia Foundation is a nonprofit international development organization committed to improving lives across a dynamic and developing Asia. Informed by six decades of experience and deep local expertise, our work across the region addresses five overarching goals—strengthen governance, empower women, expand economic opportunity, increase environmental resilience, and promote regional cooperation.

Headquartered in San Francisco, The Asia Foundation works through a network of offices in 18 Asian countries and in Washington, DC. Working with public and private partners, the Foundation receives funding from a diverse group of bilateral and multilateral development agencies, foundations, corporations, and individuals. For more information, visit [asiafoundation.org](http://asiafoundation.org)

© 2018 The Asia Foundation  
Printed on acid-free 100% recycled paper

*Photography by Omer Khan. Cover image taken from a highway overpass on west side of Kote Sangi, a busy and diverse area of Kabul. This is a main artery that leads to Wardak and the Southern provinces.*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	1
<b>1 NATIONAL MOOD .....</b>	<b>15</b>
1.1 NATIONAL MOOD: DIRECTION OF THE COUNTRY .....	16
1.2 REASONS FOR OPTIMISM OR PESSIMISM .....	21
1.3 LOCAL MOOD .....	27
1.4 BIGGEST PROBLEMS IN LOCAL AREA .....	29
1.5 BIGGEST PROBLEMS FACING WOMEN .....	32
1.6 BIGGEST PROBLEMS FACING YOUTH .....	35
1.7 SELF-REPORTED HAPPINESS .....	37
<b>2 SECURITY .....</b>	<b>43</b>
2.1 FEAR FOR PERSONAL SAFETY .....	45
2.2 CRIME AND VIOLENCE .....	52
2.3 PERCEPTIONS OF THE AFGHAN NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY FORCES .....	55
2.4 GROUPS WHO POSE A SECURITY THREAT .....	59
2.5 RECONCILIATION .....	62
<b>3 ECONOMIC GROWTH AND EMPLOYMENT .....</b>	<b>67</b>
3.1 OVERALL PERCEPTIONS OF THE ECONOMY .....	68
3.2 HOUSEHOLD ECONOMIC SITUATION .....	69
3.3 EMPLOYMENT .....	73
3.4 WOMEN AND THE ECONOMY .....	77
3.5 HOUSEHOLD ASSETS .....	79
3.6 HOUSEHOLD INCOME .....	82
3.7 WEALTH AND HAPPINESS .....	84
<b>4 DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICE DELIVERY .....</b>	<b>89</b>
4.1 ELECTRICITY SUPPLY .....	90
4.2 NUTRITION AND ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE .....	93
4.3 EDUCATION .....	102
4.4 AWARENESS OF DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS .....	104
<b>5 GOVERNANCE .....</b>	<b>111</b>
5.1 SATISFACTION WITH GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE .....	112
5.2 CONFIDENCE IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS .....	114
5.3 CORRUPTION .....	116
5.4 JUSTICE AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION .....	119
<b>6 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION .....</b>	<b>127</b>
6.1 EXERCISING BASIC POLITICAL FREEDOMS .....	128
6.2 ABILITY TO INFLUENCE LOCAL GOVERNMENT DECISIONS .....	131
6.3 ELECTIONS .....	133
6.4 ATTITUDES TOWARDS DEMOCRACY .....	138

6.5	POLITICS AND RELIGION .....	142
6.6	WOMEN IN POLITICS .....	143
<b>7</b>	<b>ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND THE MEDIA .....</b>	<b>151</b>
7.1	SOURCES OF NEWS AND INFORMATION .....	152
7.2	ACCESS TO THE INTERNET AND USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA .....	156
7.3	ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN PUBLIC OPINION AND BEHAVIOR .....	158
<b>8</b>	<b>WOMEN IN SOCIETY .....</b>	<b>165</b>
8.1	WOMEN'S ACCESS TO JUSTICE .....	166
8.2	CUSTOMS AND TRIBAL PRACTICES .....	168
8.3	POLITICAL PARTICIPATION .....	176
8.4	EDUCATION .....	183
8.5	ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES .....	188
<b>9</b>	<b>MIGRATION .....</b>	<b>201</b>
9.1	WILLINGNESS TO MIGRATE .....	202
9.2	REASONS FOR LEAVING .....	207
9.3	PROMOTING DECISIONS TO STAY .....	214
9.4	PERCEPTIONS OF RETURNEE EXPERIENCES .....	216
<b>APPENDIX 1:</b>	<b>METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>223</b>
1	SUMMARY .....	223
2	QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN .....	225
3	SAMPLE DESIGN .....	225
4	PROVINCIAL POPULATION .....	228
5	MARGIN OF ERROR .....	230
6	INTERVIEWERS .....	231
7	SAMPLING REPLACEMENTS .....	232
8	FIELD QUALITY CONTROLS .....	236
9	GPS COORDINATES .....	237
10	CODING, DATA ENTRY, AND DATA QUALITY CONTROLS .....	237
<b>APPENDIX 2:</b>	<b>SAMPLE DEMOGRAPHICS .....</b>	<b>241</b>
<b>APPENDIX 3:</b>	<b>INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE .....</b>	<b>245</b>

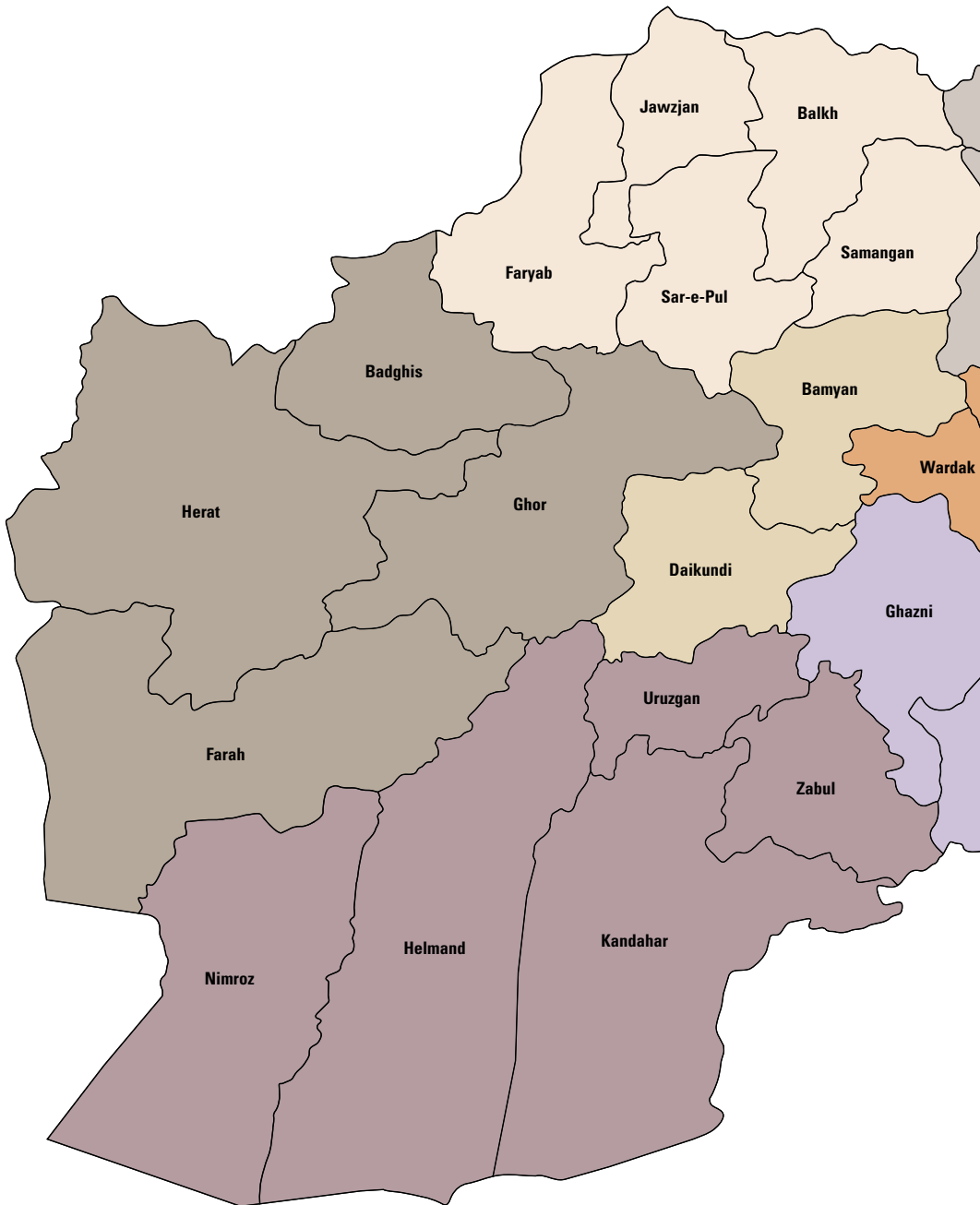
# TABLE OF FIGURES

1.1	NATIONAL MOOD: DIRECTION OF THE COUNTRY	17
1.2	NATIONAL MOOD, BY ETHNICITY	18
1.3	NATIONAL MOOD, BY PROVINCE	21
1.4	REASONS FOR OPTIMISM, BY YEAR	22
1.5	REASONS FOR OPTIMISM, BY ETHNICITY	23
1.6	TOP REASONS FOR OPTIMISM, BY REGION	24
1.7	REASONS FOR PESSIMISM	25
1.8	REASONS FOR PESSIMISM, BY URBAN AND RURAL	26
1.9	REASONS FOR PESSIMISM, BY REGION	27
1.10	WHAT IS GOING WELL LOCALLY, BY YEAR	28
1.11	BIGGEST PROBLEMS IN LOCAL AREA	29
1.12	BIGGEST PROBLEMS LOCALLY, BY REGION	31
1.13	BIGGEST LOCAL PROBLEMS FACING WOMEN	33
1.14	BIGGEST PROBLEM FACING WOMEN, BY URBAN AND RURAL	34
1.15	BIGGEST PROBLEMS FACING YOUTH LOCALLY	36
1.16	GENERAL HAPPINESS, BY GENDER	38
1.17	SELF-REPORTED HAPPINESS, BY REGION	39
2.1	FEAR FOR PERSONAL SAFETY	45
2.2	FEAR WHILE DOING DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES	46
2.3	FEAR WHILE VOTING	48
2.4	FEAR WHEN TRAVELLING	51
2.5	EXPERIENCE OF CRIME OR VIOLENCE, BY REGION	52
2.6	TYPES OF CRIME OR VIOLENCE, BY RURAL AND URBAN	53
2.7	REPORTING CRIME TO INSTITUTIONS	54
2.8	INTENTION TO VOTE, BY OPINION OF ANA AND ANP	55
2.9	SECURITY PROVIDER IN LOCAL AREA, BY RURAL AND URBAN	56
2.10	PERCEPTION THAT ANA AND ANP NEED FOREIGN SUPPORT	57
2.11	PERCEPTIONS OF THE AFGHAN NATIONAL ARMY	58
2.12	PERCEPTIONS OF THE AFGHAN NATIONAL POLICE	59
2.13	WHO POSES A SECURITY THREAT, BY ETHNICITY	61
3.1	ECONOMIC CONCERNS	69
3.2	EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES OF HOUSEHOLDS, BY PROVINCE	70
3.3	FINANCIAL SITUATION OF HOUSEHOLDS, BY PROVINCE	71
3.4	IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS ON FINANCIAL SITUATION OF HOUSEHOLD	72
3.5	IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS ON EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES OF HOUSEHOLD	73
3.6	EARNING INCOME, BY PROVINCE	74
3.7	WOMEN EARNING INCOME, BY PROVINCE	75
3.8	EARNING INCOME, BY EDUCATION LEVEL (FEMALE RESPONDENTS ONLY)	76
3.9	FARMING AS AN ECONOMIC ACTIVITY TO GENERATE MONEY	77
3.10	WOMEN CONTRIBUTING TO HOUSEHOLD INCOME, BY REGION	78
3.11	WOMEN CONTRIBUTING TO THE HOUSEHOLD INCOME, BY SECURITY PROVIDER	79
3.12	TV OWNERSHIP, BY RURAL AND URBAN	80
3.13	HOUSEHOLD ASSET INVENTORY	80

3.14	HOUSEHOLD LAND OWNERSHIP . . . . .	81
3.15	HOUSEHOLD LIVESTOCK OWNERSHIP, BY PROVINCE . . . . .	82
3.16	AVERAGE MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME . . . . .	83
3.17	AVERAGE MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME, BY REGION . . . . .	84
3.18	HAPPINESS AND FINANCIAL SITUATION . . . . .	85
4.1	SOURCE OF ELECTRICITY, BY RURAL AND URBAN . . . . .	91
4.2	HOURS OF ELECTRICITY ACCESS, BY REGION . . . . .	92
4.3	MAIN USES OF ELECTRICITY . . . . .	93
4.4	PERCEPTIONS OF FOOD QUALITY . . . . .	94
4.5	REASONS FOR VISITING PUBLIC HOSPITALS OR CLINICS, BY RURAL AND URBAN . . . . .	97
4.6	PERCEIVED DIRECTION OF THE COUNTRY, BY HOURS TO REACH PUBLIC HOSPITAL OR CLINIC . . . . .	98
4.7	ACCESS TO CLEAN DRINKING WATER, BY REGION . . . . .	100
4.8	ACCESS TO DRINKING WATER AS BIGGEST PROBLEM, BY LOCAL AREA . . . . .	101
4.9	QUALITY OF SCHOOL SERVICES. . . . .	103
4.10	PERCEPTION OF EDUCATION SERVICES, BY SECURITY PROVIDER. . . . .	104
4.11	AWARENESS OF DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN THE LOCAL AREA . . . . .	105
4.12	ACCESS TO SERVICES, BY WORSENING FINANCIAL SITUATION. . . . .	106
5.1	SATISFACTION WITH GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE. . . . .	112
5.2	CONFIDENCE IN PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT, BY LEVEL OF FEAR. . . . .	114
5.3	CONFIDENCE IN OFFICIALS, INSTITUTIONS, AND ORGANIZATIONS . . . . .	115
5.4	PERCEPTION OF CORRUPTION AS A PROBLEM IN AFGHANISTAN . . . . .	117
5.5	PERCEPTION OF CORRUPTION AS A PROBLEM IN DAILY LIFE. . . . .	118
5.6	EXPERIENCES WITH CORRUPTION, BY INSTITUTION . . . . .	119
5.7	USE OF STATE COURT, HUQUQ, OR SHURA/JIRGA TO RESOLVE A DISPUTE . . . . .	121
5.8	OPINIONS ABOUT DISPUTE RESOLUTION INSTITUTIONS . . . . .	122
5.9	TYPES OF CASES TAKEN TO DISPUTE RESOLUTION. . . . .	123
6.1	FEAR WHILE VOTING . . . . .	129
6.2	INTENTION TO VOTE, BY FEAR WHILE VOTING . . . . .	130
6.3	INFLUENCE OVER LOCAL GOVERNMENT DECISIONS . . . . .	131
6.4	SATISFACTION WITH DEMOCRACY, BY PERCEIVED INFLUENCE OVER LOCAL GOVERNMENT DECISIONS . . . . .	132
6.5	ELECTION AWARENESS, BY GENDER, LOCATION, AND EXPOSURE TO TELEVISION . . . . .	133
6.6	AWARENESS OF ELECTIONS, BY TYPE . . . . .	134
6.7	SOURCE OF ELECTION INFORMATION, BY RURAL AND URBAN . . . . .	135
6.8	REASONS FOR NOT VOTING, BY GENDER. . . . .	138
6.9	SATISFACTION WITH DEMOCRACY . . . . .	139
6.10	SATISFACTION WITH DEMOCRACY, BY HOUSEHOLD FINANCIAL SITUATION . . . . .	140
6.11	SATISFACTION WITH DEMOCRACY, BY CONFIDENCE IN GOVERNMENT MINISTERS . . . . .	141
6.12	ATTITUDE TOWARDS RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN POLITICS . . . . .	143
6.13	PREFERENCE FOR MALE REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT, BY GENDER . . . . .	144
6.14	WOMEN AND ELECTORAL DECISION MAKING. . . . .	145
7.1	SOURCES OF NEWS AND INFORMATION . . . . .	153
7.2	TV OWNERSHIP AND USAGE IN AFGHANISTAN . . . . .	154



7.3	SOURCES OF NEWS AND INFORMATION, BY GENDER AND RESIDENCE . . . . .	156
7.4	PERSONAL ACCESS TO THE INTERNET . . . . .	157
7.5	TELEVISION VS. RADIO CONSUMPTION . . . . .	158
7.6	APPROPRIATE DRESS FOR WOMEN IN PUBLIC, BY MEDIA TYPE . . . . .	160
7.7	INTENTION TO VOTE, BY MEDIA TYPE . . . . .	161
8.1	TYPE OF DISPUTE, BY PLACE OF RESOLUTION . . . . .	167
8.2	DISAGREE WITH BAAD, BY URBAN AND RURAL . . . . .	170
8.3	BAAD IS ACCEPTABLE, BY HOUSEHOLD INCOME . . . . .	170
8.4	BADDAL IS ACCEPTABLE, BY EDUCATION LEVEL . . . . .	171
8.5	BADDAL IS ACCEPTABLE, BY HOUSEHOLD INCOME . . . . .	172
8.6	APPROPRIATE DRESS FOR WOMEN IN PUBLIC . . . . .	173
8.7	APPROPRIATE DRESS FOR WOMEN IN PUBLIC, BY EDUCATION LEVEL . . . . .	174
8.8	APPROPRIATE DRESS FOR WOMEN IN PUBLIC, BY ETHNICITY . . . . .	174
8.9	IDEAL AGE FOR MARRIAGE . . . . .	175
8.10	STRONG OPINION ON WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS . . . . .	178
8.11	PREFERRED GENDER FOR MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT . . . . .	179
8.12	PERCEPTION OF POLITICAL LEADERSHIP POSITIONS . . . . .	180
8.13	SUPPORT FOR WOMEN VOTING, BY PROVINCE AND YEAR . . . . .	181
8.14	HOW WOMEN SHOULD DECIDE WHO TO VOTE FOR, BY GENDER . . . . .	182
8.15	SUPPORT FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION . . . . .	183
8.16	SUPPORT FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION, BY REGION . . . . .	184
8.17	SUPPORT FOR WOMEN'S ACCESS TO MADRASA EDUCATION, BY PROVINCE AND YEAR . . . . .	186
8.18	SUPPORT FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION, BY REGION . . . . .	188
8.19	SUPPORT FOR WOMEN WORKING OUTSIDE THE HOME . . . . .	189
8.20	REASONS WHY WOMEN SHOULD NOT WORK OUTSIDE THE HOME . . . . .	190
8.21	ACCEPTABLE PLACES OF EMPLOYMENT FOR WOMEN . . . . .	191
8.22	ACCEPTABLE PLACES OF EMPLOYMENT FOR WOMEN, BY URBAN AND RURAL . . . . .	192
8.23	WOMEN SHOULD WORK IN COED PRIVATE COMPANIES . . . . .	193
8.24	WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTION TO HOUSEHOLD INCOME . . . . .	194
8.25	FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH SUPPORT FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS . . . . .	195
8.26	EXPERIENCE OF VIOLENCE AND/OR CRIME . . . . .	196
8.27	BIGGEST PROBLEMS FACING WOMEN, BY GENDER . . . . .	197
9.1	DESIRE TO LEAVE, BY YEAR . . . . .	202
9.2	DESIRE TO LEAVE, BY GENDER, LOCATION, AGE, AND MARITAL STATUS . . . . .	203
9.3	DESIRE TO LEAVE, BY ETHNICITY . . . . .	204
9.4	DESIRE TO LEAVE, BY REGION . . . . .	205
9.5	DESIRE TO LEAVE, BY YEAR AND PROVINCE . . . . .	206
9.6	MOST CITED REASONS FOR LEAVING, BY YEAR . . . . .	208
9.7	DESIRE TO LEAVE, BY LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE IN GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS . . . . .	210
9.8	DESIRE TO LEAVE, BY OPTIMISM . . . . .	212
9.9	DESIRE TO LEAVE, BY ACCESS TO MEDIA . . . . .	213
9.10	REASONS FOR STAYING, BY REGION . . . . .	215
9.11	FACTORS THAT DISCOURAGE MIGRATION, BY YEAR . . . . .	216
9.12	MOST COMMON REASONS FOR RETURN, BY YEAR . . . . .	217



Jawzjan

Balkh

Faryab

Sar-e-Pul

Samangan

Badghis

Bamyan

Herat

Ghor

Daikundi

Wardak

Ghazni

Farah

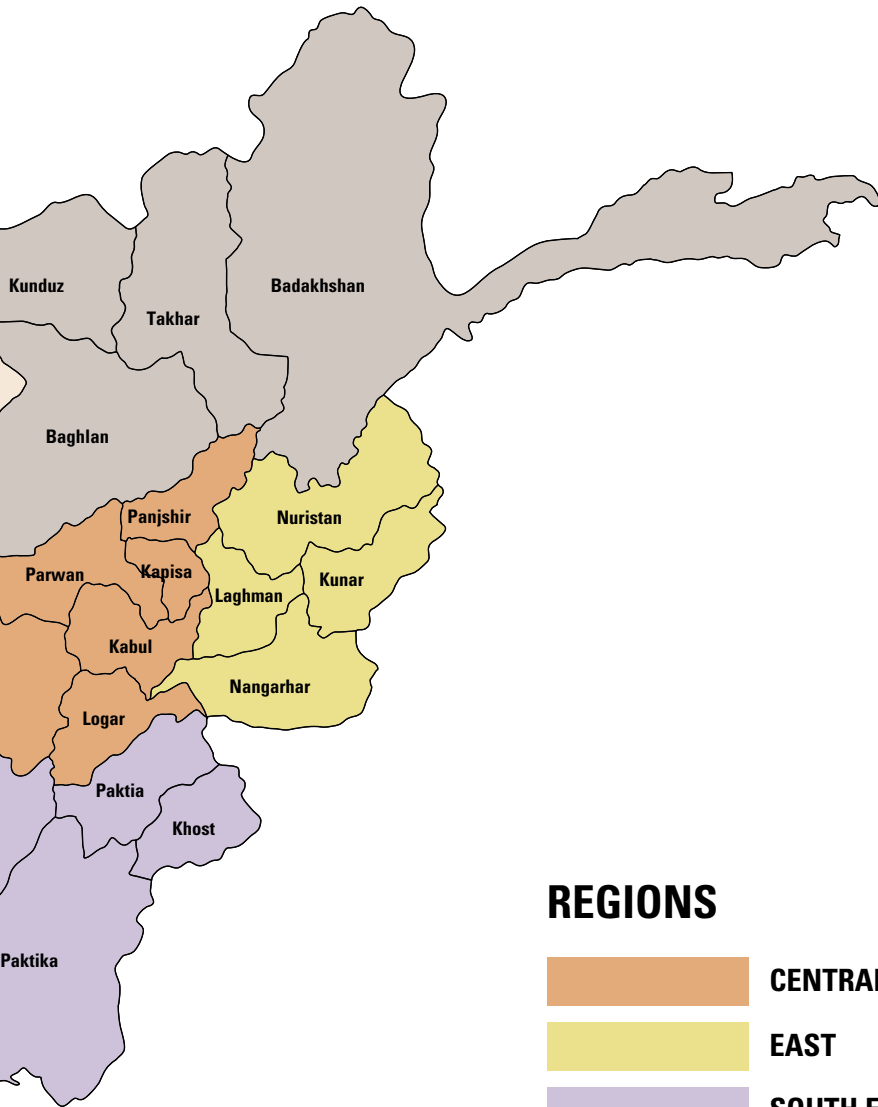
Uruzgan

Zabul

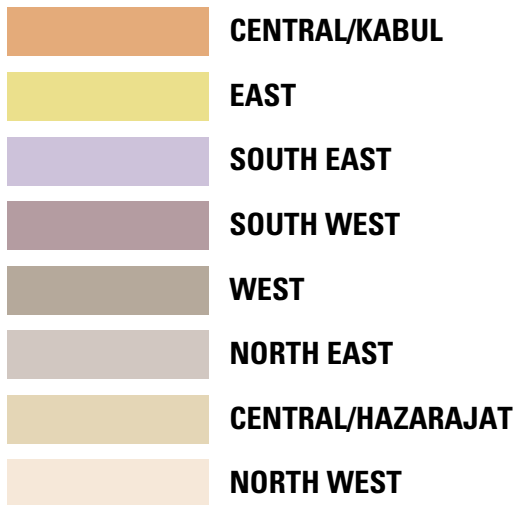
Nimroz

Helmand

Kandahar



## REGIONS



## PREFACE

Afghanistan continues to face distinct challenges since the 2014 drawdown. Beyond the lens of war, the country's deep political divisions, structural governance challenges, and economic insecurity are impeding development progress and the prospect of durable peace.

Against this backdrop, the importance of comprehensive, reliable data cannot be overstated. *Afghanistan in 2018: A Survey of the Afghan People* is The Asia Foundation's fourteenth annual public opinion survey in Afghanistan focusing on issues important to Afghans: security, elections, governance, the economy, and migration. With more than 112,000 Afghans polled one-on-one since 2004, and our largest sample size this year to date, the *Survey* is a map of social change over time, presenting a concise snapshot of the gains and gaps that Afghans perceive in a rapidly transforming nation. More than oversimplified headlines, the *Survey* provides rare insights into the views of Afghan citizens in all 34 provinces.

The long delay in parliamentary elections due to disputes over electoral reforms and instability continued to influence Afghan citizens' views on the future of the country. Since 2006, one of the *Survey's* key indicators is the extent to which Afghans express optimism or pessimism about the country's direction. Last year's *Survey* revealed a marginal increase in optimism, from 29.3% in 2016 to 32.8% in 2017. In 2018, optimism about Afghanistan's direction has remained unchanged, at 32.8%.

Despite enormous investments by the international community, Afghanistan remains in the low human development category. At the same time, between 2005 and 2017, Afghanistan's UNDP's Human Development Index value saw an increase of 22.0% with significant progress in life expectancy and education indices. This year's *Survey* also finds a steady increase in household income, and an increasing number of women contributing to their household's income.

Afghans remain eager for a better future. And, despite expected chaos, parliamentary elections did finally take place as planned across most of the country in October, the first run completely by Afghan authorities since 2001, and voters turned out with a message that they reject the militants' ideology. Optimism has been gradually rising in Afghanistan over the past 14 years. Many Afghans perceive progress in the areas of reconstruction, security, and education. Women's participation in the political process has improved markedly since the fall of the Taliban, when women had no rights of participation or representation.

Through this annual research project, we are committed to closing data gaps to help advance informed policymaking. Over the decades the Foundation maintains strong partnerships that have led to sustainable reforms in governance and law, women's empowerment, and education. Today, as Afghanistan faces a crucial period of political and economic transition, the international community is reminded to coordinate efforts and constructively support development programs that improve the lives of the people of Afghanistan.

David D. Arnold

*President, The Asia Foundation*

November 2018

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*A Survey of the Afghan People* is the product of numerous contributions from the partners and staff of The Asia Foundation. The survey report was produced under the guidance of Afghanistan Country Representative Abdullah Ahmadzai and led by a team of Afghan data analysts Fahim Ahmad Yousufzai, Mohammad Shoaib Haidary, Sayed Masood Sadat, Mohammad Sharih Shiwan, Naqibullah Ahmadi, and Mustafa Yadgari, and support staff Khadija Hayat, Abdul Tawab Jalily, and Sayed Rashid Sadat, working under the direction of Dr. Tabasum Akseer, director of Policy and Research. Additional editorial and production support was provided by the Foundation's Global Communications team and Washington, DC, office.

ACSOR, a subsidiary of D3 systems, Inc., worked closely with the Foundation to conduct all survey fieldwork. The Foundation is grateful for ACSOR's facilitation of third-party monitoring by Sayara Research, and for their commitment to quality-control best practices in one of the world's most challenging research environments. Special thanks are due to Managing Director Ashraf Salehi of ACSOR and Sayara Research's Haroon Rasheed for their professionalism and attention to detail. The General Directorate for the Office of the Minister of Interior provided valuable assistance in securing permission to conduct fieldwork, while the Afghan National Statistics and Information Authority (formerly the Central Statistics Organization) provided population estimates used for the formulation of survey weights.

The Asia Foundation thanks all the donors including the United States Agency for International Development and the Australian Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade for their support for this survey and for Afghan research capacity.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*Afghanistan in 2018: A Survey of the Afghan People* is The Asia Foundation's fourteenth annual public opinion survey in Afghanistan. The longest-running barometer of Afghan perception and opinion, the *Survey* has gathered the views of more than 112,000 Afghans since 2004, and provides a longitudinal portrait of evolving public perceptions of security, elections, governance, the economy, essential services, corruption, youth issues, reconciliation with the Taliban, access to media, migration, the role of women, and political participation.

Since 2006, one of the *Survey's* key indicators has been the extent to which Afghans express optimism or pessimism about the country's direction. Last year's *Survey* revealed a marginal increase in optimism, from 29.3% in 2016 to 32.8% in 2017. In 2018, optimism about Afghanistan's direction has remained unchanged. The proportion of Afghans who say they are optimistic about the direction of the country is identical to last year, at 32.8%.

---

The longest running barometer of Afghan perception and opinion, the Survey has gathered the views of more than 112,000 Afghans since 2004.

---

A total of 15,012 face-to-face interviews were conducted with Afghan respondents 18 years of age and older, 50.3% male and 49.7% female, and comprising 80.6% rural and 19.4% urban respondents. This is the largest sample size in the history of the *Survey*. Interviews were conducted across the country from July 6 to 27, 2018, a month following the three-day, Eid-ul-Fitr ceasefire agreement between the government and the Taliban. Interviews were conducted by a team of 1,139 enumerators (562 female, 577 male), gender matched with respondents (i.e., men interviewed men, women interviewed women). All enumerators are residents of the provinces where they conducted the interviews. *Survey* findings are weighted to be gender balanced (50:50) and nationally representative (75.1% rural, 24.9% urban) using the most recent population data (2016–2017) released by the Afghan Central Statistics Organization (National Statistics Information Authority). This year's margin of error at the 95% confidence interval with  $p=.5$  is  $\pm 1.4\%$ , based on a design effect of 2.998.

As in previous years, The Asia Foundation's longstanding research partner, the Afghan Center for Socio-Economic and Opinion Research (ACSOR) conducted the fieldwork for this project, while its parent company, D3 Systems, Inc., provided analytical and methodological support. Since 2013, Sayara Research has led the third-party verification of the fieldwork, a best practice for survey research in challenging environments. Additional quality-control measures were implemented at every step of the

process by The Asia Foundation and its partners to ensure methodological consistency for longitudinal comparisons. In total, 36% of interviews were subject to some form of back-check or quality control. Together with its partners, the Foundation is committed to quality-control processes guided by principles of validity and reliability. The survey data is available for further analysis at <http://asiafoundation.org/afghansurvey>.

Every year, new questions are added following feedback from key users and stakeholders of the *Survey*. In 2018, new questions were added exploring access to essential government services such as public and private health care, electricity, clean drinking water, and irrigation facilities. Adding to last year's question on bribes paid to organizations or for services, we included an additional question on whether respondents paid a bribe to receive official documents from schools/universities. We also ask respondents to identify what groups pose threats to the security of their local area. Adding to our 2017 questions on whether respondents have sympathy for the Taliban or Daesh/ISIS, we follow up with an open-ended question asking respondents to clarify why they may or may not have sympathy for the armed opposition groups (AOGs). Given the long-anticipated elections, we ask a battery of questions gauging respondents' awareness of elections, their intention to vote, whether they have registered to vote, and their main source of news and information regarding elections. Finally, for the first time, we ask respondents to share their most important criteria for an ideal member of parliament. An in-depth discussion of the *Survey* methodology is provided in appendix 1. The sample demographic is provided in appendix 2, and entire *Survey* questionnaire in appendix 3.

## NATIONAL MOOD

**Direction of the country.** This year, the proportion of Afghans who say the country is moving in the right direction is the same as last year (32.8%). Similarly, there is little difference between the number of Afghans this year who say the country is moving in the wrong direction (61.3%) and last year (61.2%). A small proportion of respondents say they do not know whether the country is moving in the right or the wrong direction, (5.6%, compared to 5.3% in 2017).

**Reasons for optimism.** Improved security (51.8%) and rebuilding (47.9%) are the reasons most frequently cited by respondents when they are asked why they think Afghanistan is moving in the right direction, followed by improved governance (28.8%), improved rights for women (11.7%), and economic improvements (11.2%).

**Reasons for pessimism.** At the same time, insecurity is the most frequently cited reason for pessimism about the country's direction, cited slightly more often this year than last (72.5% vs. 69.5%), followed by concern about the economy (37.6%), which includes the 23.7% of respondents who explicitly refer to unemployment as a reason for their pessimism. A third of pessimistic respondents (33.0%) cite problems with governance; 14.3% cite corruption, a lack of infrastructure or services (9.1%), foreign intervention (6.4%), injustice or human rights issues (4.2%), and a lack of international assistance (2.6%).



**Local mood.** This year, 17.8% of respondents say nothing is going well, and 5.5% of respondents say they do not know what is going well. Local infrastructure, which includes the building of roads, bridges, mosques, clinics, and dams, is the most frequently reported positive feature of the local environment again this year, at 32.9%.

Agricultural development is cited much more frequently by rural than by urban respondents (25.3% vs. 3.6%), and infrastructure development is named more frequently by urban than by rural respondents (39.5% vs. 30.8%). Almost twice as many urban respondents as rural respondents say that nothing is going well locally (27.3% and 14.6%, respectively).

**Biggest problems in the local area.** When asked about local problems, the most common theme, touched on by 45.3% of respondents, concerns utilities and public services. This number includes the 22.4% of respondents who cite drinking water and the 20.1% of respondents who cite electricity as problems in their local area. Crime and insecurity (comprising security issues predominantly) and lack of employment opportunities are each reported as local problems by almost a third of respondents (32.2% and 32.3%, respectively).

**Biggest problems facing women.** Respondents most frequently cite illiteracy and lack of educational opportunities when asked to name the biggest problems facing women in their local area. Almost half of respondents (45.7%) cite this as an issue in 2018, followed by limits on women's rights that reduce their public participation and access to justice (31.1% of respondents, down from 35.5% last year). The third-biggest problem, lack of employment opportunities, is cited more frequently this year (25.6%) than last (22.8%). Violence against women—predominantly domestic violence—is the fourth-biggest problem, cited by 19.3% of respondents, the same as in 2017 (19.0%).

**Biggest problems facing youth.** Lack of employment opportunities for young Afghans is by far the most frequent response, reported by 74.7% of respondents across Afghanistan, an increase from 71.8% last year. The second-most frequent is illiteracy and lack of educational opportunities, cited by 40.3%. Personal or mental health issues (primarily concerns about drug addiction) are cited by 17.0% of respondents; economic concerns (including the high cost of living and a poor economy) are reported by 15.1% of respondents; and violence and insecurity is cited by 8.9% of respondents as a local problem for youth.

## SECURITY

**Fear for personal safety.** Fear for personal safety remains at the same high level as 2017 (70.7% in 2017; 71.1% in 2018) and reflects the public's continued concern for personal safety since the handover of security responsibilities to the ANDSF (Afghan National Defense and Security Forces) in 2013. Females (74.7%) are more likely than males (67.4%) to fear for their personal safety. Respondents in urban areas (75.3%) are more likely to fear for their personal safety than those in rural areas (69.7%). Fear of

participating in a peaceful demonstration has risen to 73.1%, its highest level in any year of the *Survey*. More females (77.9%) report fear of participating in a peaceful demonstration than males (68.3%). Some 79.7% of respondents report some or a lot of fear when traveling, an increase of 18.7 percentage points when compared with 2008.

**Crime and violence.** This year, 18.6% of respondents reported that they had suffered from an act of violence or criminality. Within this population, physical attacks and beatings were the most-reported violent or criminal acts, at 41.3%, similar to findings recorded in 2017. Males (43.5%) are more likely than females (39.1%) to report experiencing a physical attack or beating. Rural respondents (42.1%) cite a physical attack or beating more frequently than urban respondents (37.4%).

This year, there is a decrease among Afghans in reporting crimes to the Afghan National Army (ANA) or the Afghan National Police (ANP). The proportion of respondents reporting crimes to the ANP dropped by 5.0 percentage points, to 45.7%, while those reporting crimes to the ANA dropped by 1.5 percentage points, to 16.5%. This lower confidence is reflected in the higher percentage of people reporting crimes to shuras or elders (an increase of 5.6 percentage points, to 40.5%) and to mullahs (an increase of 2.9 percentage points, to 14.6%).

**Perceptions of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces.** A majority of Afghans (68.9%) view the ANP as the primary provider of security. The ANA is second, at 45.7%. Only 2.0% of respondents in the main sample identify the Taliban as responsible for security, but this figure jumps to 18.0% in intercept interviews.

Confidence that the ANP is getting better at providing security has declined slightly, from 48.2% in 2017 to 45.8% in 2018, and the percentage of respondents who say the ANP has gotten worse has increased slightly, from 23.2% in 2017 to 25.5% this year. Overall, 53.6% of respondents “strongly agree” that the ANA helps to improve security, and 52.4% say it protects civilians, numbers similar to 2017. The proportion of respondents who consider the ANA to be honest and fair, however, has fallen by 1.5 percentage points since 2017, to 58.3%

Trends for the ANP are broadly similar to the ANA, with only a small drop in positive perceptions since 2017. “Honest and fair” is slightly down, 2.3 points, to 42.1%, and perceptions that the ANP helps to improve security (39.5% in 2017; 39.3% in 2018) and is efficient at arresting criminals (35.2% in 2017; 34.8% in 2018) are almost unchanged.

**Groups who pose a security threat.** This year, the *Survey* asks respondents if any group poses a security threat in their local area. Some 35.8% of respondents say that a group poses a threat to the security of their local area, while 62.6% say no. More rural respondents (40.3%) than urban respondents (22.1%) say some group poses a local security threat. When asked which groups pose a threat to the local area, respondents most frequently name the Taliban (68.2%), followed by criminals/thieves (24.9%), and Daesh/ISIS (16.4%).

Rural respondents are more likely to name the Taliban as a security threat (74.2%), while urban respondents are more worried about criminals/thieves (39.5%). Women name the Taliban (71.4%) and Daesh/ISIS (17.7%) as threats to local security in slightly higher proportions than men (65.2% and 15.0%, respectively).

**Peace and reconciliation.** Afghans who believe that reconciliation between the Afghan government and the Taliban is possible have increased slightly by 1.1 percentage points since last year, to 53.5%. Gender divisions remain: 60.5% of males, a 3.2 percentage point increase, believe that reconciliation is possible, but just 46.5% of females do, down 0.9 percentage points since 2017. When questioned about the main reason the Taliban are fighting, a plurality (23.7%) say “to gain power,” a sharp drop from 30.4% in 2017.

The proportion of Afghans who believe that the Taliban are fighting because of the presence of foreign troops has more than doubled, from 6.4% in 2017 to 15.2% in 2018. Respondents in the East (17.8%) are the most inclined to give this answer, while respondents in the North East (13.2%) are the least likely.

There has been a significant decline in the number of Afghans who “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” that antigovernment elements should be provided with government assistance, jobs, and housing—from 80.6% in 2010 to 68.7% in 2018.

## ECONOMIC GROWTH AND EMPLOYMENT

**Perceptions of the economy.** The *Survey* shows that Afghans continue to be concerned about the economic situation of their households and Afghanistan as a whole. Among the 61.3% of Afghans who think the country is moving in the wrong direction, a majority express concerns about such things as unemployment (23.7%), a bad economy (12.1%), high prices (3.6%), and other economic issues. When asked about the biggest problems facing youth, more than three-fourths of all respondents (74.7%) cite lack of employment opportunities and 15.1% cite economic concerns.

**Household economic situation.** This year, 57.2% of Afghans say the employment opportunities for their household have gotten worse, considerably more than the 40.2% in 2007, when this question was first asked. More urban Afghans than rural Afghans say their employment situation has worsened (67.2% vs. 53.9%).

**Employment.** The *Survey* does not provide an official unemployment rate for the country. Rather, it asks respondents whether they are involved in any activity that generates income, in order to understand how involvement in an economic activity shapes Afghans’ views and opinions. Overall, 46.3% of Afghans in 2018 say they are involved in some sort of activity that generates income, compared to 45.0% last year.

**Women and the economy.** This year, 19.1% of Afghans say female members contribute to their household income, up from 13.6% percent in 2009, when this question was introduced. Consistent

with past years, female household members in rural areas are more likely to contribute to the family income than those in urban areas (20.3% vs. 15.5%).

**Household assets.** There has been an increase in ownership of household assets. This year, 68.6% of Afghans report having one or more TVs in their home, a 2.2 percentage point increase over last year, when 66.4% reported having at least one TV in their home. TV ownership is more common in urban areas (89.7%), where more people have access to electricity, than in rural areas (61.6%). Half of respondents in rural areas report having at least one motorcycle in their household (50.5%), compared to 28.2% in urban areas. Mobile phone ownership this year hit a record high, with nine out of 10 respondents (89.5%) reporting that at least one family member owns a mobile phone. Over half of respondents (58.9%) say they own at least one jerib of land.

**Household income.** The *Survey* asked Afghans to estimate their monthly household income. The number of Afghans who report an average of AFN 5,001–20,000 (USD 67.00 –268.00) has increased markedly, from 27.5% in 2006 to 62.2% in 2018. The proportion who report AFN 20,001 and over has increased steadily during the same period, from 1.0% to 7.1%. Those who report less than AFN 5,001 per month has decreased from 69.6% in 2006 to 29.1% in 2018.

## DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICE DELIVERY

**Electricity supply.** The perception of the nation's electrical system has improved slightly, with 16.4% of respondents saying their electricity supply has gotten better, up from 12.2% in 2017. There are significant differences between urban respondents (26.5%) and rural respondents (13.0%).

Nationally, well over one-third of respondents (43.9%) say their main source of electricity is solar power, followed by power from the grid or city power (41.5%), batteries (4.7%), a community generator (2.0%), and a privately owned or rented generator (1.7%). Some 6.1% of respondents say they have no electricity.

**Nutrition and access to health care.** The *Survey* asks respondents about the quality of food in their diet. At the national level, 17.1% say it has gotten better, 52.6% say it is the same, and 29.9%, similar to last year (29.4%), indicate that it has gotten worse. In 2018, 53.2% of respondents say the health and well-being of their households is the same as 12 months ago, 21.3% say it has gotten better, and 24.9% say it has gotten worse. In 2018, the *Survey* asks Afghans whether they visited a public hospital or clinic in the past 12 months. Nationally, 59.0% of all respondents say they did. The *Survey* also asks Afghans whether they visited a private hospital or clinic in the past 12 months, and 39.2% of respondents say they visited a private hospital.

When asked if access to drinking water has gotten better, gotten worse, or stayed the same in the past 12 months, 43.8% of respondents in 2018 say it has stayed the same, 37.2% say it has gotten worse, and 18.6% say it has gotten better.

**Education.** In 2018, 22.0% of Afghans nationally say that the quality of school services is better, roughly the same as 2017 (22.2%) but the lowest proportion since the *Survey* first asked this question, in 2007 (50.7%). Rural Afghans are significantly more likely to say school services have worsened (27.5%) than urban Afghans (21.1%).

**Awareness of development projects.** In 2018, the awareness of development projects remains similar to last year. This year, road construction is most prominent in the public's awareness (33.1% of respondents), followed by health care (25.7%), new mosques (25.7%), drinking-water projects (24.2%), agricultural programs (20.8%), government-supplied electricity (19.8%), new private schools (17.4%), irrigation projects (16.1%), new government schools (14.5%), reconciliation with antigovernment elements (11.8%), new private universities (7.4%), and new factories (5.1%).

## GOVERNANCE

**Satisfaction with government performance.** Over half of Afghans surveyed (59.6%) report that the National Unity Government (NUG) is doing a good job (16.4% very good, 43.2% somewhat good). Perceptions of provincial governments have also improved, with 61.3% reporting their performance as “very good” (16.0%) or “somewhat good” (45.3%), up from 56.9% in 2017. Women express greater satisfaction with the NUG than men (61.9% vs. 57.3%).

Afghans continue to report increased satisfaction with provincial government, up from a low of 52.9% in 2016 to 56.9% in 2017 and 61.3% in 2018. Level of fear can predict level of confidence in provincial government. Afghans who fear for their personal safety or security are less likely to have confidence in their provincial government.

**Confidence in public institutions.** For the third consecutive year, Afghans express the greatest confidence in religious leaders (69.3%, a 2-point increase over 2017), followed by the media (67.0%), community shuras/jirgas (65.2%), community development councils (57.6%), and provincial councils (50.9%). Respondents had the least confidence in government ministers (38.3%), parliament as a whole (39.7%), their own members of parliament (42.3%), international NGOs (42.4%), and national NGOs (49.3%). For the second consecutive year, Afghans expressed increased confidence in the Independent Election Commission (43.3%, up from 38.1% in 2017 and a record low of 33.7% in 2016).

**Corruption.** A record 70.6% of Afghans in 2018 say corruption is a “major problem” in their daily life, just slightly more than in 2017 (69.8%). Perceptions of corruption as a major problem in Afghanistan have fallen slightly, from a record high of 83.7% in 2017 to 81.5% this year, accompanied by an increase in Afghans who say corruption is a minor problem, from 13.1% in 2017 to 14.8% in 2018.

**Justice and dispute resolution.** When asked if they are satisfied with the available dispute-resolution services in their area, most Afghans in 2018 say they are “very satisfied” (15.8%) or “somewhat satisfied” (50.8%), similarly to last year. The *Survey* asks respondents if they have applied to the state court, the

*huquq* (rights) department, or a local shura/jirga in the last two years to settle a dispute or a formal case. After a slight decline in 2017, to 20.4%, the proportion of respondents answering yes in 2018 has risen 2.6 points, to 23.1%.

Among respondents who have used a dispute-resolution service, 45.4% report using a shura/jirga, up from 43.2% in 2017; 41.9% report using a state court; and 27.0% report using the huquq department. As in previous years, more rural respondents (47.6%) than urban respondents (32.5%) report using shuras/jirgas. The disputes most commonly taken to dispute resolution were land disputes (46.7%), family problems (19.0%), property disputes other than land (11.9%), commercial disputes (8.9%), traffic accidents (8.5%), and divorce (3.5%).

## POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

**Exercising basic political freedoms.** Fear while voting has increased significantly, from 51.5% last year to 62.4% in 2018, the highest level of fear yet recorded. Female respondents are significantly more likely to report fear while voting (67.1%) than male respondents (57.7%). Urban and rural differences emerge, as the former are more likely to report fear while voting (67.0% vs. 60.9%). Fear while voting is negatively correlated with Afghans' decision to vote. Respondents who report fear while voting are less likely to say they will vote in the upcoming elections (63.9%) than respondents who report no fear (79.3%).

An overwhelming majority of Afghans (73.1%) report fear while participating in a peaceful demonstration. This fear has increased significantly, by 12.6 percentage points, since 2006, when the question was first asked. Urban respondents (79.2%) are more likely than rural respondents (71.1%) to say they fear participating in a peaceful demonstration. Women (77.9%) are more likely to report fear than men (68.3%).

**Ability to influence local government decisions.** Over half of respondents (52.9%) say that they have some or a lot of influence over local government decisions. Findings are similar among men (52.7%) and women (53.2%). Rural respondents (54.7%) are more likely to say they have influence over local government decisions than urban respondents (47.7%).

**Elections.** In 2018, when respondents were asked whether they were aware of the upcoming election, a majority (79.7%) said yes. This is consistent with 2009 (81.9%), when the same question was asked regarding the presidential election. Television (43.9%); radio (25.1%); and friends, family, and neighbors (14.7%) are the main sources of information about the elections.

**Free and fair elections.** Over half of respondents (52.4%) believe that the next election will be free and fair. The variation between rural and urban respondents, however, is significant, with rural respondents far more likely to say that the next elections will be free and fair (57.0%) than urban respondents (39.5%). Respondents who believe that the next elections will be free and fair are significantly more likely to think the country is moving in the right direction than those who believe the opposite (42.2% vs.

24.2%). Almost half (50.5%) of those who think elections will not be free and fair cite fraud as a reason. Corruption is the next-most common reason, cited by 14.7% of respondents. Other reasons mentioned by respondents include insecurity (8.9%), interference of warlords (5.3%), and bad leadership (3.6%).

**Decision to vote.** This year there is a significant drop in the proportion who say they have registered to vote compared to the first time this question was asked, prior to the presidential election in 2009. At that time, 77.4% of respondents said they had registered, compared to 67.6% in 2018, a significant 9.8 percentage point difference. Over two-thirds of Afghans who are aware of the upcoming election (69.7%) plan to vote, with men (76.2%) significantly more likely than women (62.4%). Rural respondents (71.4%) are more likely to say they plan to vote than urban respondents (65.0%). Those who are satisfied with democracy are significantly more likely to say they plan to vote in the upcoming elections (75.4%) than those who are dissatisfied (60.8%).

The most common reasons given by respondents who say they will not vote include fraud (20.5%), “it is not beneficial” (18.6%), not having “permission” (13.8%), insecurity (12.1%), fear of the Taliban (6.7%), and lack of a *tazkira*, the national ID card (5.5%). The reasoning is significantly different between genders: male respondents are more likely to cite fraud or say that voting is not beneficial, while females are more likely to say they lack permission or an ID card.

**Attitudes towards democracy.** Afghans’ satisfaction with democracy has increased from 57.0% in 2017 to 61.4% this year. However, this increase is very small compared to the high level of satisfaction with democracy recorded during the last election, in 2014 (73.1%).

Women (66.2%) are significantly more likely to report satisfaction with democracy than men (56.6%). There is little difference between rural and urban respondents (62.3% and 58.9%, respectively); however, differences do emerge at the regional level. Respondents in Central/Hazarajat (75.8%) and the East (74.2%) report the highest levels of satisfaction, whereas respondents in Central/Kabul (54.9%) and the North West (58.4%) report the lowest.

The *Survey* shows a significant positive correlation between economic status and satisfaction with democracy. Respondents who say that their household financial situation has improved since a year ago are significantly more likely to express satisfaction with democracy than those who report a worsening situation.

Additionally, this year the *Survey* asks Afghans about their criteria for an ideal member of parliament. Over half of respondents (53.9%) say an ideal MP should possess honesty and fairness. Other participants suggest that an ideal MP should be “a good servant” (27.5%), be “educated” (24.1%), be “Muslim” (14.0%) “fulfill their promises” (7.3%), be “patriotic” (6.4%), be “intelligent” (5.8%), and not be “corrupt” (5.3%).

**Politics and religion.** Support for the involvement of religious leaders in politics is slightly lower this year (60.2%) than it was in 2017 (61.6%). As in previous years since 2006, male respondents (63.8%) are more likely to say that religious leaders should be involved in politics than female respondents

(56.6%). Rural respondents (61.3%) are more likely than urban residents (56.6%) to support the idea. Regionally, respondents in the East (71.7%) express the highest support for mixing religion and politics, followed by the South West (68.8%), the North East (68.5%), and the South East (61.0%).

**Women in politics.** This year, 19.9% of respondents say they would prefer to be represented in parliament by a woman, the same percentage as 2006, while 43.7% in 2018 would prefer to be represented by a man, up from 38.9% in 2006. Some 87.6% of Afghans in 2018 support women's right to vote, a significant majority, but slightly down from 89.0% last year.

Finally, while there is strong support for women's right to vote, fewer Afghans this year support the notion that women should decide independently whom to vote for—56.6%, a slight decline from last year's 59.7%. Women are more likely (59.2%) than men (53.9%) to say that women should decide for themselves whom to vote for, and urban respondents (67.5%) are significantly more likely to say so than rural respondents (53.0%).

## ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND THE MEDIA

**Sources of news and information.** Friends and family remain the most-cited source of news and information (83.7%), followed by television (68.7%), and radio (62.9%). Mosques (48.0%) and community shuras (40.0%) remain the fourth- and fifth-most-cited sources of news and information, followed by the Internet (16.8%).

**Access to the Internet and use of social media.** The Internet is one of the fastest-growing sources of news and information in Afghanistan, increasing from 3.3% of respondents in 2013 to 16.8% in 2018. This year, 40.2% of respondents overall say their area has some form of access to the Internet, similar to 2016 (40.0%). However, the share of respondents with personal access to the Internet in those areas has grown rapidly, from 28.1% in 2016 to 32.8% in 2017 and 37.7% in 2018.

**Role of the media in public opinion and behavior.** The media are one of the most trusted institutions in Afghanistan (67.0%), after religious leaders (69.3%). Afghans who use mass media—that is, radio and television—to get their information are more likely to report higher levels of fear for their own or their family's safety, while those who use localized sources of news and information, such as family and friends, shuras, or mosques, are more likely to report lower levels of fear. Radio listeners express the highest level of sympathy with the Taliban (19.9%), while television and Internet users express the lowest sympathy (13.4% and 12.5%, respectively).

Internet users are the most likely to say they would leave Afghanistan (48.3%), followed by television watchers (39.6%). The least likely are radio listeners (36.0%). Obtaining news and information from television or the Internet and watching television are associated with positive perceptions of democracy. However, obtaining news and information from the radio or family and friends is associated with negative views of democracy.



Afghans who rely on the Internet and television to obtain news and information are more supportive of equal educational opportunities for men and women (89.8% Internet and 87.5% television) than those who use radio for obtaining news and information (82.2%). Those who use television (77.1%) and the Internet (76.3%) are the most likely to support women working outside the home. Election awareness and intention to vote were highest among those who rely on the Internet for news and information (election awareness, 87.8%; intention to vote, 76.9%).

## WOMEN IN SOCIETY

**Women's access to justice.** The *Survey* asks Afghans whether in the past two years they have had a dispute with another party that they were unable to settle, and if so, where did they seek resolution. A similar percentage of women and men had such disputes in the past two years (women, 22.2%; men, 23.9%—up slightly from 20.3% and 20.6%, respectively, in 2017).

The most common place to take disputes is the neighborhood-based shura/jirga, with men (44.9%) and women (45.9%) taking equal advantage of the institution. Also commonly used are the state courts, with 41.4% of women and 42.4% of men saying they brought their disputes there in the last two years. With a 6.9 percentage point increase from 2017, 28.6% of men say they bring their disputes to the huquq department, slightly more than women, at 25.3%.

**Customs and tribal practices.** Support for the practices of *baad* and *baddal* continues to decline. This year, only 9.5% of respondents agree (“strongly” or “somewhat”) that *baad* is acceptable. Some 25.2% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that *baddal* is acceptable, continuing a decline in the rate of approval from 29.1% in 2017 and 31.8% in 2016. Attitudes towards *miras*, a woman's share of her father's inheritance, show a continuing trend towards greater acceptance, and fully 90.2% of Afghans now agree women are entitled to *miras*.

**Perceptions of appropriate dress in public.** Overall, an equal number of respondents, 30.9%, selected the images of a woman wearing a burqa and a woman wearing a niqab; 15.3% selected the chador; 14.5% selected the tight, hair-covering hijab; 6.1% selected the loose hijab; and only 0.5% chose the image of a woman with no head covering.

**Political participation.** Overall, approval of women in leadership positions has fallen 2 to 3 percentage points since 2015, and approval remains highest for the less prestigious community development council (CDC) leadership positions and lowest for women running for president.

Respondents are less likely this year than last year to strongly or somewhat agree that women should be able to lead CDCs (67.5% vs. 69.7%). The proportion of respondents who strongly agree has risen one percentage point this year, to 32.1%, while those who somewhat agree has dropped 3.2 percentage points, to 35.4%.

Support for women as provincial governors has dropped slightly, from 55.4% in 2017 to 53.1% this year. Support has similarly decreased for women as CEOs of large companies (52.0%, down from 54.6% in 2017) and minister or cabinet member (53.4%, down from 56.0% in 2017), with gender, urban and rural residence, and ethnicity providing the greatest sources of variation. Support for women running for president of Afghanistan has dropped to 46.1% from 48.2% last year, although respondents were more likely to strongly agree this year (22.3%) than in 2017 (20.7%). The proportion who strongly disagree has also increased, from 26.9% in 2017 to 29.6% this year.

**Education.** Overall, Afghans' support for girls' equal access to education has improved marginally, from 82.3% in 2017 to 84.0% this year. Male respondents are significantly more likely to "strongly" agree with gender equality in access to education this year than last (40.2%, up from 33.6%), and fewer men "somewhat" agree this year than last (39.4%, down from 45.4% last year). Women who strongly or somewhat agree both increased this year, and women overall are more likely to support gender equality in access to education than men (88.4% of women strongly or somewhat agree, compared to 79.6% of men).

**Economic opportunities.** There has again been a marginal decline in the proportion of Afghans who say women should be allowed to work outside the home, with 70.3% responding positively this year, down from 72.4% in 2017. There is significant variation in opinions. As seen in previous years, women (79.8%, down from 80.9% in 2017) are significantly more likely than men (60.8%, down from 63.9% in 2017) to agree that women should be allowed to work outside the home. Urban respondents (80.5%) are much more likely than rural (66.9%) to agree.

## MIGRATION

**Willingness to migrate.** This year, the desire to leave Afghanistan has declined, albeit marginally, with 36.8% of respondents saying they would leave Afghanistan and live somewhere else if given the opportunity, down from 38.8% in 2017.

**Reasons for leaving.** Domestic insecurity is the predominant reason Afghans say they are willing to leave their country, cited by 80.5% of respondents, up from 76.5% in 2017. Afghans who say they never fear for their safety are considerably less likely to say they would leave the country if given the opportunity (30.1%) than respondents who always fear for their safety (43.2%). Similarly, 40.1% of respondents who have suffered a personal experience with violence (to either themselves or a family member) express a willingness to leave Afghanistan if given the opportunity, compared to 36.1% of those who have not experienced violence in this way.

This year, 32.5% of Afghans who believe the country is going in the right direction say they would leave, compared to 40.2% of those who say the country is moving in the wrong direction. This growing gap suggests that perceptions about the direction of the country are having a growing effect on migration decisions.

Respondents who have a relative abroad more often express a willingness to migrate than respondents who do not (44.6% vs. 31.2%). Afghans who use the Internet and television to get news and information are more likely to express willingness to migrate than those who rely on radio, mosques, shuras, or family and friends as sources of information.

**Promoting the decision to stay.** Some 83.7% of respondents who say they would not want to leave the country give reasons such as “It is my country,” “I love my country,” and “I feel comfortable here.” The second-most frequent reason for staying, offered by 17.6% of respondents who do not want to leave (up from 13.9% last year) is related to perceived restrictions on leaving. Around half of these respondents refer to an (unspecified) “inability to leave,” with the balance explicitly saying their family won’t allow it.

A number of respondents (13.0%) say they would stay to serve or improve Afghanistan (e.g., for reconstruction, to serve people, to remove ISIS and the Taliban), and 11.7% refer to poor prospects elsewhere (e.g., no employment opportunities, other countries do not accept refugees).

The most frequently mentioned action the government could take to discourage respondents from leaving is improving domestic security. This includes addressing crime more effectively (78.4%).

**Perceptions of returnee experiences.** A very similar number of respondents this year and last (24.8% and 24.0%, respectively) report that they know of a returnee. The predominant reason given for their return is deportation (40.4%, up slightly from 36.8% in 2017). Willingness to migrate from Afghanistan is higher among respondents who know a returnee (41.9%) than among those do not know a returnee (35.2%).



# 1 NATIONAL MOOD

One of the *Survey's* key indicators is the extent to which Afghans express optimism or pessimism about the country's direction. Last year's *Survey* revealed a marginal increase in optimism, from 29.3% in 2016 to 32.8% in 2017. In 2018, however, despite successful elections in most of the country for the Wolesi Jirga, the lower house of the National Assembly, optimism about Afghanistan's direction has remained unchanged. The proportion of Afghans who say they are optimistic about the direction of the country is identical to last year, at 32.8%.

In 2013, during preparations for the presidential election the following year, national levels of optimism were at their peak at roughly 58%. Unlike the positive anticipation surrounding that election, preparations for the 2018 parliamentary election were less than reassuring. Most notably, the vote was postponed by three and a half years while government, civil society, and political parties debated electoral reforms, which eventually led to a 100% turnover in the leadership of the Independent Election Commission (IEC) and the Independent Electoral Complaints Commission. Despite efforts by the IEC to assemble a credible voter list by starting a fresh registration process, the credibility of the new list remained questioned. Adding to these concerns was the difficulty of ensuring the safety of Afghans registering to vote.<sup>1</sup> District council elections have been indefinitely postponed due to a number of reasons, including insecurity. Between January 1 and June 30 of this year, 341 election-related civilian casualties were reported.<sup>2</sup> The majority of those casualties (198) were the result of a suicide attack at a national identity card (*Tazkira*) distribution center in Kabul on April 22.<sup>3</sup> While security was an issue during the 2014 presidential election,<sup>4</sup> the proportion of Afghans who report feeling fearful about voting this year is the highest since the *Survey* began. There has been a notable rise in the number of targeted assassinations and suicide attacks in the first half of 2018 compared to the same period last year.<sup>5</sup> The deliberate targeting of civilians by antigovernment elements doubled in the first quarter of 2018 compared to the first quarter of 2017, and the number of civilian casualties due to airstrikes is high.<sup>6</sup> Adding to this instability, a drought, affecting large parts of Afghanistan, particularly the West, was officially declared in mid-April.<sup>7,8</sup> This environmental challenge places an even greater burden on a population in which 55% live below the poverty line and unemployment, currently standing at 24%, remains endemic.<sup>9</sup>

At the same time, Afghanistan has also enjoyed some positive developments this year. During the meeting of the Kabul Process for Peace and Security Cooperation in February, the government offered a comprehensive proposal, free of preconditions, for direct peace talks with the Taliban.<sup>10</sup> On June 7, the government also announced a unilateral halt to all offensive government actions during the Eid-ul-Fitr holiday. Two days after this announcement, the Taliban declared a three-day ceasefire,<sup>11</sup> resulting in what has been described as the first real cessation of hostilities in 17 years.<sup>12</sup> Afghans took this unprecedented opportunity to move peacefully around the country and visit areas that had been beyond reach for many years. The ceasefires were said to have offered a glimmer of hope to Afghans who may have been unable to imagine any respite ahead.<sup>13</sup> Since the ceasefires, independent, grassroots peace

movements such as the Helmand Peace Marchers, also known as the Peoples Peace Movement, who attracted worldwide attention with a 37-day, 770-kilometer march, have continued to mobilize support for peace across Afghanistan.<sup>14</sup>

The beginning of 2018 also saw positive developments in economic cooperation across the region with the inauguration of the Afghan segment of the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India natural gas pipeline in February, and the finalization of the Afghanistan-Pakistan Action Plan for Peace and Solidarity in April. The Action Plan led to the reopening of the border crossing between Khost in Afghanistan and North Waziristan in Pakistan, which had been closed since 2014.<sup>15</sup>

It could be inferred that the lack of change in optimism from last year to this year reflects a status quo of sorts—a continuation of the factors at play in 2017. This seems unlikely, however. The context in which data was collected this year, particularly following the ceasefire during the first half of 2018, included a complex mix of both challenging and encouraging events. Set against that backdrop, it is possible that the continuity of optimism this year reflects a new blend of negative and positive influences.

This chapter examines the reasons behind Afghans' reports of optimism and pessimism about the direction of the country. It also explores the factors associated with self-reported happiness and perceptions of what is going well, and not so well, in respondents' local areas. This includes a focus on local issues for women and young people.

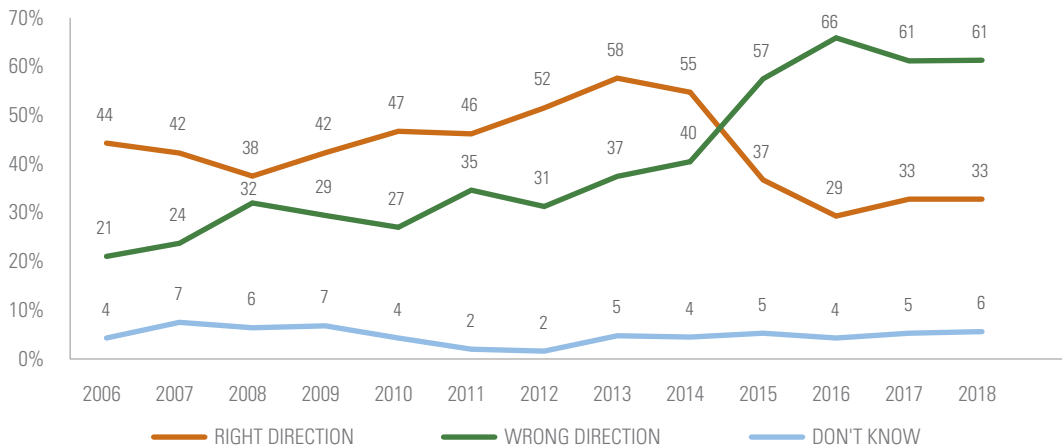
## 1.1 NATIONAL MOOD: DIRECTION OF THE COUNTRY

### KEY QUESTION

*Q-1. Overall, based on your own experience, do you think things in Afghanistan today are going in the right direction, or do you think they are going in the wrong direction?*

This year, the proportion of Afghans who say the country is moving in the right direction is the same as last year (32.8%). Likewise, there is effectively no difference between the number of Afghans this year who say the country is moving in the wrong direction (61.3%) and last year (61.2%). There is always a small proportion of respondents who say they do not know whether the country is moving in the right or the wrong direction. This year, 5.6% of Afghans responded this way, compared to 5.3% in 2017 (figure 1.1).

## NATIONAL MOOD: DIRECTION OF THE COUNTRY



**FIG. 1.1: Q-1.** Overall, based on your own experience, do you think things in Afghanistan today are going in the right direction, or do you think they are going in the wrong direction?

### DEMOGRAPHIC AND GEOGRAPHIC FACTORS

The proportions of men and women expressing optimism or pessimism this year are similar to 2017, again with only slight gender differences. Men are marginally more optimistic than women (34.4% vs. 31.2%, respectively) and women are slightly more pessimistic than men (62.6% vs. 60.0%, respectively).

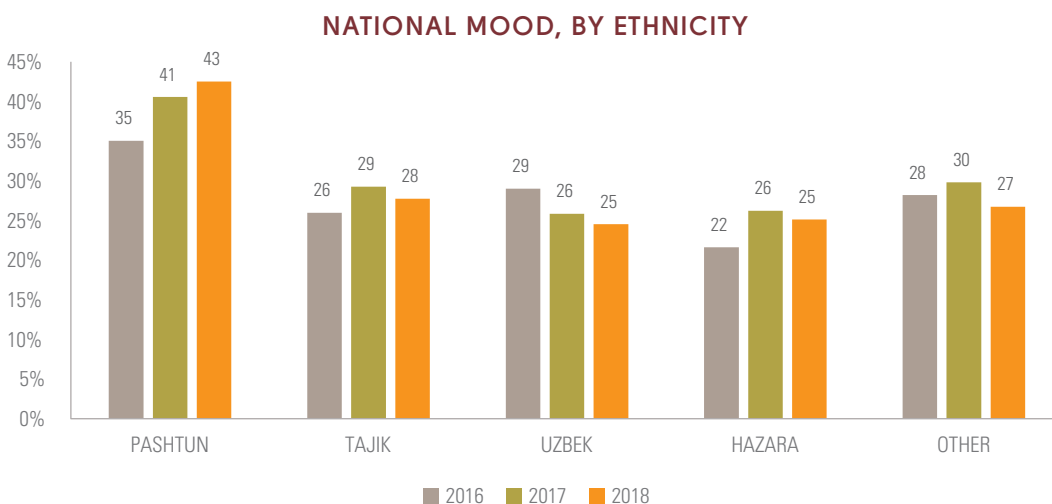
As in 2017, Afghans over the age of 55 are the least optimistic about the direction of the country (29.7%), but again this year there is less than a 2 percentage point difference between the other age categories. Afghans age 18–25 and 26–35 express the most optimism (33.5% and 33.6%, respectively).

Being married continues to make little difference in Afghans' optimism about the direction of the country (married, 32.7%; single, 33.8%), but Afghans who have been widowed are less optimistic (27.1%) than married or unmarried respondents.

Respondents with no formal education are only slightly less likely to say the country is going in the right direction than respondents with a university education (30.2% vs. 32.0%).

Respondents who report engaging in an activity that can generate income are more likely than those who report no such activity to say the country is going in the right direction (35.1% vs. 30.7%). Similarly, while Afghans who report higher average annual incomes are more likely to say the country is going in the right direction, there are only marginal differences in optimism between Afghans whose monthly earnings are less than AFN 2,000 and those who earn more than AFN 40,000 (32.1% vs. 35.5%, respectively). The highest levels of optimism are expressed by respondents with incomes of between AFN 25,000 and 40,000 (45.7%).

The overall pattern of responses among ethnic groups this year is similar to 2017 (figure 1.2). A substantially higher proportion of Pashtuns express optimism about the future of the country (42.5%) than Tajiks (27.7%), Hazaras (25.1%), Uzbeks (24.5%), and other ethnic minorities (26.7%).<sup>16</sup>



**FIG. 1.2: Q-1.** Overall, based on your own experience, do you think things in Afghanistan today are going in the right direction, or do you think they are going in the wrong direction? (Percent who say “right direction.”)

Geographically, there have been few clear changes in levels of reported optimism and pessimism since 2017. Afghans living in rural areas again report higher levels of optimism than those living in urban areas (34.8% vs. 26.5%, respectively). Consistent with national trends, levels of reported optimism in rural areas have changed little since 2017 (2017, 34.5%; 2018, 34.8%), and the same is true of optimism in urban areas (2017, 27.5%; 2018, 26.5%).

There is almost no difference in reported levels of pessimism between men and women living in rural areas of Afghanistan (58.3% and 58.9%, respectively), but urban women are more pessimistic about the direction the country (76.1%) than either rural women (58.9%) or urban men (64.3%).



Looking across regions, there have been marginal changes in optimism and pessimism since 2017. Overall, Afghans living in the predominantly Pashtun regions of the East, the South West, and the South East are most likely to report that the country is moving in the right direction (48.0%, 45.6%, and 43.1%, respectively). Over two-thirds of respondents in Central/Kabul and the North West reported a pessimistic outlook (70.2% and 69.0%), closely followed by Central/Hazarajat (64.1%), the North East (63.3%), and the West (59.1%).

While regional levels of optimism and pessimism have shifted little since 2017, there are some notable provincial variations within those regions (figure 1.3). There has been a marginal increase since 2017 in the percentage of Herat respondents who express optimism about the country's direction, from 32.1% to 33.4%. Yet, in Ghor and Farah (where the Taliban launched a large-scale attack on its capital in May 2018)<sup>17</sup> there has been quite a substantial decrease in reported optimism since last year's *Survey*—from 49.5% to 34.0% in Ghor, and from 20.7% to 12.2% in Farah.

In the North East, more respondents in Badakhshan express optimism this year (35.4%) than in 2017 (27.0%); however, in Baghlan that trend is reversed, with over a third of respondents in 2017 expressing optimism (34.7%) compared to just over one-fifth this year (21.3%).

The percentage of respondents in Nimroz, in the South West of Afghanistan, who say the country is going in the wrong direction has risen from 52.4% in 2017 to 63.8% this year, whereas pessimism has declined in Helmand (from 36.6% to 28.3%), in Kandahar (from 53.9% to 47.9%) and in Uruzgan (from 64.1% to 61.5%). There has been no change since 2017 in the proportion of Zabul respondents who express pessimism about the country's direction (66.0%).

The only region in which provincial levels of optimism show a consistent downward trend is the North West, where optimism declined in Balkh (from 27.6% to 23.2%), in Samangan (from 43.6% to 42.8%), in Jawzjan (from 19.9% to 14.7%), in Sar-e-Pul (from 25.2% to 23.0%) and in Faryab (from 19.5% to 18.5%). The North West, particularly the provinces of Jawzjan and Sar-e-pul, has been subject to heavy clashes between Daesh/ISIS and the Taliban.<sup>18</sup> The province of Balkh has also experienced significant political unrest over the past 12 months, as a result of tensions between the government and Balkh's former governor, Mohammad Atta Noor.<sup>19</sup>

As in 2017, respondents in Panjshir were the least likely to say that the country was going in the right direction—just 2.4%, almost 2 percentage points lower than 2017's 4.2%. The province with the highest incidence of optimism is Paktika, in the South East (65.3%) where the Taliban gained significant influence this summer. In Ghazni, another South East province where the Taliban also have significant influence,<sup>20</sup> optimism has risen from 26.5% last year to 30.4% this year. During the Eid ceasefire in June, many Taliban militants in Ghazni reportedly celebrated with their families and fraternized freely with members of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF).<sup>21</sup>

The parliamentary elections in October made this year an important one for Afghanistan's elected representatives. The *Survey* asks respondents how successful they think the current government has been

in improving living conditions in their area. Overall, just over half (51.7%) say the government has had “a little” success, 13.4% say the government has had “a lot of” success, and around a third (33.8%) say the government has had no success in improving living conditions. Of those respondents who think the government has had a lot of success, 55.5% say the country is going in the right direction, compared to 34.7% of those who think the government has had a little of success and 20.7% of those who think the government has had no success.

Interestingly, positive perceptions of democracy in Afghanistan are directly associated with greater optimism. Respondents who are satisfied with the way democracy works in Afghanistan are less likely to say the country is moving in the wrong direction (55.3%) than respondents who are dissatisfied with democracy (71.0%). Respondents who think the next election in Afghanistan will be free and fair are also less likely to say the country is moving in the wrong direction (53.4%) than those who think election will not be free and fair (71.5%).

There are a number of other factors that, again in 2018, are positively correlated with optimism. Respondents who are happy, and those who believe their household situation has improved over the last year, are more likely to say the country is moving in the right direction. Additionally, as confidence in various institutions and processes grows, so too does optimism. This includes confidence that the government and the Taliban will eventually reconcile, confidence that law enforcement agencies and the judicial system will deliver just outcomes, and confidence in a range of informal and formal authorities. Those who are less fearful for their personal safety, experience less corruption, and are less likely to be involved in sociopolitical activities (such as participating in demonstrations) are also more likely to express optimism.<sup>22</sup>

## NATIONAL MOOD, BY PROVINCE



**FIG. 1.3: Q-1.** Overall, based on your own experience, do you think things in Afghanistan today are going in the right direction, or do you think they are going in the wrong direction? (Percent who say "right direction.")

## 1.2 REASONS FOR OPTIMISM OR PESSIMISM

### KEY QUESTIONS

**Q-2.** (Ask if answer to Q-1 is "right direction.") What are two reasons you think that Afghanistan is going in the right direction?

**Q-3.** (Ask if answer to Q-1 is "wrong direction.") What are two reasons you think that Afghanistan is going in the wrong direction?

Each year, *Survey* respondents are asked to give two reasons why they think Afghanistan is going in the right or the wrong direction. (Because each respondent gives two reasons, the proportions reported in the next section sum to greater than 100%.)

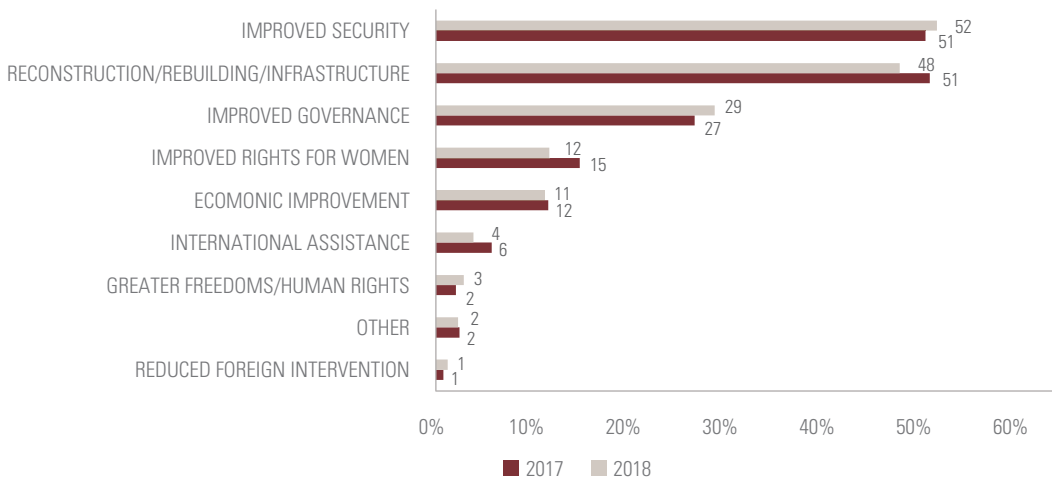
For ease of interpretation and reporting, the many responses to this question have been consolidated into several themes. That said, notable findings on some specific responses within the themes are highlighted where appropriate.

## RIGHT DIRECTION

Improved security (51.8%) and rebuilding (47.9%)<sup>23</sup> are the two reasons most frequently cited by respondents when they are asked why they think Afghanistan is moving in the right direction. Following these, in order of diminishing frequency, are improved governance (28.8%), improved rights for women (11.7%), and economic improvements (11.2%). Less frequently mentioned reasons for optimism relate to the provision of international assistance (3.9%), greater freedom and human rights (2.9%), and reduced foreign intervention (1.2%).

The pattern of themed responses evident in this year's *Survey* is similar to that in 2017 (figure 1.4). However, rebuilding is cited as a reason for optimism slightly less frequently in 2018 than in 2017 (47.9% vs. 51.0%), as are improved rights for women (11.7% vs. 14.9%) and international assistance (3.9% vs. 5.8%). There has been a slight increase since last year in the number of respondents who attribute their optimism to improved security (from 50.6% to 51.8%) and improved governance (from 26.7% to 28.8%).

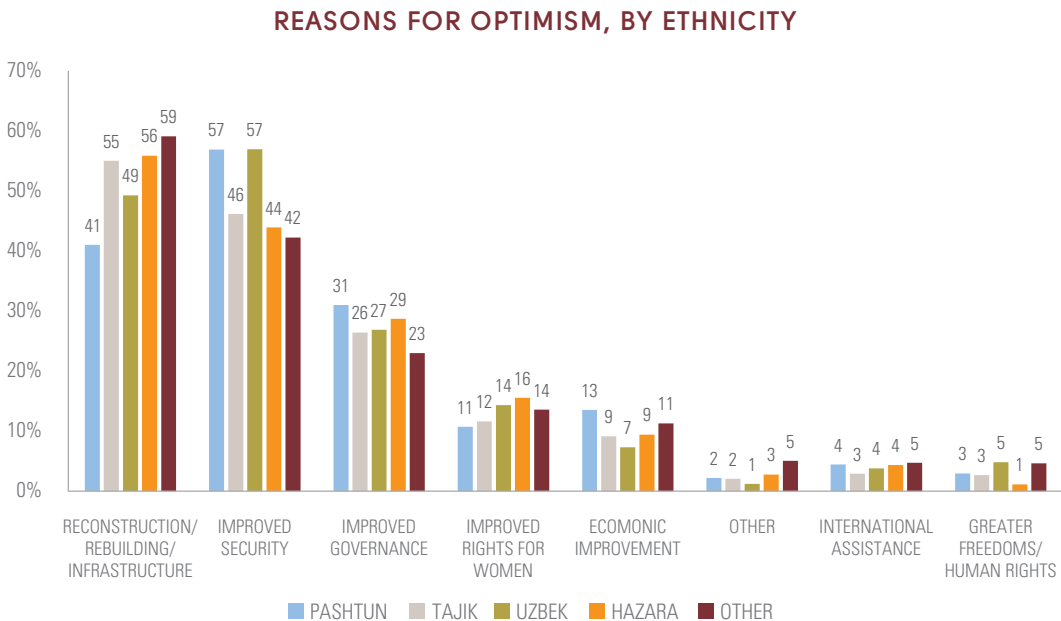
### REASONS FOR OPTIMISM, BY YEAR



**FIG. 1.4: Q-2.** (Ask if answer to Q-1 is “right direction.”) What are two reasons you think that Afghanistan is going in the right direction?

A slightly higher proportion of men (52.9%) than women (50.5%) say improved security is a reason for optimism, but women cite rebuilding more frequently than men (49.3% vs. 46.7%). Women are more likely than men to cite improved rights for women as a reason for optimism (15.0% vs. 8.7%), but fewer women cite this reason this year (15.0%) than last (18.4%), as do fewer men (2018, 8.7%; 2017, 11.6%). Men more frequently than women cite improved governance (31.1% vs. 26.3%) and economic improvements (12.8% vs. 9.4%) as reasons for optimism.

Pashtuns and Uzbeks are more likely to refer to improved security as a reason for optimism (both 56.9%) than Tajiks (46.2%), Hazaras (43.9%), and other ethnic minorities (42.2%) (figure 1.5).



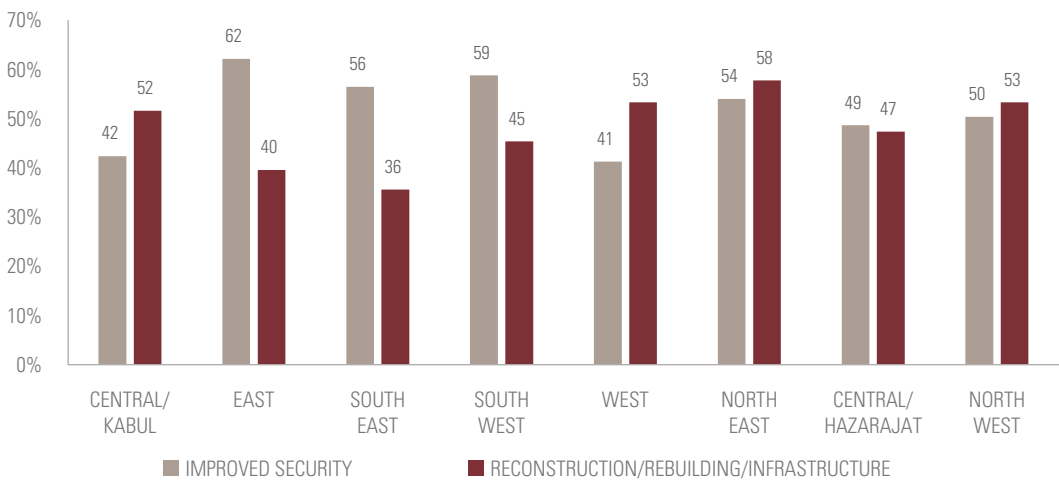
**FIG. 1.5: Q-2.** (Ask if answer to Q-1 is “right direction.”) What are two reasons you think that Afghanistan is going in the right direction?

This year again, improved security is cited more frequently by rural than urban respondents as a reason to be optimistic about the direction of the country (53.5% and 44.7%, respectively). While urban and rural Afghans in 2017 cited rebuilding in similar proportions (53.9% and 50.3%, respectively), urban respondents in this year’s *Survey* mention rebuilding considerably more frequently than rural respondents (55.4% vs. 46.1%). In 2017 there was little difference in the proportions of rural and urban respondents who cited improved rights for women as a reason for optimism (rural, 14.9%; urban, 14.7%). In 2018 these numbers have declined, particularly for urban respondents (rural, 12.4%; urban, 9.0%).

As in 2017, improved security, followed by rebuilding, was the most frequently cited reason for optimism in the East, South East, South West, and Central/Hazarajat regions. This pattern was reversed in Central/Kabul, the West, the North East, and the North West (figure 1.6).

Among other regional variations, improved governance is cited as a reason for optimism significantly less frequently in Central/Hazarajat (16.7%) than in other regions, where percentages range from 22.2% in the South West to 40.2% in the South East. Respondents cite improved rights for women less frequently than last year in all regions except Central/Hazarajat and the North West.

### TOP REASONS FOR OPTIMISM, BY REGION



**FIG. 1.6: Q-2.** (Ask if answer to Q-1 is “right direction.”) What are two reasons you think that Afghanistan is going in the right direction?

## WRONG DIRECTION

In 2018, once again, insecurity is the most frequently cited reason for pessimism about the country's direction (figure 1.7), cited slightly more often this year than last (72.5% vs. 69.5%). Concern about the economy<sup>24</sup> is the next-most frequently cited reason, at 37.6%, which includes the 23.7% of respondents who explicitly refer to unemployment as a reason for their pessimism. A third of pessimistic respondents (33.0%) cite problems with governance. Of those who are pessimistic, 14.3% specifically

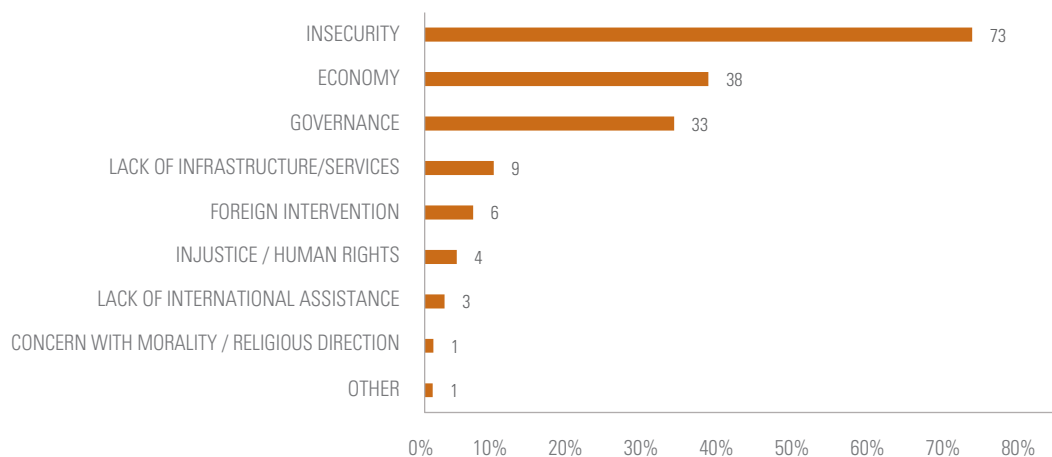
---

Once again, insecurity is the most frequently cited reason for pessimism about the country's direction.

---

report corruption. This pattern of responses is largely consistent across gender, age, ethnicity, urban and rural residence, and region. Respondents also cite a lack of infrastructure or services (9.1%), foreign intervention (6.4%), injustice or human rights issues (4.2%), and a lack of international assistance (2.6%) as reasons why they believe the country is going in the wrong direction. Less than 2% of respondents report concerns about morality or religion as a reason for pessimism.

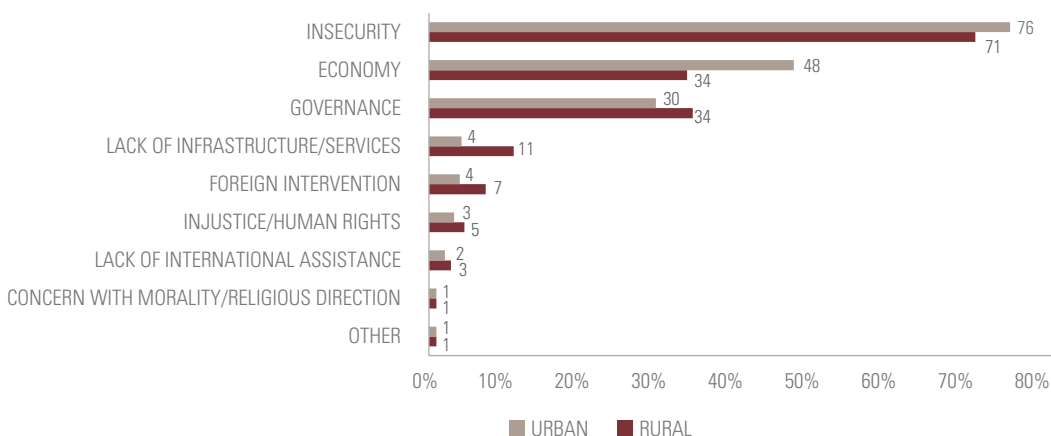
### REASONS FOR PESSIMISM



**FIG. 1.7: Q-3.** (Ask if answer to Q-1 is “wrong direction.”) What are two reasons you think that Afghanistan is going in the wrong direction?

There are some variations among demographic groups. Women are slightly more concerned about security and crime than men (74.0% vs. 71.0%, respectively). Men cite problems with governance as a reason for their pessimism more frequently than women (35.8% vs. 30.4%, respectively). Rural respondents are less worried about the economy than their urban counterparts (33.6% vs. 47.6%) but they are more worried about governance issues (34.4% vs. 29.6%), and rural respondents cite foreign intervention almost twice as often as urban respondents as a reason for pessimism (7.4% vs. 4.0%) (figure 1.8).

### REASONS FOR PESSIMISM, BY URBAN AND RURAL



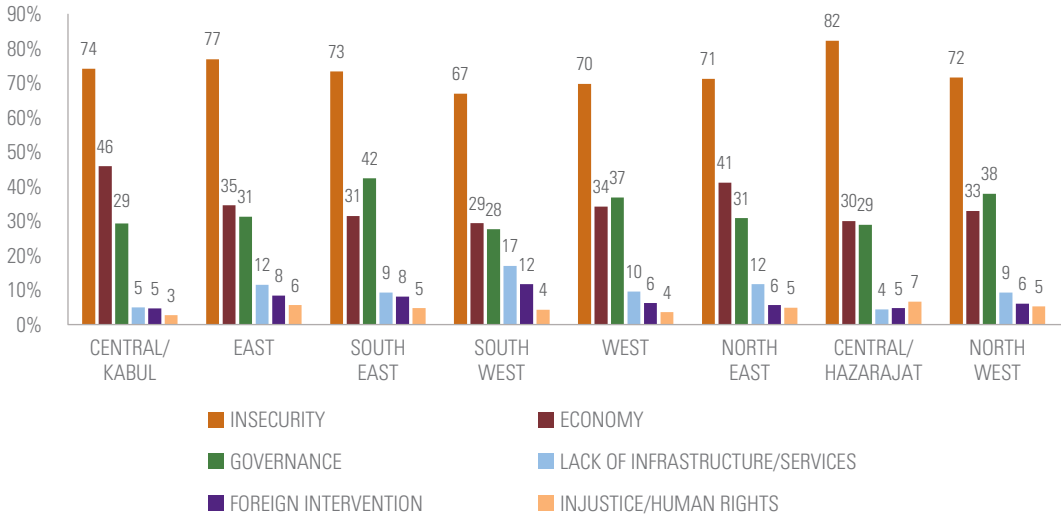
**FIG. 1.8: Q-3.** (Ask if answer to Q-1 is “wrong direction.”) What are two reasons you think that Afghanistan is going in the wrong direction?

In the Central/Hazarajat region, 82.2% of respondents cite insecurity or crime as a reason Afghanistan is going in the wrong direction. This represents a substantial increase from 65.1% in 2017 in the same region.

Concerns about foreign intervention are most frequently given as a reason for pessimism in the South West, East, and South East regions that border Pakistan (11.8%, 8.4%, and 8.1%, respectively). Only small proportions of respondents in all regions cite a lack of international assistance as a reason for pessimism. This reason is given most often by residents in the West (4.3%) and Central/Hazarajat (4.2%) (figure 1.9).



## REASONS FOR PESSIMISM, BY REGION



**FIG. 1.9: Q-3.** (Ask if answer to Q-1 is “wrong direction.”) What are two reasons you think that Afghanistan is going in the wrong direction?

### 1.3 LOCAL MOOD

#### WHAT IS GOING WELL IN THE LOCAL AREA

##### KEY QUESTION

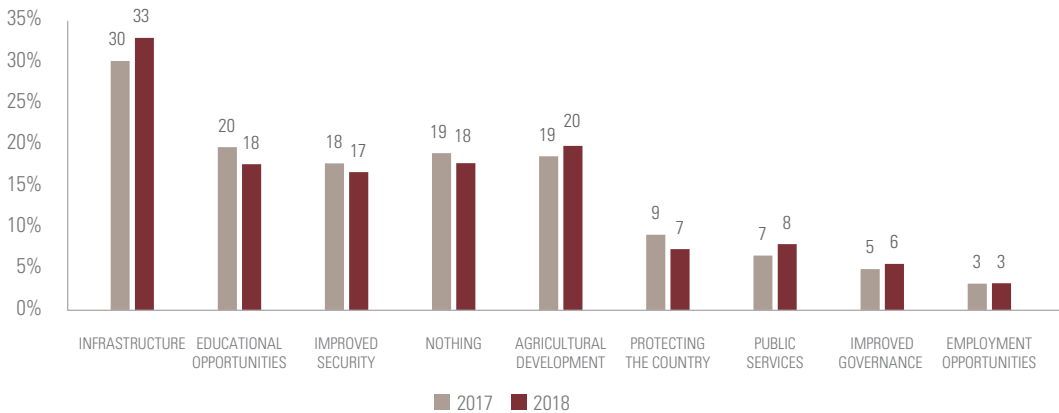
**Q-4.** In your view, what is going well in your local area? (Allow two answers.)

Each year, respondents are asked to provide their insights into what they think is going well in their local community and what they think the problems are. Again, for ease of interpretation, these responses have been combined thematically, but findings on specific responses are broken out where appropriate.

A number of respondents every year say nothing is going well, and many say they do not know what is going well. This year, 17.8% of respondents say nothing is going well, and 5.5% of respondents say they do not know what is going well.

Local infrastructure, which includes the building of roads, bridges, mosques, clinics, and dams, is the most frequently reported positive feature of the local environment again this year, at 32.9%. This is followed by: agricultural development; educational opportunities; and improved security; (19.9%, 17.7%, and 16.7%, respectively), public services (which includes the availability of drinking water and access to professional doctors); protecting the country (which includes: unity among the people, protecting natural resources, return of refugees, cleaner environment, culture and tradition, and religion); improved governance, economic improvements, and employment opportunities are less frequently cited (8.0%, 7.4%, 5.6%, 3.5%, and 3.3%, respectively) (figure 1.10).

### WHAT IS GOING WELL LOCALLY, BY YEAR



**FIG. 1.10: Q-4.** *In your view, what is going well in your local area?*

There are some understandable differences between urban and rural respondents when they are asked what is going well locally. Agricultural development is cited much more frequently by rural than by urban respondents (25.3% vs. 3.6%), and infrastructure development is reported more frequently by urban than by rural respondents (39.5% vs. 30.8%). Additionally, 5.7% of rural Afghans say they don't know what is going well locally, compared to 4.6% of urban Afghans. Almost twice as many urban respondents as rural respondents say that nothing is going well locally (27.3% and 14.6%, respectively).

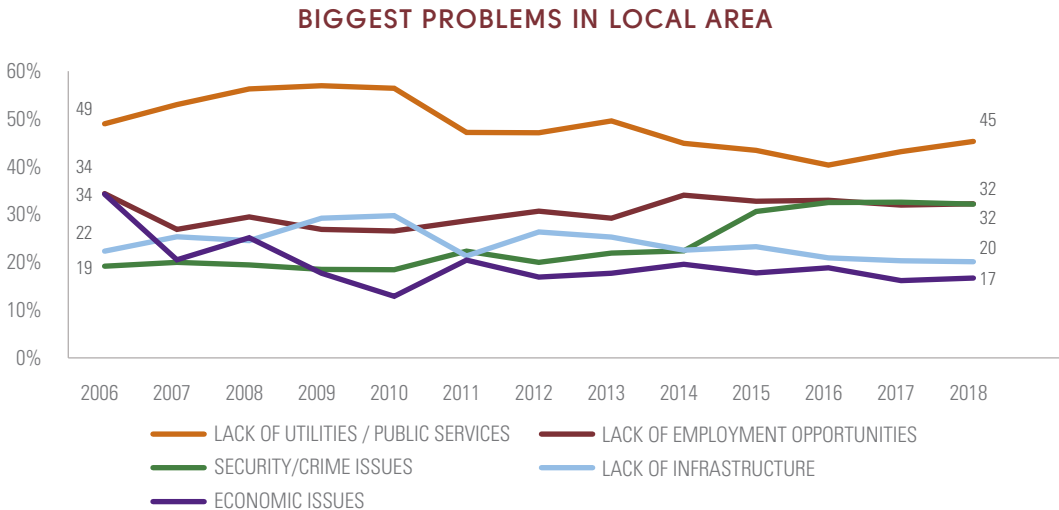
The most notable change since this question was asked last year is the growing proportion of respondents in Central/Hazarajat who cite agricultural development as something that is going well locally (2017, 45.2%; 2018, 63.0%). Respondents in Central/Kabul are the most likely to say nothing is going well in their community (29.1%), and respondents in Central/Hazarajat and the South East are the least likely (7.6% and 7.8%, respectively). Educational opportunities are reported most frequently by respondents in the South East (33.4%) and least frequently in the North East (10.8%). One notable observation is how infrequently infrastructure is mentioned as something going well in Central/Hazarajat (5.5%). This percent contrasts 29.5% in the South East and 40.8% in East Afghanistan.

## 1.4 BIGGEST PROBLEMS IN LOCAL AREA

### KEY QUESTION

Q-5. *In your view, what are the biggest problems in your local area? (Allow two answers.)*

When asked about local problems, the most common theme, touched on by 45.3% of respondents, concerns utilities and public services.<sup>25</sup> This number includes the 22.4% of respondents who cite drinking water and the 20.1% of respondents who cite electricity as problems in their local area. More respondents cite drinking water as a problem this year (22.4%) than last year (17.6%). Crime and insecurity (comprising security issues predominantly) and lack of employment opportunities are each reported as local problems by almost a third of respondents (32.2% and 32.3%, respectively). One-fifth of respondents cite lack of infrastructure (20.1%) as a problem in their local area, including the 15.3% of all respondents who say roads. Economic issues such as poverty or the poor economy (16.7%), lack of educational opportunities (9.4%), and governance issues (7.0%) are also frequently cited as local problems (figure 1.11). Corruption, which is part of the governance theme, is cited as a local problem by 4.0% of respondents.



**FIG. 1.11: Q-5.** *In your view, what are the biggest problems in your local area? (Organized by theme.)*

Men (36.3%) more frequently refer to a lack of employment opportunities in their local area than women (28.3%), and women are slightly more likely than men to report lack of educational opportunities

(10.0% vs. 8.8%). Rural respondents are more likely to cite insecurity and crime (33.1%) than urban respondents (29.3%), but urban respondents report it slightly more often than last year's 26.7%.

Regionally, lack of utilities or services is the most frequently stated local problem in Central/Hazarajat (67.1%), the North West (53.5%), the North East (52.3%), Central/Kabul (47.1%), and the East (45.2%). Just over half of respondents in the province of Bamyan refer to drinking water as a local problem (51.4%), and those in Baghlan are the most likely to cite problems with electricity (46.5%) (figure 1.12).

In the South East, West, and South West, insecurity or crime is the most-cited local problem (44.7%, 42.3%, and 39.1%, respectively). Looking individually at insecurity and crime, Uruzgan respondents are the most likely to report insecurity as a local problem (59.3%), and Helmand respondents are the most likely to say crime (28.3%).

While over two-thirds of respondents in Central/Hazarajat report lack of utilities as a local problem (67.1%), only 6.9% cite insecurity or crime. It should be noted, however, that the proportion of respondents in Central/Hazarajat reporting insecurity or crime as a local issue this year has almost doubled since 2017, when it was just 3.9%. The South East has seen a rise in crime and insecurity concerns since last year, from 37.4% to 44.7%, while the West has seen a decline, from 51.4% to 42.3%. Lack of employment opportunities is reported by a consistent 30% to 35% of respondents in all regions except Central/Hazarajat (25.7%). Respondents in Kunduz complain of unemployment more frequently than in other provinces (50.5%), and respondents in Panjshir less frequently than other provinces (15.1%).

## BIGGEST PROBLEMS LOCALLY, BY REGION

	CENTRAL/ KABUL	EAST	SOUTH EAST	SOUTH WEST	WEST	NORTH EAST	CENTRAL/ HAZARAJAT	NORTH WEST
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
SECURITY/CRIME ISSUES	28	33	45	39	42	27	7	26
ECONOMIC ISSUES	15	20	19	19	17	13	22	17
LACK OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES	30	34	35	35	31	34	26	31
LACK OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES	8	11	11	12	6	11	11	9
GOVERNANCE/ JUSTICE ISSUES	4	11	12	13	7	4	1	6
LACK OF UTILITIES / PUBLIC SERVICES	47	45	33	33	39	52	67	53
LACK OF INFRASTRUCTURE	20	17	16	13	17	26	23	26
FOREIGN INTERVENTION	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
LACK OF INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
CONFLICTS IN THE COMMUNITY	1	3	4	6	2	1	0	1
ENVIRONMENTAL/ NATURAL DISASTERS	8	1	2	1	1	1	2	1
MORALITY ISSUES	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
OTHER	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
NOTHING	3	1	0	0	2	1	1	0
DON'T KNOW	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0

**FIG. 1.12: Q-5.** *In your view, what are the biggest problems in your local area?*

## 1.5 BIGGEST PROBLEMS FACING WOMEN

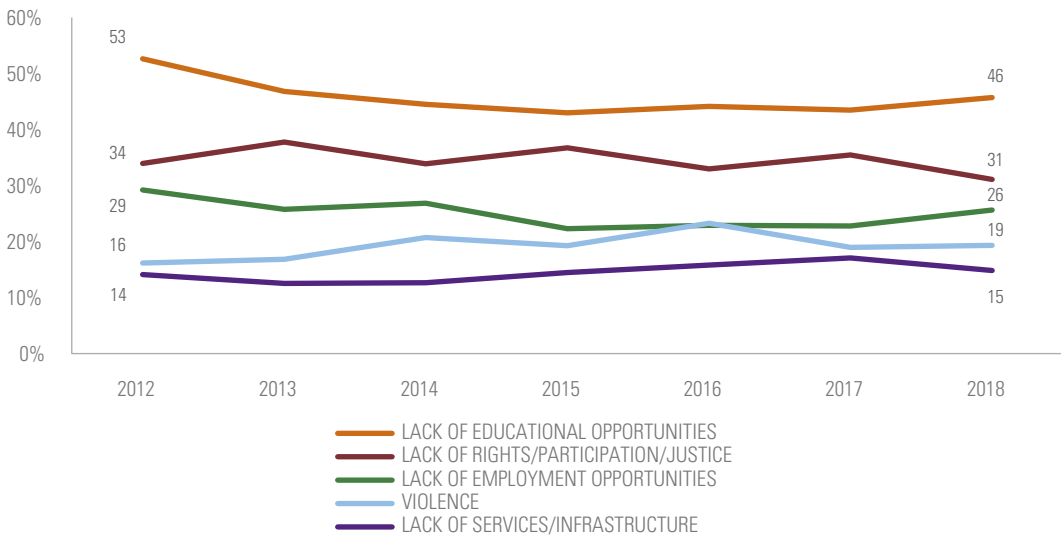
### KEY QUESTION

Q-7. *What, if anything, is the biggest problem facing women in this area today? What is the next-biggest problem?*

Despite concrete efforts by the government to improve the rights of women in Afghanistan, women continue to face serious challenges. Violence against Afghan women, including murder, beatings, mutilation, and acid attacks, remains widespread.<sup>26</sup> The Ministry of Women's Affairs reported an increase in violence against women over the past year, particularly in areas under Taliban control.<sup>27</sup> The literacy rate for young women is only 57% of that for young men, and child marriage, which has a significant impact on women's opportunities, remains widespread.<sup>28</sup> Each year the *Survey* asks respondents what is the biggest problem facing women in their local area (figure 1.13).

Overall, illiteracy and lack of educational opportunities is the answer respondents give most often when asked to name the biggest problems facing women in their local area. Almost half of respondents (45.7%) cite this as an issue in 2018, a slight increase from last year (43.5%). The second-most reported problem facing women is limits on women's rights that reduce their public participation and access to justice (31.1% of respondents, down from 35.5% last year). The third biggest problem, lack of employment opportunities, is cited more frequently this year (25.6%) than last (22.8%). Violence against women—predominantly domestic violence—is the fourth biggest problem, cited by 19.3% of respondents, the same as in 2017 (19.0%). Lack of services or infrastructure as local problems for women have declined since last year, from 17.1% to 14.8%. The number of Afghans reporting economic issues, which includes references to poverty and high prices, also remains a problem for women this year at 9.8%, compared to 9.0% last year. Around 4.3% of respondents say “nothing” when asked to name the biggest local problems facing women, and 4.1% say they do not know what the biggest problems facing local women are.

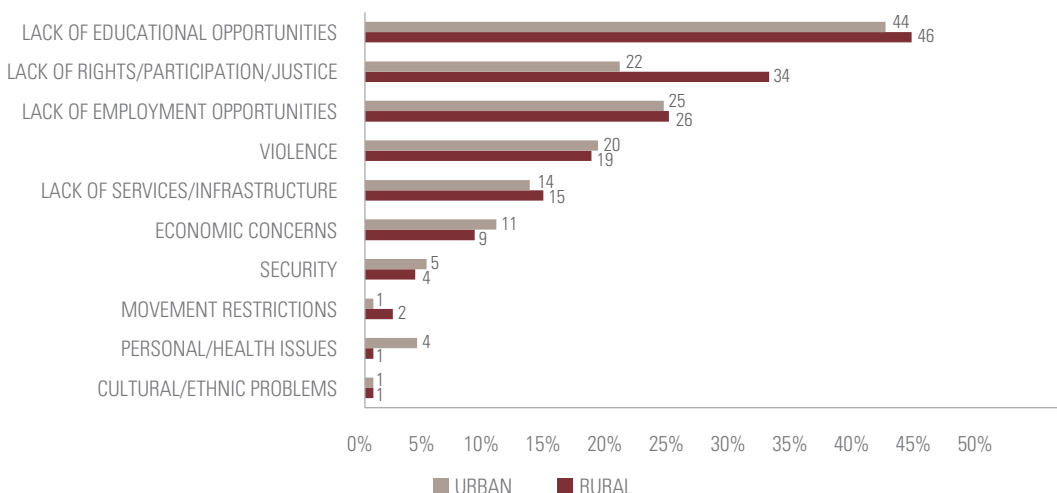
## BIGGEST LOCAL PROBLEMS FACING WOMEN



**FIG. 1.13: Q-7.** *What, if anything, is the biggest problem facing women in this area today? What is the next-biggest problem?*

The proportion of women reporting specifically these local problems is slightly higher than that of men. This is true for all the main themes except infrastructure. There has been a notable decline since last year, however, from 40.0% to 32.0%, in the proportion of women who cite lack of rights as a local problem for women. There are relatively few differences across age groups, although younger Afghans are more likely to cite violence and lack of rights, and less likely to cite lack of employment opportunities, than Afghans over the age of 55.

## BIGGEST PROBLEM FACING WOMEN, BY URBAN AND RURAL



**FIG. 1.14: Q-7.** *What, if anything, is the biggest problem facing women in this area today?*

Urban Afghans (9.5%) are more likely than rural Afghans (2.6%) to say that women do not face any problems at the local level, while rural Afghans (34.2%) are more likely than urban Afghans (21.6%) to say that women face restrictions on their rights, access to justice, and participation in society (figure 1.14).

Uzbek respondents (40.3%) are significantly more likely than Hazaras (32.0%), Tajiks (29.9%), and Pashtuns (15.7%) to report lack of employment opportunities as a problem for women. Illiteracy and lack of educational opportunities is the issue most frequently cited by all ethnic groups except for Pashtuns (Tajiks, 49.1%; Uzbeks, 45.1%; Hazaras, 49.8%; other minorities, 47.2%). Pashtuns most frequently cite lack of rights (44.9%)—more often than Tajiks (21.6%), Uzbeks (24.6%), Hazaras (21.1%), and other minorities (30.7%).

There are a number of significant regional differences. Lack of rights and access to justice is the problem most frequently cited in the East (57.8%) and the South East (51.9%) but least frequently cited in Central/Kabul (15.2%) and Central/Hazarajat (9.9%). There has been very little change since last year in the frequency of this answer in the East, the South West, and the North West, while the frequency has declined in the South East, the South West, the West, the North East, and Central/Hazarajat.

Violent crime against women is also less frequently cited as a local issue in Central/Hazarajat (7.3%) than in other regions, particularly the South East, where there has been an increase from 24.5% in 2017



to 32.6% in 2018. Domestic violence specifically (as opposed to the broader theme of violence or crime) is again mentioned most frequently by respondents in Khost—up from 42.8% last year to 51.8% this year—and by over a third of respondents in Paktia (37.6%) and Nuristan (36.5%). Forced marriage/dowries is the local problem for women mentioned most often by residents of Khost (48.4%), Nuristan (47.1%), and Kunar (41.6%). Provincially, illiteracy and lack of educational opportunities reported as a problem for women differ most starkly between Bamyán (61.2%) and Zabul (4.6%).

## 1.6 BIGGEST PROBLEMS FACING YOUTH

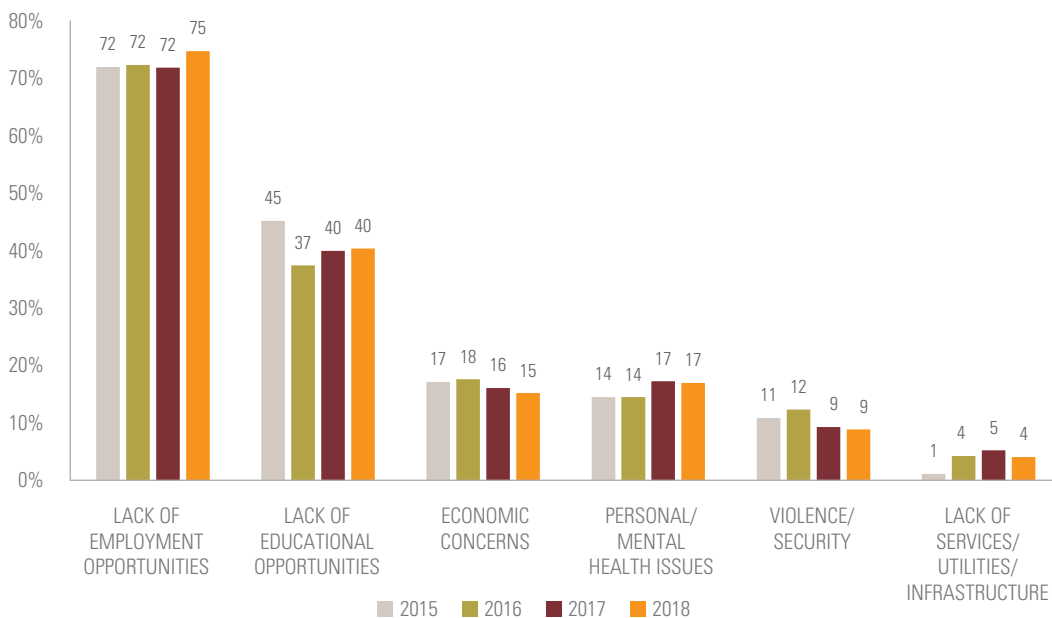
### KEY QUESTION

*Q-6. In your view, what are the two biggest problems facing youth in your area? By youth, I mean people between the ages of 15 and 24?*

The national unemployment rate in Afghanistan is 23.9%, but the youth unemployment rate is considerably higher, at 30.7%.<sup>29</sup> At the same time, the literacy rate is 34.8% for adults, and 53.6% for young people age 15–24. These statistics are of particular concern in a country where nearly half the population (47.7%) is under 15 years of age.<sup>30</sup>

Not unexpectedly, unemployment and lack of educational opportunities are again the most commonly cited local problems for youth. Lack of employment opportunities for young Afghans is by far the most frequent response, reported by 74.7% of respondents across Afghanistan, an increase from 71.8% last year. The second-most frequent is illiteracy and lack of educational opportunities, cited by 40.3%. Personal or mental-health issues (primarily concerns about drug addiction) are cited by 17.0% of respondents; economic concerns (including the high cost of living and a poor economy) are reported by 15.1% of respondents; and violence and insecurity is cited by 8.9% of respondents as a local problem for youth (figure 1.15).

## BIGGEST PROBLEMS FACING YOUTH LOCALLY



**FIG. 1.15: Q-6.** *In your view, what are the two biggest problems facing youth in your area? By youth, I mean people between the ages of 15 and 24.*

This pattern of responses holds across age group and gender. Urban respondents are slightly more likely to report employment issues as a problem than rural respondents (77.6% vs. 73.7%), and rural respondents are more likely than urban respondents to cite lack of educational opportunities (42.9% vs. 32.5%). Personal or mental-health issues are reported much more frequently by urban than by rural Afghans (23.4% vs. 14.8%). Less than 1% of respondents say that the influence of ISIS or the Taliban is an issue for Afghanistan's youth.

Violence and insecurity issues are reported less frequently than economic issues by respondents in all regions. Economic concerns are particularly pronounced in Central/Hazarajat (31.7%) and the West (22.5%).

Looking across regions, drug addiction specifically is more likely to be cited by respondents who live in the South East (particularly in the province of Khost), the East, the South West, and Central/Kabul (25.0%, 24.8%, 21.6%, and 20.6%, respectively). Only 2.2% of respondents in Hazarajat, 7.7% in the North East, and 11.1% and 11.0% in the North West and the West, respectively, cite drug addiction as a local issue for young people.

Respondents in the province of Parwan are the most likely to report unemployment as an issue for young people (90.3%), and residents of Zabul are the least likely to refer to this issue (33.8%).

## 1.7 SELF-REPORTED HAPPINESS

### KEY QUESTION

*D-16. In general in your life, would you say you are very happy, somewhat happy, not very happy, or not at all happy?*

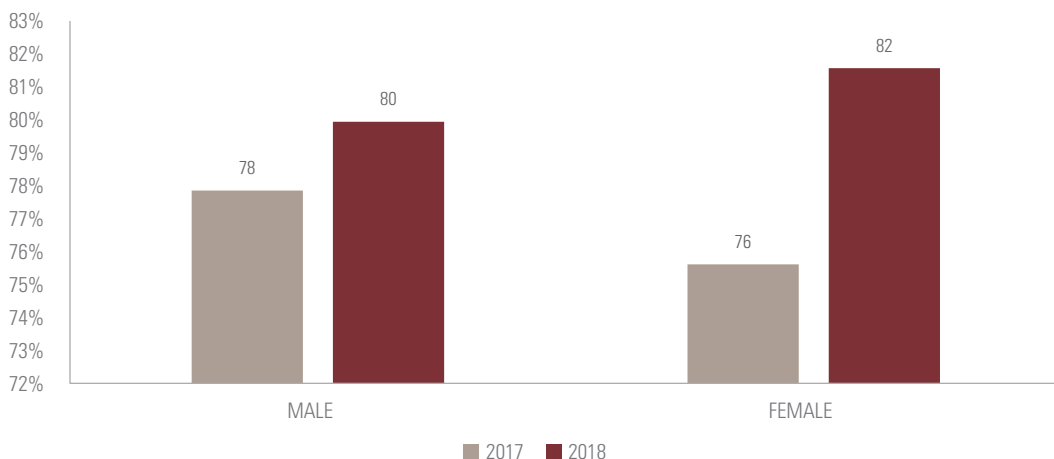
Every year, the *Survey* asks respondents how happy they are in their life. Respondents can choose one of four options: very happy, somewhat happy, not very happy, or not at all happy. To interpret these four responses and their relationship to other *Survey* variables, we have aggregated them into two categories: “very happy” and “somewhat happy” have been combined to create the measure “generally happy”; “not very happy” and “not at all happy” have been combined into “generally unhappy.”

The number of Afghans who are generally happy has increased slightly from 76.7% in 2017 to 80.8% this year, and respondents who are generally unhappy have declined from 23.3% last year to 18.9% in 2018. Afghans who reside in very insecure areas (i.e., intercept respondents) are again less likely to say they are generally happy than respondents in the main sample (71.3% vs. 80.8%). However, self-reported happiness among intercept respondents has also increased, from 67.8% in 2017 to 71.3% this year.

There are links between feeling happy and feeling optimistic about the future. While 35.7% of respondents who report being generally happy also say they are optimistic about the direction the country is taking, just 20.1% of Afghans who are generally unhappy are optimistic about the country’s direction.

Since 2014, self-reported general happiness has been higher among Afghan men than among women (figure 1.16). This year, for the first time, women report being generally happy just slightly more frequently than men (81.6% vs. 79.9%). Notably, women’s self-reported happiness has increased 6 percentage points since 2017, while men’s happiness has increased by just 2 points.

## GENERAL HAPPINESS, BY GENDER



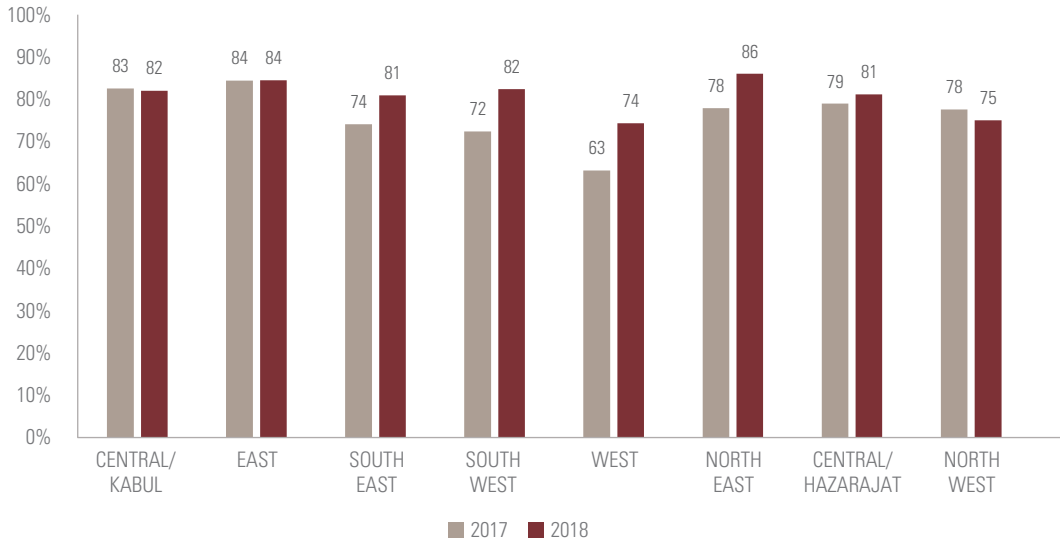
**FIG. 1.16: D-16.** *In general in your life, would you say you are very happy, somewhat happy, not very happy, or not at all happy? (Percent who say “very happy” or “somewhat happy.”)*

Overall, single respondents are more likely to be happy than married respondents (83.2% vs. 80.5%). The proportion of widowed Afghans who say they are happy is still lower, at 70.4%. Single women are more likely to say they are generally happy (84.8%) than single men (82.1%), married women (81.5%), or married men (79.4%). There is little difference between the proportions of urban men and urban women who report general happiness (83.4% and 83.5%, respectively), but Afghan men in rural areas report somewhat lower levels of self-reported happiness than rural women (78.6% and 81.0%, respectively).

There is a negative correlation between age and self-reported happiness—as Afghans get older they are less likely to say they are happy. Respondents age 18–25 are the most likely to say they are generally happy (82.4%), while respondents age 55 and above are the least likely (76.6%).

Regionally, self-reported happiness has remained relatively stable since last year in Central/Kabul and the East. It has declined slightly in the North West and increased slightly in the other regions (figure 1.17). The most notable increase is in the West. While self-reported happiness declined in the West between 2016 and 2017 (from 75.4% to 63.2%), it has rebounded this year to 74.3%.

## SELF-REPORTED HAPPINESS, BY REGION



**FIG. 1.17: D-16.** *In general in your life, would you say you are very happy, somewhat happy, not very happy, or not at all happy? (Percent who say “very happy” or “somewhat happy.”)*

Again this year, looking at regional data alone is insufficient for a complete picture of geographical trends in self-reported happiness. In general, the provinces of Central/Kabul show declining happiness since 2017. Indeed, in Panjshir, general happiness has fallen from 77.5% to 58.5% in the last 12 months. In Wardak, however, the proportion of respondents who say they are generally happy has increased from 55.2% in 2017 to 69.6% this year.

Compared to the national average of 80.8%, self-reported happiness is considerably lower in Zabul (48.1%). Self-reported happiness has risen substantially in Baghlan, from 75.4% in 2017 to 91.0% in 2018.

While it is not possible to establish causal relationships between *Survey* variables, there are, as with optimism, a number of other factors that correlate with self-reported happiness. Respondents who earn higher incomes, are more highly educated, or believe that their household situation is better than it was 12 months ago are more likely to say they are happy. Likewise, as their confidence in national reconciliation, fair judicial outcomes, and informal and formal authorities rises, so too does respondents’ self-reported happiness. However, the more likely they are to fear for their personal safety, experience corruption, or have fear of participating in sociopolitical activities such as demonstrating, the less likely they are to report being happy.<sup>31</sup>

## ENDNOTES

- 1 Ali Yawar Adili, “Thematic Dossier (XX): Electoral reform and the preparations for the 2018 elections,” *Afghanistan Analysts Network*, August 10, 2018, <https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/publication/aan-thematic-dossier/thematic-dossier-xx-electoral-reform-and-the-preparations-for-the-2018-elections/>.
- 2 United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), *Midyear Update on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict: 1 January to 30 June 2018* (UNAMA, July 15, 2018), [https://unama.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/unama\\_poc\\_midyear\\_update\\_2018\\_15\\_july\\_english.pdf](https://unama.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/unama_poc_midyear_update_2018_15_july_english.pdf).
- 3 United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), *Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict: Election-Related Attacks and Abuses During the Initial Voter Registration Period* (UNAMA, May 10, 2018), [https://unama.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/protection\\_of\\_civilians\\_-\\_special\\_report\\_-\\_election-related\\_attacks\\_and\\_abuses\\_may\\_2018\\_english.pdf](https://unama.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/protection_of_civilians_-_special_report_-_election-related_attacks_and_abuses_may_2018_english.pdf).
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), *Report of the Secretary-General: The Situation in Afghanistan and its Implications for International Peace and Security* (United Nations General Assembly Security Council, June 6, 2018), <https://unama.unmissions.org/report-secretary-general-situation-afghanistan-and-its-implications-international-peace-and-7>.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 International Organization for Migration (IOM) website, “Return of Undocumented Afghans, Weekly Situation Report, 12–18 August 2018,” [https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/situation\\_reports/file/afghanistan\\_sr\\_20180812-18.pdf](https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/situation_reports/file/afghanistan_sr_20180812-18.pdf).
- 9 Central Statistics Organization (CSO), *Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey 2016–2017*, Highlights Report (Kabul: CSO, 2018), [http://cso.gov.af/Content/files/Surveys/ALCS/Final%20English%20ALCS%20Highlight\(1\).pdf](http://cso.gov.af/Content/files/Surveys/ALCS/Final%20English%20ALCS%20Highlight(1).pdf).
- 10 Hamid Shalizi and James Mackenzie, “Afghanistan’s Ghani offers talks with Taliban ‘without preconditions,’” *Reuters*, February 28, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-afghanistan-taliban/afghanistans-ghani-offers-talks-with-taliban-without-preconditions-idUSKCN1GC0J0>.
- 11 Kate Clark, “The Eid Ceasefire: Allowing Afghans to imagine their country at peace,” *Afghanistan Analysts Network*, June 19, 2018, <https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/the-eid-ceasefire-allowing-afghans-to-imagine-their-country-at-peace/>.
- 12 UNAMA, *Midyear Update on the Protection of Civilians* (see note 2).
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 Ali Mohammad Sabawoon and Thomas Ruttig, “‘The Eid ceasefire helped our efforts well’: Helmand peace marchers keep up the pressure,” *Afghanistan Analysts Network*, August 2, 2018, <https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/the-eid-ceasefire-helped-our-efforts-well-helmand-peace-marchers-keep-up-the-pressure/>.
- 15 UNAMA, *The situation in Afghanistan* (see note 5).
- 16 Other ethnic minorities includes Turkmen, Nuristani, Baloch, Arab, Aimaq, Sadat, Pashaye, Qezelbash, Kyrgyz, and others.
- 17 Fahim Abed and Taimoor Shah, “Taliban Overrun Afghan City, Kill 30 People and Leave,” *New York Times*, May 16, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/16/world/asia/taliban-farah-afghanistan.html>.
- 18 Reuters and Daniel Brown, “ISIS just ambushed and killed 15 Taliban fighters as the terror groups wage a bloody battle while the US watches,” *Business Insider*, July 17, 2018, <https://www.businessinsider.com/r-islamic-state-fighters-in-afghanistan-kill-at-least-15-taliban-2018-7>.
- 19 UNAMA, *The situation in Afghanistan* (see note 5).
- 20 Ehsan Qaane, “The Insecure Spring of Ghazni: Results of third-grade treatment by the centre?” *Afghanistan Analysts Network*, July 25, 2018, <https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/the-insecure-spring-of-ghazni-results-of-third-grade-treatment-by-the-centre/>.
- 21 Ibid.

- 22 Logistic regression was used to regress perceived direction of Afghanistan (Q1) on demographic indicators such as gender (D1), age (D2), income (D6 & D7), education (D10), marital status (D12), ethnicity (D14), geography (M6b), employment (D3), self-reported happiness (D16), perceived fear for personal safety (Q21), a scale for fear when participating in different social and political activities (alpha=0.67), confidence about outcome of reconciliation between the government and the Taliban (Q53), confidence in law enforcement (Q28), awareness of different projects implemented in the local area (Q10 questions), perception of local government decisions (Q43), a scale for confidence in formal and informal authorities (alpha=0.84), a perception-of-ANSF scale (alpha=0.87), an experience-of-corruption scale (alpha= 0.92), and a household well-being scale (alpha= 0.74). The model was weighted by urban/rural and provincial distribution, excluding the intercept interviews. The full model explained 12.9% of all variance in the perceived direction of Afghanistan (R2= 0.1287, p<.0001).
- 23 Rebuilding includes reasons related to reconstruction and infrastructure development.
- 24 Anxiety about the economy includes references to unemployment, high prices, and “bad” economy, among other things.
- 25 Themes created this year have been applied to previous years’ data so comparisons can be made more effectively. Please note that the year-over-year figures presented in this report may therefore differ from those reported in 2017.
- 26 United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), *Injustice and Impunity: Mediation of Criminal Offences of Violence against Women* (Kabul: UNAMA and OHCHR, May 2018), [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/unama\\_ohchr\\_evaw\\_report\\_2018\\_injustice\\_and\\_impunity\\_29\\_may\\_2018.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/unama_ohchr_evaw_report_2018_injustice_and_impunity_29_may_2018.pdf).
- 27 Amnesty International, “Afghanistan 2017/2018,” in *Amnesty International Report 2017/18: The State of the World’s Human Rights* (London: Amnesty International, 2018), 66–69, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/asia-and-the-pacific/afghanistan/report-afghanistan/>.
- 28 CSO, *Afghanistan Living Conditions* (see note 9).
- 29 Ibid.
- 30 Ibid.
- 31 Ordered logistic regression was used to regress self-reported happiness (D16) on demographic indicators such as gender (D1), age (D2), income (D6 & D7), education (D10), marital status (D12), ethnicity (D14), geography (M6b), employment (D3), perceived direction of Afghanistan (Q1), perceived fear for personal safety (Q21), a scale for fear when participating in different social and political activities (alpha=0.67), confidence about outcome of reconciliation between the government and the Taliban (Q53), confidence in law enforcement (Q28), awareness of different projects implemented in the local area (Q10 questions), perception of local government decisions (Q43), a scale for confidence in formal and informal authorities (alpha=0.84), a perception-of-ANSF scale (alpha=0.87), an experience-of-corruption scale (alpha= 0.92), and a household well-being scale (alpha= 0.74). The model excluded the intercept interviews. The full model explained 7% of all variance in the perceived direction of Afghanistan (R2=0.0671, p<.0001).





## 2 SECURITY

The security situation in Afghanistan remains precarious, with the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF), International Military Forces (IMF), and insurgent groups engaged in an almost continuous cycle of combat. The presence of an estimated 20 insurgent groups<sup>1</sup> adds to the complexity of the security environment. Violence continues to inflict large-scale casualties and fatalities on the civilian population. Indeed, during the first nine months of 2018, more civilians were killed than during any year since 2014.<sup>2</sup> Highlighting the perilous security environment, some analysts are inferring that the conflict in Afghanistan may surpass Syria as the world's current deadliest.<sup>3</sup>

The Taliban remain a formidable and resilient antigovernment force, demonstrating a continued ability to threaten district centers and provincial capitals. They were briefly able to seize government and ANDSF facilities in Farah city in May,<sup>4</sup> before being repelled by the ANDSF. In a more serious incursion, Ghazni city fell to the group after the Taliban surrounded and attacked it. The Ghazni offensive is arguably the Taliban's most notable battlefield success to date. Further indicative of Taliban strength were the rumors of potential assaults or pressure on Pul-e Khumri, Baghlan; Tirinkot, Uruzgan; Kunduz city, Kunduz; Faizabad, Badakhshan; Lashkargah, Helmand; and Sar-e-Pul.<sup>5</sup> The Taliban continue to control or influence territory throughout Afghanistan—up to 70% of the country in the estimate of some analysts.<sup>6</sup> Other observers, however, see little significant change in territorial control.<sup>7</sup> Increased Taliban activity is reflected in the increase in number of Afghans who say they have no sympathy for the Taliban, up from 80.0% in 2017 to 82.4% this year.

---

The conflict is now widely seen as having reached a stalemate. This stalemate appears to have been recognized by all sides to the conflict, and a push for peace talks has become more visible.

---

The conflict is now widely seen as having reached a stalemate. This stalemate appears to have been recognized by all sides to the conflict, and a push for peace talks has become more visible.<sup>8</sup> The first signs of a new push for peace came from President Ashraf Ghani, who made an unprecedented offer to the Taliban for peace talks “without preconditions” and with attractive enticements, which included removal of Taliban leaders from sanctions lists and recognition of the group as a political entity.<sup>9,10,11</sup> While the Taliban did not respond at the time, President Ghani's offer was welcomed by many commentators and the international community.

Despite the lack of a Taliban response to his offer of talks, President Ghani took the bold step of announcing a unilateral ceasefire during Eid-ul-Fitr.<sup>12,13</sup> The IMF and the Taliban both responded, and from June 9 to 12, a ceasefire was widely observed throughout the country. Jubilant scenes of the ANDSF, members of the government, civilians, and the Taliban openly mixing provided a rare respite

from the conflict. The Taliban, however, returned to fighting the ANDSF immediately upon the three-day ceasefire's end. A second ceasefire, again initiated by President Ghani, during Eid-ul-Adha, was ignored by the Taliban. The successful first ceasefire, however, did highlight the growing optimism about prospects for peace and reconciliation. In a further sign that peace talks are closer than ever, representatives from the United States (U.S.) and the Taliban met in Doha, Qatar, on July 23, 2018, for discussions regarding the groundwork for possible peace negotiations.<sup>14</sup> The Taliban described the talks as “productive.”<sup>15</sup> Increasing optimism surrounding peace talks generally is reflected in the *Survey*, where the percentage of Afghans who say they believe that reconciliation between the government and the Taliban is possible has grown from 52.3% in 2017 to 53.5% in 2018.

The push for peace also saw the start of an independent, grassroots movement among civil society actors,<sup>16</sup> who, after a suicide attack in Helmand, began establishing “peace tents” in Helmand, an idea which quickly spread across the country. As an expression of growing frustration with the war, Afghans are erecting “peace tents” near the sites attacked, and march for peace across the country. The movement has widened, and the participants marched from Helmand to Kabul in order to appeal to all sides to lay down arms and stop killing civilians. At the time of writing, the movement has reached Balkh Province. Whether this movement has had or can have any tangible impact on peace talks is uncertain; some of the group's early momentum has been lost.

In October 2018, parliamentary elections took place across most of the country, and presidential elections are scheduled for April 14, 2019. During the voter-registration process, insurgents attacked registration sites, *Tazkira* (national identity card) distribution centers, the electoral apparatus, candidates, and election workers.<sup>17</sup> These attacks, and growing public awareness of the upcoming elections, are likely a significant factor in the 10.9-percentage point increase, from 51.5% in 2017 to 62.4%, this year, in the percentage of Afghans who are fearful of voting in a national election. This also represents a significant increase when compared with the election cycle in 2014 when over 45.8% of Afghans expressed a fear of voting.

The performance of the ANDSF continues to be mixed. Despite significantly outnumbering the Taliban on paper,<sup>18</sup> they continue to be plagued by poor morale, ethnic tensions, ineffective leadership, “ghost soldiers,” poor command and control,<sup>19</sup> and declining troop strength.<sup>20</sup> Even taking into account questions over their effectiveness, public confidence in both the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP) remains largely unchanged.

The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (known as ISIS or Daesh) continues to undermine security in the country, although the group has been significantly weakened by targeted ANDSF and IMF operations. That said, the group has managed to maintain a limited presence in Nangarhar, Kunar, and Jawzjan,<sup>21</sup> and has shown an ability to conduct high-profile attacks in Kabul City and Jalalabad City. In a sign that ISIS has been weakened, they have expanded their target base to include softer targets such as civilian and educational facilities, and have continued to conduct sectarian attacks against places of worship.<sup>22</sup> The indiscriminate targeting of Afghans seems to be reflected in this year's *Survey*, with the number of Afghans reporting no sympathy for ISIS increasing from 91.5% in 2017, to 96.4% this year.

## 2.1 FEAR FOR PERSONAL SAFETY

### KEY QUESTIONS

**Q-21.** *How often do you fear for your own personal safety or security or for that of your family these days? Would you say you always, often, sometimes, rarely, or never fear for you and your family's safety?*

**Q-41.** *Please tell me how you would respond to the following activities or groups. Would you respond with no fear, some fear, or a lot of fear? (a) Voting in a national/provincial election. (b) Participating in a peaceful demonstration. (c) Running for public office. (d) Encountering ANP. (e) Encountering ANA. (f) Traveling from one part of Afghanistan to another part of the country. (g) Encountering international forces (Western military only). (h) Encountering the Taliban. (i) Encountering ISIS/Daesh.*

Fear for personal safety remains at the same high level as 2017 (70.7% in 2017 vs 71.1 in 2018) and reflects the public's continued concern for personal safety since the handover of security responsibilities to the ANDSF in 2013.



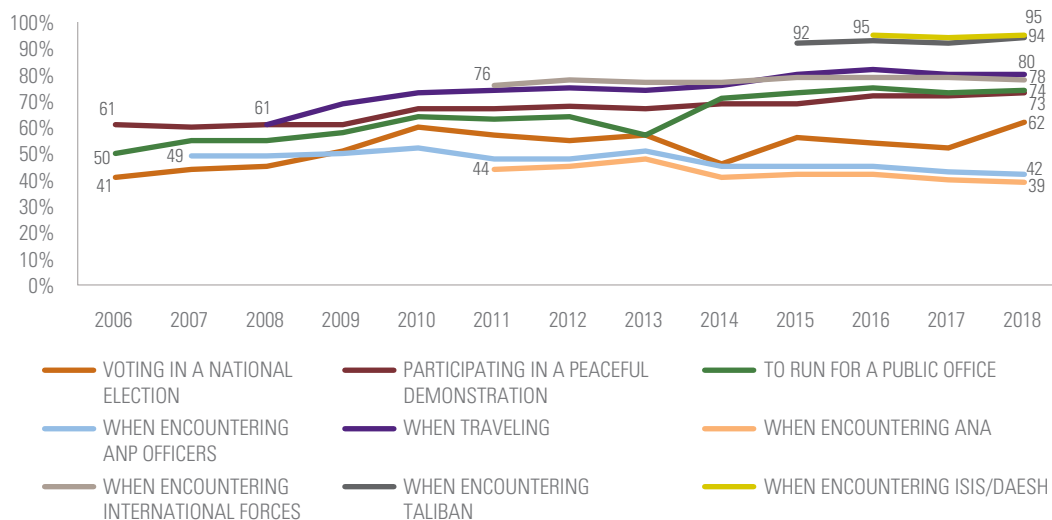
**FIG. 2.1: Q-21.** *How often do you fear for your own personal safety or security or for that of your family these days? Would you say you always, often, sometimes, rarely, or never fear for you and your family's safety? (Percent who respond "always," "often," or "sometimes.")*

Females (74.7%) are more likely than males (67.4%) to fear for their personal safety. Respondents in urban areas (75.3%) are more likely to fear for their personal safety than those in rural areas (69.7%).

Considered by province, the fear for personal safety is consistent with figures recorded in 2017. The only notable deviations from last year's findings are an increase in fear for personal safety in Nangarhar, Kunduz, and Ghazni. The increased fear for personal safety can be explained by the well-publicized security issues in those provinces. In Helmand Province, there has been a sharp increase in fear for personal safety, from 61.0% in 2017 to 74.0% this year. This increase reflects the volatile situation in Helmand, where a number of districts are either contested or controlled by the Taliban.<sup>23</sup>

When disaggregating fear for personal safety by ethnic group, Pashtuns remain the most fearful (76.7%), which marks an increase since 2017 (73.4%) and the first increase in three years. Fear for personal safety among Tajiks has declined to 67.4%, reversing an upwards trend since 2015. Fear for personal safety is lowest among Hazaras, at 65.8%.

### FEAR WHILE DOING DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES



**FIG. 2.2: Q-41.** Please tell me how you would respond to the following activities or groups. Would you respond with no fear, some fear, or a lot of fear? (a) Voting in a national/provincial election. (b) Participating in a peaceful demonstration. (c) Running for public office. (d) Encountering the ANP. (e) Encountering the ANA. (f) Traveling from one part of Afghanistan to another part of the country. (g) Encountering international forces (Western military only). (h) Encountering the Taliban. (i) Encountering ISIS/Daesh. (Percent who say “some fear” or “a lot of fear.”)

The *Survey* also asks respondents to report on their levels of fear while engaging in various activities.

As with previous years, fear when encountering ISIS (94.9%) and the Taliban (93.6%) remains consistent. Disaggregating the level of fear when encountering ISIS by province, respondents in Balkh are the most fearful (99.6%), while respondents in Laghman are the least (83.2%). Interestingly, respondents from Nangarhar, which has significant levels of ISIS activity,<sup>24</sup> comparatively, are at the lower end of the scale regarding fear of encountering ISIS, at 90.7%. A few provinces exhibit noticeable variations. The percentage of respondents in Zabul who report no fear when encountering the Taliban has risen significantly, from 52.7% in 2017 to 62.7% this year (interestingly, respondents in Zabul are hugely skeptical of ANA/ANP performance), while the percentage of respondents in Paktika who report no fear when encountering the Taliban has *fallen* significantly, from 21.4% in 2017 to just 8.7% this year. Some 15.6% of respondents in Laghman report no fear when encountering ISIS/Daesh.

Given the imminent parliamentary elections, the presidential election next year, and attacks on the voter-registration process, and against potential candidates,<sup>25</sup> it is not surprising that fear of voting in a national election has risen 10.9 percentage points, to 62.4%, since last year. Females (67.1%) are more fearful of voting in a national election than males (57.7%). Disaggregating by rural or urban residence, 67.0% of respondents in urban areas reported fear when voting, while 60.9% of respondents in rural areas reported fear when voting.

Comparing this year's results with pre- and postelection *Survey* data from 2013 and 2014 yields a number of interesting observations. The 62.4% who expressed fear of voting this year is noticeably greater than the 57.2% during the 2013 pre-national election period, and it is a significant increase over the 51.5% who expressed fear in 2017. Data shows that the fear of voting is usually higher among respondents who are polled during the pre-election period. For example, a 2013 pre-election poll, 61.3% of respondents in Badghis reported a fear of voting, while in 2014, in a postelection poll, this figure dropped to 44.0%. In this year's pre-election poll, the figure for Badghis has risen to 61.9%. Ghazni saw 63.6% report a fear of voting in 2013, pre-election, but 55.3% in 2014, postelection. For 2018, this figure has risen substantially, to 78.0%. The general insecurity in Ghazni is witnessed by the postponement of the Parliamentary elections,<sup>26</sup> with them now likely to be held in April 2019.

When comparing the fear of voting recorded pre-election in 2013 and 2018, we see significant increases in 2018 in a number of provinces, including Baghlan (from 41.7% in 2013 to 61.7% in 2018), Faryab (from 56.9% to 77.9%), Jawzjan (from 34.5% to 53.3%), Kunduz (from 58.2% to 73.8%), and Takhar (from 35.7% to 54.9%). These appear to be indicative of the increased insecurity in the North. On the other hand, we find noticeable decreases in the relatively peaceful provinces of Daikundi (2013, 62.8%; 2018, 11.9%), Bamyán (2013, 23.1%; 2018, 20.4%), and Panjshir (2013, 6.4%; 2018, 1.5%).

### FEAR WHILE VOTING 2013



### FEAR WHILE VOTING 2014



## FEAR WHILE VOTING 2018



**FIG. 2.3: Q-41.** Please tell me how you would respond to the following activities or groups. Would you respond with no fear, some fear, or a lot of fear? (a) Voting in a national/provincial election. (Percent who say “some fear” or “a lot of fear.”)

Reflecting the spread of conflict and growing insecurity, there are noticeable increases over 2014 in the fear of voting in the Northern provinces of Samangan (an increase of 21.6 percentage points, to 39.1%), Sar-e-Pul (an increase of 12.0 percentage points to 62.9%); Jawzjan (an increase of 24.2 percentage points to 53.3%); Kunduz (an increase of 26.0 percentage points to 73.8%) and Takhar (an increase of 32.8 percentage points to 54.9%). In the West, Farah has also recorded 29.4 percentage point increase over 2014’s 53.7%, with 83.1% of respondents this year experiencing fear when voting. Given the significant influence of the Taliban in Ghazni, general insecurity,<sup>27</sup> and possible ethnic tensions,<sup>28</sup> it is unsurprising to see fear of voting increase from 55.3% in 2014 to 78.0% in 2018. When assessing the years 2014 and 2018, Daikundi stands out with a 38.6 percentage point *decrease* in the fear of voting.

Disaggregating by region, and when comparing 2017 and 2018, significant increases in fear of voting in a national election are reported in the South East (up from 53.9% to 72.8%), the South West (up from 59.1% to 69.5%), the North East (up from 40.3% to 59.2%), and the East (up from 43.4% to 59.2%). More moderate increases in fear of voting in a national election are reported in Central/Kabul (up from 58.7% to 63.3%). A decrease in fear is reported in the Central/Hazarajat region (down from 19.2% to

16.0%). Fear of voting in a national election is highest among Pashtuns (67.5%), reflecting the large Pashtun populations in regions reporting higher levels of fear.

Fear of participating in a peaceful demonstration has risen to 73.1%, its highest level in all years, reflecting the targeting of demonstrations by insurgent or criminal groups.<sup>29,30</sup> More females (77.9%) report fear of participating in a peaceful demonstration than males (68.3%). 75.4% of Pashtuns report fear of participating in a peaceful demonstration. Despite previous attacks against Hazara demonstrations,<sup>31</sup> Hazaras are least likely (66.8%) of all ethnic groups to report “fear” when participating in a peaceful demonstration.

Fear when encountering either the ANP or the ANA is at levels commensurate with those recorded in 2017. However, in a reversal of 2017 trends, 55.5% of respondents in the West report fear when encountering the ANP (down from 65.3% in 2017), and 50.7% report fear when encountering the ANA (down from 64.4% in 2017). Fear of encountering the ANP or the ANA is lowest in the Central/Hazarajat region (ANP, 15.0%; ANA, 18.4%) and highest in the South West (ANP, 62.8%; ANA 60.5%).

Fear when traveling is of great concern to Afghans. Continued expansion by armed opposition groups into the previously quiet western, northwestern, and northern provinces and their ability to threaten the nation’s roads and highways<sup>32,33,34</sup> are reflected in this year’s data, with 79.7% of Afghans reporting some or a lot of fear when traveling, an increase of 18.7 percentage points when compared with 2008.

When further comparing data from 2008 and 2018, a noticeable increase in fear of traveling is visible countrywide. The fear of traveling increased noticeably in the West, the North West, the North, the North East and some provinces in the Central region. Fear of traveling among respondents from Sar-e-Pul has risen by almost 200% since 2008 from 28.9%, to 85.0% in 2018. Continuing the theme, Faryab has seen a rise from 48.3% in 2008 to 91.2% in 2018, and Takhar has risen from 32.5% in 2008 to 77.7% in 2018.



### FEAR WHEN TRAVELLING 2008



### FEAR WHEN TRAVELLING 2018



**FIG. 2.4: Q-41.** Please tell me how you would respond to the following activities or groups. Would you respond with no fear, some fear, or a lot of fear? (f) Traveling from one part of Afghanistan to another part of the country. (Percent who say “some fear” or “a lot of fear.”)

When considered by region, the proportion of Afghans who report fear when traveling remains broadly consistent with 2017. Considered by province, respondents in Panjshir report the highest levels of fear when traveling (92.9%), and respondents in Paktika the lowest (61.4%).

## 2.2 CRIME AND VIOLENCE

### KEY QUESTIONS

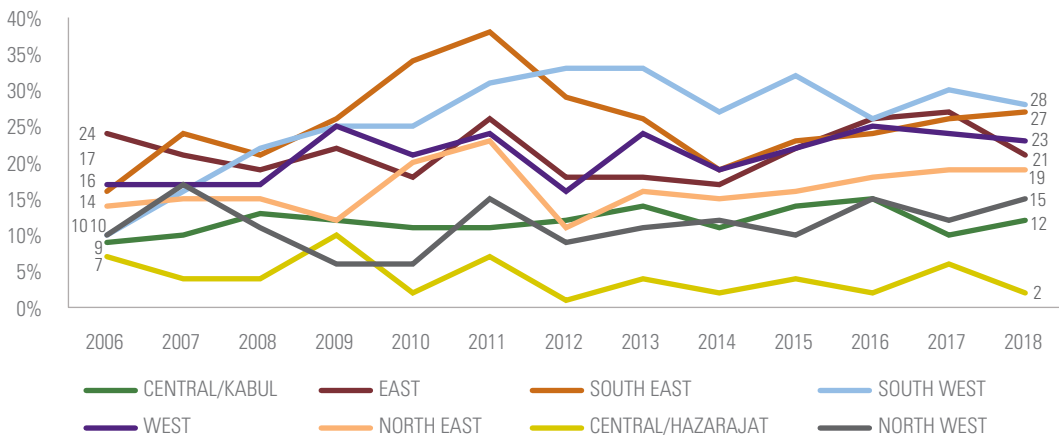
**Q-24.** *Have you or has anyone in your family suffered from violence or some criminal act in the past year?*

**Q-25.** *(If answer to Q-24 is yes.) If it is ok to ask, what kinds of violence or crimes did you or someone in your family experience in the past year?*

**Q-45f.** *Fear while traveling from one part of the country to another.*

During this year's *Survey*, 18.6% of respondents reported that they had suffered from an act of violence or criminality. When assessed regionally, minor changes from the 2017 figures are noted. The following regions reported increases over 2017: Central/Kabul (up 2.6 percentage points, to 12.5%), and the North West (up 2.9 percentage points, to 14.7%). Declines were reported in Central/Hazarajat (down 4.2 percentage points, to 2.0%) and the East (down 5.8 percentage points, to 20.8%). All other regions reported findings broadly similar to 2017.

### EXPERIENCE OF CRIME OR VIOLENCE, BY REGION



**FIG. 2.5: Q-24.** *Have you or has anyone in your family suffered from violence or some criminal act in the past year? (Percent who say yes.)*

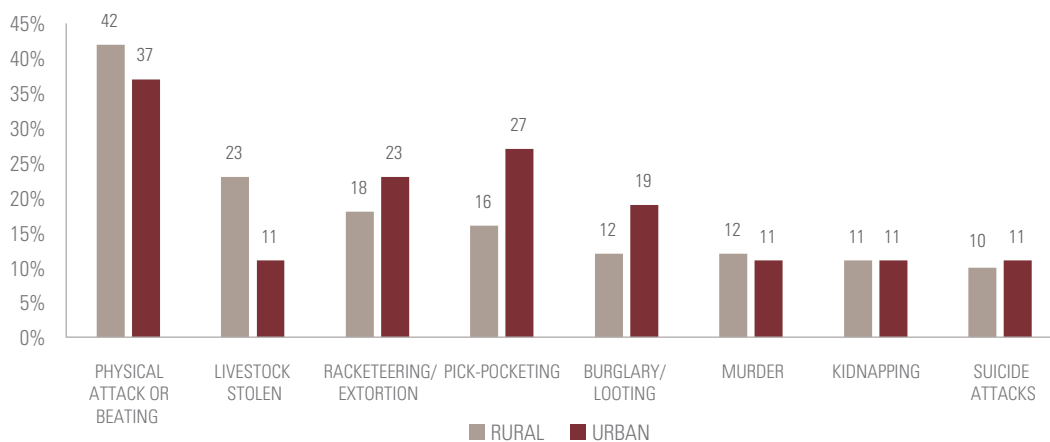
When disaggregated by ethnicity, Pashtuns (25.1%) are the most likely to have suffered from violence or crime in the past year. Hazaras (11.4%) are the least likely.

By province, Helmand (40.3%), Wardak (36.3%), Paktia (32.0%), Uruzgan (32.0%), and Zabul (29.3%) are the provinces where the most respondents reported that someone in their family had been a victim of violence or crime. These findings come as no surprise given the volatile situation in those provinces. Kapisa (5.6%), Bamyan (2.9%), Panjshir (1.6%), and Daikundi (1.3%) reported the lowest rates of violence or crime affecting the family, which correlates with the finding that people in those provinces reported the lowest fear for their personal safety.

In line with findings recorded in 2017, physical attacks and beatings were the most-reported violent or criminal acts, at 41.3%. Compared to 2017, this is a 6.7 percentage point increase in this category of violence.<sup>35</sup> Males (43.5%) are more likely than females (39.1%) to report suffering from a physical attack or beating. Rural respondents (42.1%) cite a physical attack or beating more frequently than urban respondents (37.4%).

The proportion of Afghans who report that they or a family member have been affected by a suicide attack declined by 6.0 percentage points, to 10.0%.

### TYPES OF CRIME OR VIOLENCE, BY RURAL AND URBAN

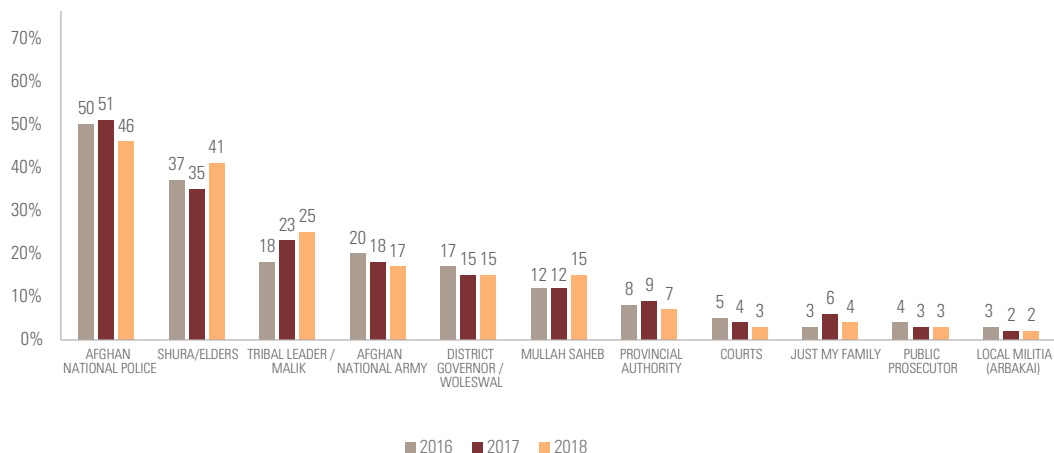


**FIG. 2.6: Q-25.** (Ask if answer to Q-24 is yes.) If it is ok to ask, what kinds of violence or crimes did you or someone in your family experience in the past year?

Data for 2018 indicates decreased confidence amongst Afghans in reporting crimes to the ANA or the ANP. The proportion of respondents reporting crimes to the Afghan National Police dropped by 5.0 percentage points, to 45.7%, while those reporting crimes to the ANA dropped by 1.5 percentage

point, to 16.5%. This decreased confidence is reflected in the increased percentage of people reporting crimes to shuras or elders (an increase of 5.6 percentage points to 40.5%), and to mullahs *sabehs* (a religious person worthy of respect) (an increase of 2.9 percentage points, to 14.6%), highlighting a growing inclination to report crimes to unofficial organizations. Of those who have been victims of crime or violence, 64.3% in 2018 and 62.5% in 2017 say that they reported the episode to someone outside the family.

## REPORTING CRIME TO INSTITUTIONS

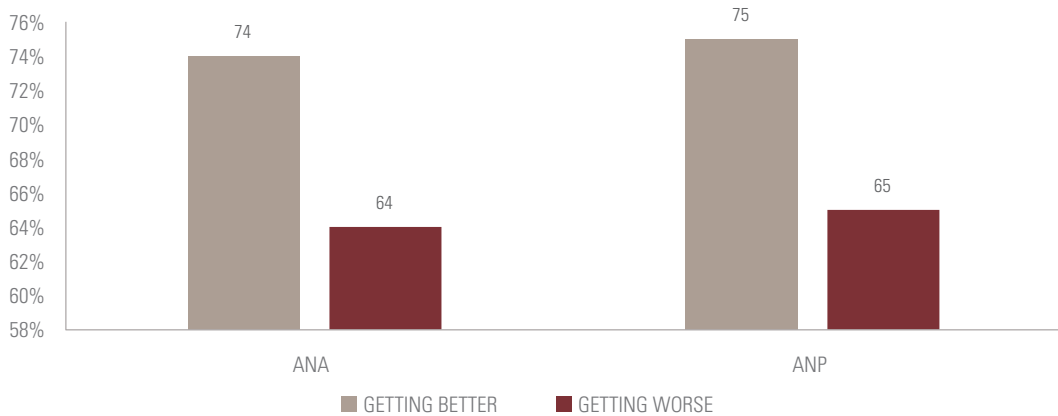


**FIG. 2.7: Q-27.** (Ask if answer to Q-24 is yes.) Who did you report the crime to?

When respondents were asked if they believe elections will be free and fair, 8.9% of respondents cited bad security, and 5.3% cited the interference of warlords as reasons for not believing elections will be free and fair. Insecurity (12.1%) and fear of the Taliban (6.7%) are significant reasons influencing respondent views on why they do not plan to vote.

Confidence in the ANDSF significantly affects whether Afghans are likely to vote. For example, 73.9% of respondents who believe the ANA is getting better at providing security say they plan to vote in the upcoming elections, but 10.2 percentage point fewer, or just 63.6% of those who think the ANA is getting worse plan to vote. Similarly, 75.0% of respondents who say the ANP is getting better at providing security plan to vote, compared to just 65.1% of those who think it is getting worse.

## INTENTION TO VOTE, BY OPINION OF ANA AND ANP



**FIG. 2.8: Q-48a.** (Ask if answer to Q-44a is yes.) Do you plan to vote in this election? (Percent who say yes.) Q-16. Compared with last year, do you think the [insert item] are getting better at providing security, getting worse, or is there no difference? (a) ANA. (b) ANP.

## 2.3 PERCEPTIONS OF THE AFGHAN NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY FORCES

### KEY QUESTIONS

- Q-15. Which group would you say is most responsible for providing security in this village/gozar? And the second-most?
- Q-16. Compared with last year, do you think [insert item] are getting better at providing security, getting worse, or is there no difference? (a) ANA (b) ANP (c) ALP
- Q-17. Now please tell me if you think that the following need foreign support to do their job properly at the moment? Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, or strongly disagree? (a) ANA (b) ANP (c) ALP
- Q-18. I'm going to read some statements to you about the Afghan National Army (ANA). Please tell me if you agree or disagree with each statement. Would you say strongly or somewhat? (a) The ANA is honest and fair with the Afghan people (b) The ANA helps improve security in Afghanistan. (c) The ANA protects civilians.
- Q-19. I'm going to read some statements to you about the Afghan National Police (ANP). ANP officers are the ones who wear solid blue-grey uniforms. Please tell me if you agree or disagree with each statement. Would you say strongly or somewhat? (a) ANP is honest and fair with the Afghan people. (b) ANP helps improve security in Afghanistan. (c) ANP is efficient at arresting those who have committed crimes.

**Q-20a.** *Would you agree or disagree with a family member's decision to join the Afghan National Police?*

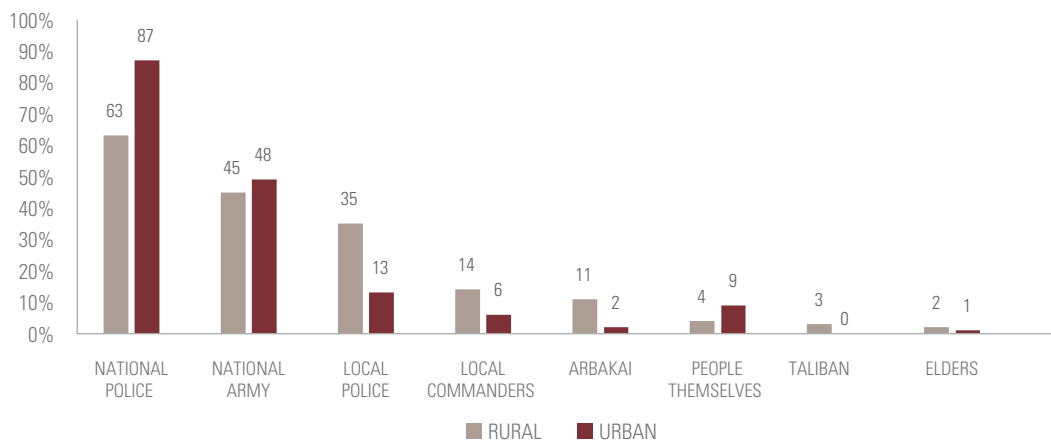
**Q-20b.** *(Ask if answered no or "don't know" to Q-20a) Why would you disagree with their decision?*

A majority of Afghans (68.9%) continue to view the ANP as the primary provider of security. The ANA is second, at 45.7%. Interestingly, in intercept interviews, the findings are reversed, with 48.5% naming the ANA and just 45.9% naming the ANP, the latter number significantly lower than the main sample. Only 2.0% of respondents in the main sample identify the Taliban as responsible for security, but this figure jumps to 18.0% in intercept interviews.

Regionally, residents of Central/Kabul are the respondents most likely to identify the ANP as the main provider of security (78.8%), while those in the East are the least likely (55.1%). Respondents in the South East are the ones most likely to name the ANA as the main provider of security (68.0%), while respondents in Central/Hazarajat are the least likely (6.8%). Residents of the South West are the respondents most likely to say that the Taliban are responsible for providing security (7.7%).

Both the ANP and the ANA are most likely to be identified as the local security providers by urban respondents. In rural areas, the local police, local commanders, and the Taliban are more likely choices, which may reflect the weak presence of the national government in those areas (figure. 2.9).

### SECURITY PROVIDER IN LOCAL AREA, BY RURAL AND URBAN

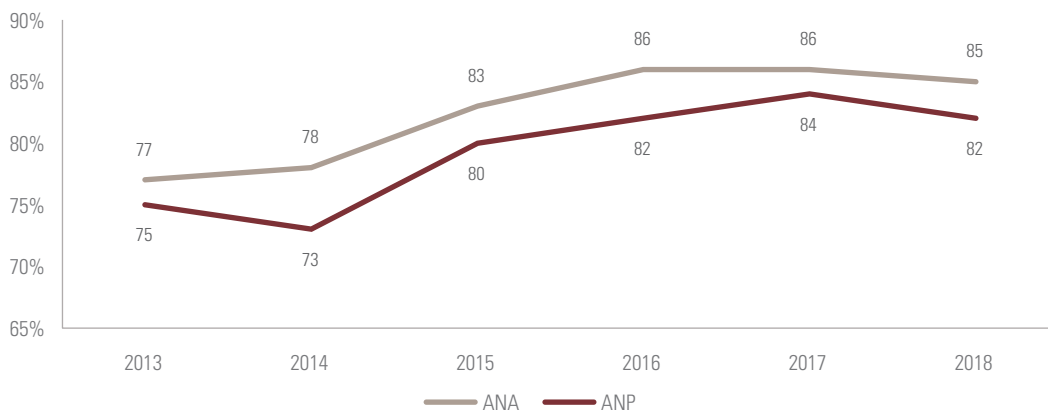


**FIG. 2.9: Q-15.** *Which group would you say is most responsible for providing security in this village/gozar? And the second most?*

Confidence that the ANP is getting better at providing security has declined slightly from 48.2% in 2017 to 45.8% in 2018, and the percentage of respondents who say the ANP has gotten worse has increased slightly from 23.2% in 2017 to 25.5% this year. No discernible differences are reported regarding the ANA and the Afghan Local Police (ALP).

Well-publicized IMF involvement in ANDSF operations across the country may explain why the perception remains high among Afghans, with just a small drop this year, that the ANA and ANP need foreign support to do their jobs properly. Afghans overall are more likely to say the ANA needs foreign support than the ANP (figure 2.10).

### PERCEPTION THAT ANA AND ANP NEED FOREIGN SUPPORT



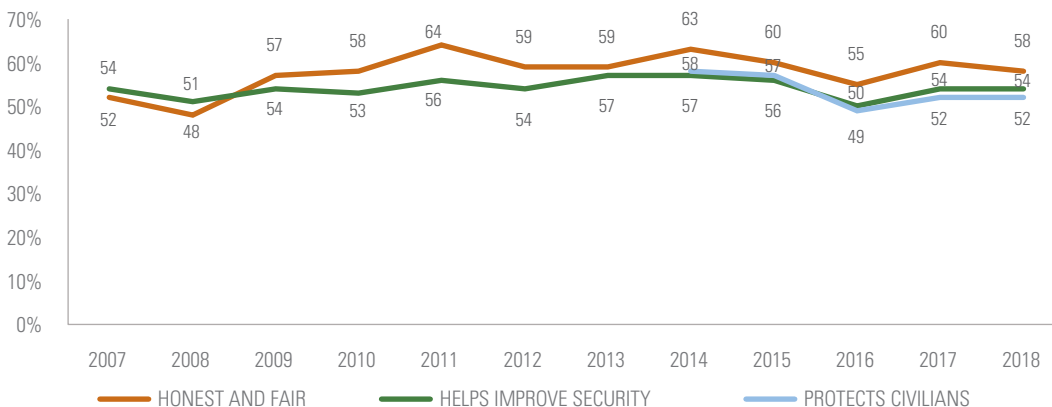
**FIG. 2.10: Q-17.** Now please tell me if you think that the following need foreign support to do their job properly at the moment? Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree? (a) Afghan National Army. (b) Afghan National Police. (Percent who somewhat or strongly agree.)

Provincially, respondents in Panjshir (72.4%), Paktia (63.1%), and Kabul (61.7%) are most likely to think that ANP needs foreign support and residents of Wardak (15.8%), Ghor (16.5%), and Farah (24.2%) are the least likely to have this sentiment. Respondents in Panjshir (81.7%), Paktia (74.5%), and Kunar (68.8%) are most likely to say that ANA need foreign support and respondents in Helmand (21.1%), Wardak (21.6%), and Nimroz (25.9%) are least likely to have this opinion.

Overall, 53.6% of respondents “strongly agree” that the ANA helps to improve security, and 52.4% say it protects civilians, similar to 2017. The proportion of respondents who consider the ANA to be honest and fair, however, has fallen slightly by two percentage points since 2017, to 58.3% (figure 2.11).

Respondents in Zabul Province appear to be highly skeptical of the ANA: 37.1% strongly disagree that the ANA is honest and fair, 42.2% strongly disagree that it helps improve security, and 40.9% strongly disagree that it protects civilians.

### PERCEPTIONS OF THE AFGHAN NATIONAL ARMY



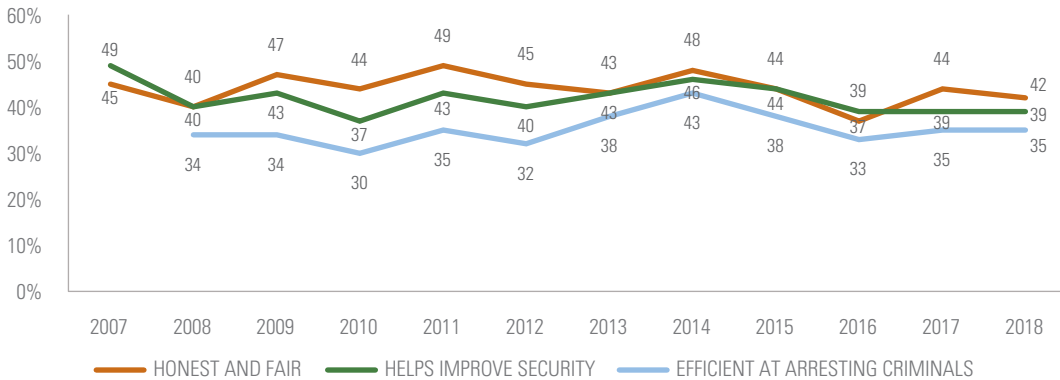
**FIG. 2.11: Q-18.** *I'm going to read some statements to you about the Afghan National Army (ANA). Please tell me if you agree or disagree with each statement. Would you say strongly or somewhat? (a) The ANA is honest and fair with the Afghan people. (b) The ANA helps improve security in Afghanistan. (c) The ANA protects civilians. (Percent who strongly agree.)*

Trends for the ANP are broadly similar to the ANA, with only a small drop in positive perceptions since 2017. Honest and fair is slightly down 2.3 points, to 42.1% and perceptions of ANP helps to improve security and efficient at arresting criminal are almost unchanged ( 39.3% and 34.8% respectively) (figure 2.12).

As with the ANA, respondents in Zabul stand out for their skepticism of the ANP, with 50.7% strongly disagreeing that the ANP is honest and fair, 54.3% strongly disagreeing that the ANP helps to improve security, and 56.3% strongly disagreeing that the ANP is efficient at arresting criminals.



## PERCEPTIONS OF THE AFGHAN NATIONAL POLICE



**FIG. 2.12: Q-19.** *I'm going to read some statements to you about the Afghan National Police (ANP). ANP officers are the ones who wear solid blue-grey colored uniforms. Please tell me if you agree or disagree with each statement. (Read out statement, wait for response, and then ask) Would you say strongly, or somewhat? (a) ANP is honest and fair with the Afghan people. (b) ANP helps improve security in Afghanistan. (c) ANP is efficient at arresting those who have committed crimes. (Percent who strongly agree.)*

The proportion of Afghans who would agree with a family member's decision to join the ANP has continued to decline, to 70.1% in 2018, a drop of 2.0 percentage points since last year. Given the ANDSF's widely publicized casualty figures, it is no surprise that respondents who would oppose a family member's enlistment cite the high death toll (33.0%) and insecurity (22.8%) as their top reasons. Females are most likely to cite those reasons for not allowing a family member to join the ANP.

## 2.4 GROUPS WHO POSE A SECURITY THREAT

### KEY QUESTIONS

**Q-22.** *In your view, does any group currently pose a threat to the security of this local area?*

**Q-23.** *(If answer to Q-22 is yes.) Who do you think poses a threat to the security of this local area? (Open-ended, record up to two answers.)*

**Q-56a.** *Thinking about the reasons why the Taliban have been fighting during the past year, in general would you say that you have a lot of sympathy, a little sympathy, or no sympathy at all for the Taliban?*

**Q-58a.** *Thinking about the reasons why Daesh has been fighting during the past year, in general would you say that you have a lot of sympathy, a little sympathy, or no sympathy at all for Daesh?*

These questions are a new addition to the *Survey*. In the main sample, 35.8% of respondents say that a group poses a threat to the security of their local area, while 62.6% say no. In the intercept interviews, however, these figures are reversed: 62.9% say that a group poses a threat to the security of the local area, and 36.1% say no. When disaggregated by gender, there is little difference between the proportion of males who see a threat (36.6%) and the proportion of females (35.0%). Pashtuns (46.8%) and Uzbeks (40.6%) are the two ethnic groups most likely to report that some group poses a threat to security.

Respondents are most likely to perceive a security threat in provinces with an active insurgent presence: Helmand (76.6%), Paktia (74.4%), Zabul (73.1%), Kunar (66.7%), Nuristan (63.4%), Uruzgan (62.7%), Ghazni (60.9%), Wardak (59.0%), Khost (57.8%), and Faryab (55.8%). They are least likely to perceive a security threat in areas with historically low levels of insurgent presence: Balkh (12.6%), Daikundi (4.7%), Bamyán (2.0%), and Panjshir (1.0%).

Because insurgents control primarily rural territory, it is no surprise that 40.3% of rural respondents, but just 22.1% of urban respondents, say some group poses a local security threat.

When asked which groups pose a threat to the local area, respondents most frequently name the Taliban (68.2%), followed by criminals/thieves (24.9%) and Daesh/ISIS (16.4%). The proportions are roughly the same in intercept interviews, with criminals/thieves slightly lower, at 17.0%, and Daesh/ISIS slightly higher, at 20.2%.

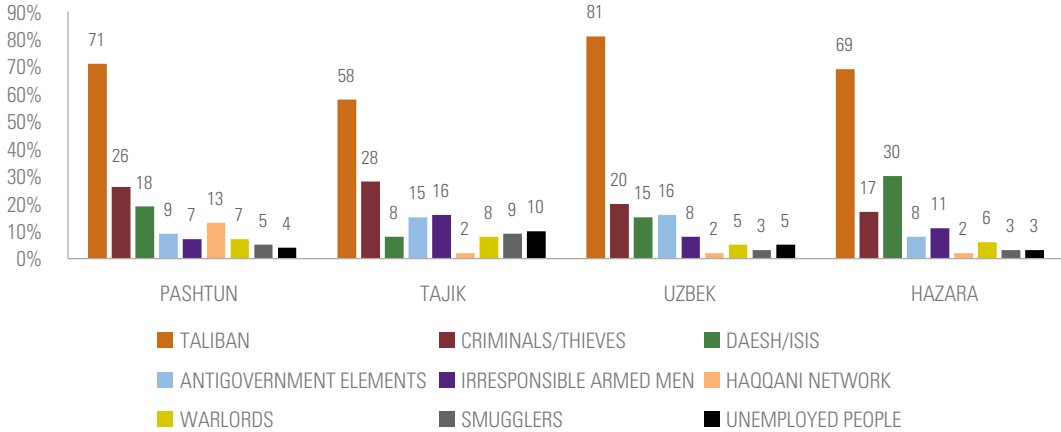
The Taliban's long-standing influence in Ghazni<sup>36</sup> is underscored by the 91.6% of respondents there who identify the Taliban as the greatest threat to local security, while, unsurprisingly, about 65.6% of respondents in Nangarhar identify ISIS as the greatest threat to security.

Rural respondents are more likely to name the Taliban as the biggest security threat (74.2%), while urban respondents are more worried about criminals/thieves (39.5%).

Women name the Taliban (71.4%) and Daesh/ISIS (17.7%) as the greatest threats to local security in slightly higher proportions than men (65.2% and 15.0%, respectively).

Examining the data by ethnicity, Uzbeks (80.6%) are most likely to say the Taliban is the greatest threat to their local area, and Tajiks (57.5%) are the least likely. The tendency of Daesh/ISIS to mount sectarian attacks is reflected in the 30.3% of Hazaras who identify them as the biggest threat to local security.

## WHO POSES A SECURITY THREAT, BY ETHNICITY



**FIG. 2.13: Q-23.** (Ask if answer to Q-22 is yes.) Who do you think poses a threat to the security of this local area? (Ask open-ended, record up to two mentions.)

Regionally, 79.2% of respondents in the North West identify the Taliban as the biggest threat to local security, while respondents in the East (56.6%) see Daesh/ISIS as the biggest threat to local security. Respondents in the Central/Hazarajat region stand out nationally as the least concerned about the Taliban (29.2%) and Daesh/ISIS (4.0%), but they exhibit substantial concern about irresponsible armed men (48.5%) and warlords (17.1%).

Afghans continue to lose sympathy for armed opposition groups. Respondents indicating that they have “no sympathy” for the Taliban have increased to 82.4%.

Respondents who say they have “a lot of sympathy” for the Taliban is highest in the provinces of Zabul over-half (58.5%), Kandahar (21.7%) Wardak (18.9%), and Uruzgan (16.7%). The lowest levels of sympathy for the Taliban are mainly in the Central provinces. Fully 100% of respondents in Panjshir, 98.2% in Daikundi, and 95.3% in Bamyan say they have “no sympathy” for the Taliban. The Northern Province of Samangan also has a high incidence of no sympathy for the Taliban (96.4%).

Despite nationally low levels, sympathy for the Taliban has risen in their traditional South West stronghold, where almost 40.8% of respondents indicate that they have a little or a lot of sympathy, up from 32.3% in 2017. We see the same trend when disaggregating by ethnicity: 26.8% of Pashtuns express either a little or a lot of sympathy for the Taliban. The strong South West support for the Taliban is also reflected in provincial totals, with respondents expressing a lot of sympathy for the Taliban in Zabul (58.5%), Kandahar (21.7%), and Uruzgan (16.7%).

Respondents professing “no sympathy” for Daesh/ISIS have increased to 96.4%, while those expressing a little or a lot of sympathy for Daesh have decreased by 0.9 percentage point, to 1.7% (2.6% in 2017). Sympathy for Daesh is low across Afghanistan: 100% of respondents in Nimroz and Farah report “no sympathy,” as do more than 95% of respondents in 21 other provinces. Sympathy for ISIS is highest in Nuristan (9.0%).

## 2.5 RECONCILIATION

### KEY QUESTIONS

**Q-53.** *Do you think reconciliation between the Afghan government and the Taliban is possible or impossible?*

**Q-55.** *Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree that antigovernment elements who lay down their arms and express willingness to reintegrate into society should be provided government assistance, jobs, and housing?*

Given the Eid-ul-Fitr ceasefire, it is no surprise to see a 1.1 percentage point increase, to 53.5%, in the proportion of Afghans who say they believe that reconciliation between the Afghan government and Taliban is possible. This figure marks a significant improvement over the 70.0% of Afghans in 2016 who were pessimistic about the chances of peace talks in a *Survey* by the Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies.<sup>37</sup>

Gender divisions remain, as the gap between male and females has grown this year, with 60.5% of males (a 3.2 percentage point increase) believing that reconciliation is possible, but just 46.5% of females, down by 0.9 percentage points since 2017. This represents a 4.0 percentage point increase in the disparity between males and females on this question.

Increased optimism for reconciliation is reported in the following regions: Central/Kabul (an increase of 6.1 percentage points to 52.5%), the East (an increase of 3.4 percentage points, to 73.6%), the South East (an increase of 6.0 percentage points, to 61.1%), and the North East (an increase of 1.1 percentage points, to 49.9%). Declining optimism for reconciliation is reported in the following regions: the South West (a decrease of 1.9 percentage points, to 59.3%), the West (a decrease of 3.8 percentage points, to 50.0%), Central/Hazarajat (a decrease of 4.2 percentage points, to 32.9%), and the North West (a decrease of 4.4 percentage points, to 43.4%).

Reflecting growing optimism in the East and South East, high proportions of respondents in Paktika (79.1%), Nangarhar (76.2%), Laghman (75.5%), Paktia (69.2%), Khost (69.2%), and Nuristan (68.4%) say reconciliation is possible.

The central provinces of Bamyan (35.9%), Daikundi (30.1%), and Panjshir (11.3%) and the North Western provinces of Faryab (31.6%) and Sar-e-Pul (30.0%) report the least confidence in reconciliation, which, again, mirrors the regional data.

When considering the results by ethnicity, Pashtuns remain the most likely to believe that reconciliation is possible (63.7%). Confidence among Uzbeks that reconciliation is possible fell 3.7 percentage points, to 38.8%, when compared with 2017.

When questioned about the main reason the Taliban are fighting, a plurality (23.7%) say “to gain power,” a sharp drop from 30.4% in 2017. Regionally, respondents in Central/Hazarajat (40.1%) are most inclined to believe that the Taliban are fighting to gain power, while respondents in the East (18.9%) are least likely.

U.S. President Donald Trump’s South Asia strategy, which has a heavy focus on Afghanistan and includes an expansion of the operational mandate of U.S. forces, may be one reason that the proportion of Afghans who believe that the Taliban are fighting because of the presence of foreign troops has more than doubled, from 6.4% in 2017 to 15.2% in 2018. Respondents in the East (17.8%) are the most inclined to give this answer, while respondents in the North East (13.2%) are least likely.

Repeated accusations by officials from the Afghan government and the IMF<sup>38</sup> that Pakistan is tacitly supporting the Taliban, along with increased media reporting and heightened rhetoric, may be a factor in the increase from 10.7% in 2017, to 11.1% of Afghans who believe the Taliban are fighting because of support from Pakistan.

Respondents who believe that the Taliban are fighting because they are supported/motivated by foreign countries decreased by 2.7 percentage points, to 4.7%. Despite these figures, there have been small increases in the number of respondents who believe that the Taliban are fighting because they are supported by Pakistan (from 10.7% to 11.1%), Iran (from 0.2% to 0.4%), and interference of Russia (from 0.0% to 0.1%), which may reflect increased media reporting alleging foreign support for the Taliban.

The peace deal between Gulbuddin Hekmatyar’s Hezb-e Islami group (HIG) and the Afghan government in September 2016 was seen by many as a possible blueprint for future negotiations with the Taliban. A significant part of the peace deal was the reintegration of HIG fighters into Afghan society by providing them with land, and jobs in the ANDSF. At this writing, there are still issues surrounding the commitments made by the government.<sup>39</sup> To date, there has been no tangible evidence that the deal has brought additional peace and security. This lack of tangible progress may have contributed to the decline in the number of Afghans who “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” that antigovernment elements should be provided with government assistance, jobs, and housing— from 80.6% in 2010 to 68.7% in 2018. Support for government assistance to antigovernment elements is strongest in the East, where 78.6% of respondents strongly agree or somewhat agree with this support. Males (71.6%) and Pashtuns (74.2%) are the groups that most widely support government assistance to antigovernment elements. Given their large Pashtun populations, it is no surprise to see respondents from Zabul (59.9%), Paktia (50.4%), and Uruzgan (43.2%) strongly agree that support should be given to antigovernment elements.

## ENDNOTES

- 1 “Afghanistan 2017/2018,” Amnesty International website, accessed September 27, 2018, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/asia-and-the-pacific/afghanistan/report-afghanistan>.
- 2 United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA), *Quarterly Report on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict: 1 January to 30 September 2018* (UNAMA, October 10, 2018), [https://unama.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/unama\\_protection\\_of\\_civilians\\_in\\_armed\\_conflict\\_3rd\\_quarter\\_report\\_2018\\_10\\_oct.pdf](https://unama.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/unama_protection_of_civilians_in_armed_conflict_3rd_quarter_report_2018_10_oct.pdf).
- 3 “Afghanistan could overtake Syria as world’s deadliest conflict in 2018: analysts,” *ITVNews*, September 15, 2018, [www.itvnews.af/en/news/afghanistan/35807-afghanistan-could-overtake-syria-as-worlds-deadliest-conflict-in-2018-analysts](http://www.itvnews.af/en/news/afghanistan/35807-afghanistan-could-overtake-syria-as-worlds-deadliest-conflict-in-2018-analysts).
- 4 Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress* (SIGAR, July 30, 2018), <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2018-07-30qr.pdf>.
- 5 Thomas Ruttig, Ali Mohammad Sabawoon, Rohullah Soroush, and Obaid Ali, “Surrounding the Cities: The meaning of the latest battle for Farah (I),” *Afghanistan Analysts Network*, June 6, 2018, <https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/surrounding-the-cities-the-meaning-of-the-latest-battle-for-farah-i/>.
- 6 Shoaib Sharifi and Louise Adamou, “Taliban threaten 70% of Afghanistan, BBC finds,” *BBC News*, January 31, 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-42863116>.
- 7 SIGAR, *Quarterly Report* (see note 4).
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Khalilullah Safi and Thomas Ruttig, “Understanding Hurdles to Afghan Peace Talks: Are the Taleban a political party?” *Afghanistan Analysts Network*, June 27, 2018, <https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/understanding-hurdles-to-afghan-peace-talks-are-the-taleban-a-political-party/>.
- 10 UNAMA, *The situation in Afghanistan* (see note 2).
- 11 Thomas Ruttig and Jelena Bjelica, “Who shall cease the fire first? Afghanistan’s peace offer to the Taleban,” *Afghanistan Analysts Network*, March 1, 2018, <https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/who-shall-cease-the-fire-first-afghanistans-peace-offer-to-the-taleban/>.
- 12 SIGAR, *Quarterly Report* (see note 4).
- 13 Afghanistan Analysts Network Team, “The Eid Ceasefire: What did (some of the) people think?” *Afghanistan Analysts Network*, June 29, 2018, <https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/the-eid-ceasefire-what-did-some-of-the-people-think/>.
- 14 Jessica Donati and Dion Nissenbaum, “U.S. Envoy, Taliban Officials Meet to Discuss Afghan Peace Talks,” *Wall Street Journal*, July 25, 2018, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/u-s-envoy-taliban-officials-meet-to-discuss-afghan-peace-talks-1532547118>.
- 15 Ayaz Gul, “Taliban Describes as ‘Productive’ Initial Direct Talks with US,” *VOA*, July 28, 2018, <https://www.voanews.com/a/taliban-describes-as-productive-initial-direct-talks-with-us/4503360.html>.
- 16 United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA), *The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security: Report of the Secretary General* (UNAMA, June 6, 2018), [https://unama.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/sg\\_report\\_on\\_afghanistan\\_6\\_june.pdf](https://unama.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/sg_report_on_afghanistan_6_june.pdf).
- 17 United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA) *Midyear Update on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict: 1 January To 30 June 2018* (UNAMA, July 15, 2018), [https://unama.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/unama\\_poc\\_midyear\\_update\\_2018\\_15\\_july\\_english.pdf](https://unama.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/unama_poc_midyear_update_2018_15_july_english.pdf).
- 18 Rod Nordland, Ash Ngu, and Fahim Abed, “How the U.S. Government Misleads the Public on Afghanistan,” *New York Times*, September 8, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/09/08/world/asia/us-misleads-on-afghanistan.html?smid=tw-share>.
- 19 Pamela Constable, “Afghan security forces declining in number, U.S. inspector general report shows,” *Washington Post*, May 1, 2018, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia\\_pacific/afghan-security-forces-declining-in-number-us-inspector-general-report-shows/2018/05/01/aa7b7922-4d4d-11e8-85c1-9326c4511033\\_story.html?noredirect=on&utm\\_term=.f2a603cbc268](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/afghan-security-forces-declining-in-number-us-inspector-general-report-shows/2018/05/01/aa7b7922-4d4d-11e8-85c1-9326c4511033_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.f2a603cbc268).
- 20 SIGAR, *Quarterly Report* (see note 4).
- 21 UNAMA, *The situation in Afghanistan* (see note 2).

- 22 “‘No Safe Place’: Insurgent Attacks on Civilians in Afghanistan,” Human Rights Watch website, May 8, 2018, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2018/05/08/no-safe-place/insurgent-attacks-civilians-afghanistan>.
- 23 Bill Roggio “In Helmand, Taliban dominates security situation,” *Long War Journal*, April 20, 2018, <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2018/04/in-helmand-taliban-dominates-security-situation.php>.
- 24 Zabihullah Ghazi and Mujib Mashal “Election Rally Bombing in Afghanistan Heightens Security Fears” *New York Times*, October 2, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/02/world/asia/afghanistan-election-rally-bombing.html>
- 25 Tamim Hamid “IEC Concerned About Security As Another Candidate Killed” *TOLONews* September 3, 2018, <https://www.tolonews.com/elections-2018/iec-concerned-about-security-another%2%A0candidate%2%A0killed>
- 26 Ali Yawar Adili, “Afghanistan Election Conundrum (14): District council and Ghazni parliamentary elections quietly dropped” *Afghanistan Analysts Network*, September 26, 2018, <https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/afghanistan-election-conundrum-14-district-council-and-ghazni-parliamentary-elections-quietly-dropped/>
- 27 Ehsan Qanne, “The Insecure Spring of Ghazni: Results of third-grade treatment by the centre?” *Afghanistan Analysts Network*, July 15, 2018, <https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/the-insecure-spring-of-ghazni-results-of-third-grade-treatment-by-the-centre/>.
- 28 Ali Yawar Adili, “The Afghanistan Election Conundrum (9): The 2010 Ghazni spectre rears its head again,” *Afghanistan Analysts Network*, July 5, 2018, <https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/the-afghanistan-election-conundrum-9-the-2010-ghazni-spectre-rears-its-head-again/>.
- 29 Abdol Qadir Sediqi and Ahmad Sultan, “Dozens killed and injured in suicide attack at Afghan protest,” *Reuters*, September 11, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-afghanistan-security/dozens-killed-and-injured-in-suicide-attack-at-afghan-protest-idUSKCN1LR0W9>.
- 30 “Afghan Police Thwart Attack In Kabul, Seven Police Killed In East” *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, July 16, 2018, <https://www.rferl.org/a/afghan-police-thwart-attack-in-kabul-seven-police-killed-in-east/29367628.html>.
- 31 “Kabul explosion: IS claims attack on Hazara protest,” *BBC News*, July 23, 2016, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-36874570>.
- 32 “Thirty Shia Muslims kidnapped in Afghanistan,” *Al Jazeera*, February 24, 2015, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/southasia/2015/02/shia-muslims-kidnapped-afghanistan-150224081251654.html>.
- 33 “Taliban fighters kidnap over 100 people after buses ambushed,” *Al Jazeera*, August 20, 2018, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/08/taliban-fighters-kidnap-100-people-buses-ambushed-180820053306572.html>.
- 34 “Afghan forces, Taliban battle for control of highway in Ghazni province,” *Reuters*, May 5, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-afghanistan-attacks/afghan-forces-taliban-battle-for-control-of-highway-in-ghazni-province-idUSKBN1160IQ>.
- 35 Qanne, “Insecure Spring of Ghazni” (see note 27).
- 36 Ibid.
- 37 “Over 70 Percent Of Afghans Pessimistic About Peace Talks: Survey,” *TOLONews*, October 18, 2016, <https://www.tolonews.com/index.php/afghanistan/over-70-percent-afghans-pessimistic-about-peace-talks-survey>.
- 38 Clayton Thomas, *Afghanistan: Background and U.S. Policy In Brief* (Congressional Research Service, September 17, 2018), <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R45122.pdf>.
- 39 Casey Garret Johnson, *The Political Deal with Hezb-e Islami: What It Means for Talks with the Taliban and Peace in Afghanistan* (United States Institute of Peace, July 6, 2018), <https://www.usip.org/publications/2018/07/political-deal-hezb-e-islami>.





### 3 ECONOMIC GROWTH AND EMPLOYMENT

The National Unity Government (NUG) assumed power in 2014 in the midst of a deep economic downturn. Rising concern over insecurity due to the drawdown of Western troops, accompanying reductions in international grants, and the intractable disputes surrounding the presidential election contributed to a plunge in economic growth starting in 2012.<sup>1</sup> In 2017, despite their preoccupation with security issues, the NUG began to focus on economic growth, as evidenced by Afghanistan's first-time inclusion in the Heritage Foundation's Economic Freedom Index.<sup>2</sup> Afghanistan's economic freedom score in 2018 is 51.3 on a scale of 100, 2.4 points higher than last year and 154th overall out of 180.

In the first year of the NUG, Afghanistan's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew just 1.5%, the slowest rate since 2004. Since then, the economy has slowly recovered, with real GDP growth rising to 2.6% in 2017, but positive changes in the livelihoods of Afghanistan's growing population<sup>3</sup> will require still faster economic growth.

With increasing election-related violence, declining business confidence, and worsening drought conditions, however, overall growth is projected to decline to 2.4% in 2018,<sup>4</sup> but then edging up to 3.3% in 2020 according to World Bank projections.<sup>5</sup>

---

Security and political stability, which underpin any economic activity, remain elusive for the Afghan government.

---

From 2015 to 2017, the government collected record revenues, consistently surpassing International Monetary Fund (IMF) revenue targets by considerable margins. In 2017, government revenues of AFN 169 billion exceeded the IMF's target by AFN 16.6 billion.<sup>6</sup> This followed strong revenue performances in 2015 and 2016, considered one of the more positive trends in the Afghan economy.<sup>7</sup>

The government has adopted a five-year financial management plan, the Fiscal Performance Improvement Plan, that maps out the country's path to fiscal sustainability.<sup>8</sup> A second plan, the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework, has become the government's five-year development narrative, aiming to achieve self-reliance, increase the welfare of Afghans, and transform Afghanistan from an import-heavy to an export-heavy economy.<sup>9</sup>

Yet the country continues to face severe economic challenges. Security and political stability, which underpin any economic activity, remain elusive for the Afghan government.

The government's Afghan Living Condition Survey (ALCS) shows deterioration in the welfare of Afghans. The poverty rate has climbed dramatically, from 38% in 2011–12 to 55% in 2016–17. Living

standards are also threatened by drought conditions, which damage wheat harvests and contribute to food insecurity throughout the country. According to the ALCS, 23.9% of the country's labor force is currently unemployed, and with nearly 400,000 new job seekers entering the workforce annually, unemployment continues to grow.<sup>10</sup>

Afghanistan remains a donor-driven economy. The development budget and parts of the operating budget are financed by international assistance. Afghanistan ranks among the world's least developed countries; it is one of the poorest countries in its region; and it needs to find a sustainable foundation for economic development.

This chapter describes how overall household economic status shapes Afghans' opinions and attitudes, it describes women's contribution to household income, and it examines self-reported estimates of household income and assets.

### 3.1 OVERALL PERCEPTIONS OF THE ECONOMY

#### KEY QUESTIONS

**Q-3a/b.** *(If answer to Q-1 is "wrong direction.") What are two reasons you think that Afghanistan is going in the wrong direction?*

**Q-6a/b.** *In your view, what are the two biggest problems facing youth in your area? By youth, I mean people between the ages of 15 and 24. What is the next-biggest problem?*

**Q-7a/b.** *What, if anything, is the biggest problem facing women in this area today?*

**Q-83c.** *(If answer to Q-83a is yes.) Why would you leave Afghanistan?*

The *Survey* shows consistently that Afghans are deeply concerned about the economic situation of their households and Afghanistan as a whole. Among the 61.3% of Afghans who think the country is moving in the wrong direction, a majority cite economic issues such as unemployment (23.7%), a bad economy (12.1%), and high prices (3.6%). When asked about the biggest problems facing youth,<sup>11</sup> more than three-fourths of respondents (87.4%) cite economic concerns,<sup>12</sup> and this holds true regardless of gender, place of residence, or ethnicity.

The *Survey* also asks about the main challenges facing Afghan women, and after education/illiteracy (38.4%), the poor economy is cited most frequently (32.8%).<sup>13</sup> This is true in both urban and rural areas (33.7% and 32.5%, respectively). Since 2011 when for the first time the *Survey* asked about Afghans' intention to leave the country, it reveals that economy, along with insecurity, is a top reason why Afghans are willing to migrate (65.9%).<sup>14</sup> Looking at gender differences, 58.1% of women say they would leave the country because of the bad economy, and this proportion rises to 73.1% for men.

## ECONOMIC CONCERNS

REASONS FOR BEING PESSIMISTIC ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE COUNTRY	UNEMPLOYMENT 24%, BAD ECONOMY 12%, HIGH PRICES 4%
PROBLEMS FACING YOUTH	UNEMPLOYMENT 73%, BAD ECONOMY 14%
PROBLEMS FACING WOMEN	LACK OF JOB OPPORTUNITIES 26%, POVERTY 9%,
REASONS FOR LEAVING THE COUNTRY	UNEMPLOYMENT 52%, BAD ECONOMY 18%, HIGH PRICES 1%

**FIG. 3.1: Q-3.** (If answer to Q-1 is “wrong direction.”) What are two reasons you think that Afghanistan is going in the wrong direction? **Q-6.** In your view, what are the two biggest problems facing youth in your area? By youth, I mean people between the ages of 15 and 24. What is the next-biggest problem? **Q-7.** What, if anything, is the biggest problem facing women in this area today? **Q-83c.** (If answer to Q-83a is yes.) Why would you leave Afghanistan?

### 3.2 HOUSEHOLD ECONOMIC SITUATION

#### KEY QUESTION

**Q-8.** Compared to one year ago, would you say that the situation for your household has gotten better, remained the same, or gotten worse with respect to the following? (a) Financial situation of your household. (b) Employment opportunities. (c) Availability of products in the market (e.g., rice, wheat, oil). (d) Quality of food in your diet.

To assess Afghans’ economic status, the *Survey* asks whether the financial situation and employment opportunities of their household has gotten better, remained the same, or gotten worse compared to a year ago. This year, 57.2% of Afghans say the employment opportunities for their household have gotten worse, which remains comparable to last year (58.1%). It is considerably higher than 2007, however, when this question was first asked (40.2%). There is a link between place of residence and employment opportunities: 67.2% of Afghans living in urban areas say their employment situation has worsened, compared to 53.9% in rural areas. Provincially, the proportion of respondents who say their employment opportunities have gotten worse ranges from a high of 77.9% in Paktia, 76.6% in Panjshir, and 75.2% in Kabul, to lows of 29.3% in Laghman and 30.8% in Paktika provinces.

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES OF HOUSEHOLDS, BY PROVINCE



**FIG. 3.2: Q-8.** Compared to one year ago, would you say that the situation of your household has gotten better, remained the same, or gotten worse with respect to the following? (b) Employment opportunities. (Percent who say “gotten worse.”)

Nearly half of Afghans (46.8%) say that the financial situation of their household is the same as last year, while 34.1% say it has worsened and 19.0% report an improvement. It is unsurprising to find that where employment opportunities have improved, the financial situation has also improved, while in areas where respondents say employment opportunities have gotten worse, they also say their financial situation has done the same. Among respondents who say their employment opportunities are better, over half (54.0%) say the financial situation of their household has improved, while just 7.0% of those who say their employment opportunities have gotten worse say their household financial situation has improved.

## FINANCIAL SITUATION OF HOUSEHOLDS, BY PROVINCE

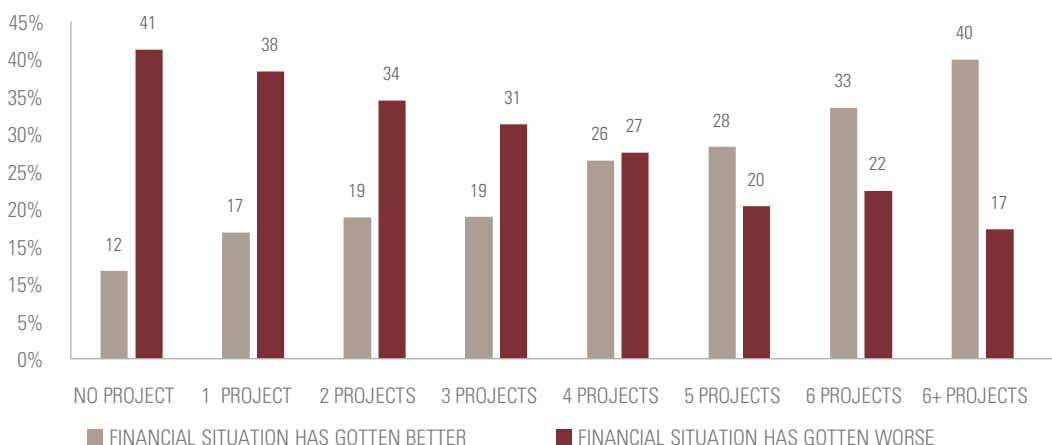


**FIG. 3.3: Q-8.** Compared to one year ago, would you say that the situation of your household has gotten better, remained the same, or gotten worse with respect to the following? (a) Financial situation of your household. (Percent who say "gotten worse.")

In 2018, 12.2% of Afghans report an improvement in the availability of basic products in the market, such as rice, wheat, and oil, while over half of Afghans (54.0%) say availability has remained the same, and 33.2% say it has worsened. The proportion of respondents who report a positive change in the quality of food has remained unchanged since last year (17.1% vs. 16.6%), while 29.9% say the quality of food worsened in 2018, and 52.6% say it remained the same as last year.

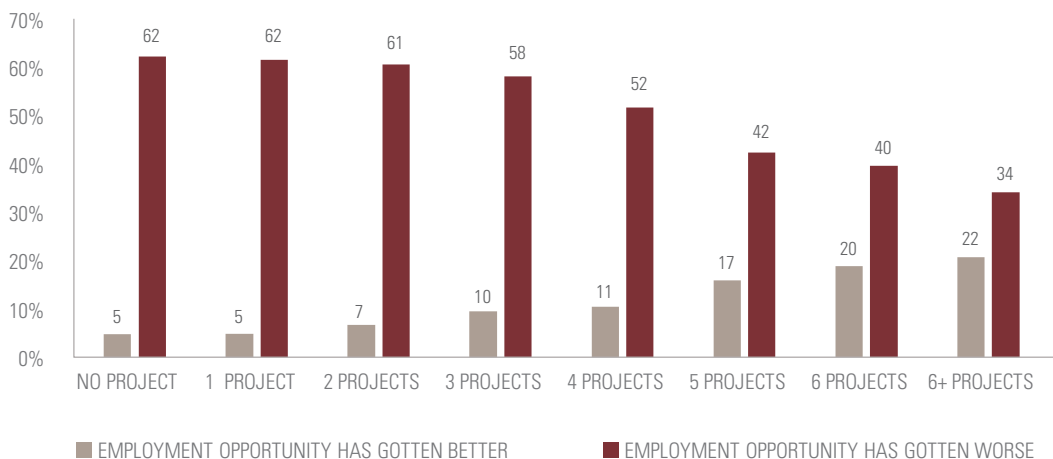
The *Survey* finds that a better security situation and implementation of development projects can predict an improvement in the economic situation of households in the area. Those who live in relatively secure areas, and those who report a higher awareness of the number of development projects being implemented in their area, are also more likely to report an improvement in the economic situation of their household than those who live in insecure areas and those who are less aware of development projects in their area.

## IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS ON FINANCIAL SITUATION OF HOUSEHOLD



**FIG. 3.4: Q-10.** *I am going to read a list of projects that may or may not have been implemented in your area. Please tell me if there has been this type of project in your area in the last 12 months. (a) Reconstruction/building of roads or bridges. (b) New government school. (c) New private school. (d) New private university. (e) Drinking-water project (e.g., new wells, hand pumps, tank system, reservoir). (f) Irrigation project. (g) Government-supplied electricity. (h) Health care (primary health center, regular visits of doctors, etc.). (j) Agricultural programs. (k) New factory. (l) New mosque. Q-8. Compared to one year ago, would you say that the situation of your household has gotten better, remained the same, or gotten worsen with respect to the following? (a) Financial situation.*

## IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS ON EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES OF HOUSEHOLD



**FIG. 3.5: Q-10.** *I am going to read a list of projects that may or may not have been implemented in your area. Please tell me if there has been this type of project in your area in the last 12 months. (a) Reconstruction/building of roads or bridges. (b) New government school. (c) New private school. (d) New private university. (e) Drinking-water project (e.g., new wells, hand pumps, tank system, reservoir). (f) Irrigation project. (g) Government-supplied electricity. (h) Health care (primary health center, regular visits of doctors, etc.). (j) Agricultural programs. (k) New factory. (l) New mosque. Q-8. Compared to one year ago, would you say that the situation of your household has gotten better, remained the same, or gotten worsen with respect to the following? (b) Employment opportunities.*

### 3.3 EMPLOYMENT

#### KEY QUESTIONS

D-3. *Do you yourself do any activity that generates money?*

D-4. *(If D-3 answer is yes.) What type of activity is that?*

According to the Central Statistics Organization (CSO), the current unemployment rate in Afghanistan is 23.9%, and there is a significant gender gap in unemployment: 41.0% of women are currently unemployed, compared to 18.3% of men. However, no significant gap emerges when looking at place

of residence (24.0% in rural areas vs. 26.5% in urban areas). The unemployment rate is higher among youth (30.7%) than the national average (23.9%). The difference is particularly pronounced between urban youth (39.1%) and rural youth (29.6%).<sup>15</sup>

The *Survey* does not provide an official unemployment rate for the country. Rather, it asks respondents whether they are involved in any activity that generates money, in order to understand how involvement in an economic activity shapes Afghans' views and opinions.

Overall, 46.3% of Afghans in 2018 say they are involved in some sort of activity that generates money, compared to 45.0% last year.

Regionally, respondents in Central/Kabul remain the least likely to report earning income (40.5% in 2017 and 41.6% in 2018) while those earning income increased 7.8 percentage points in the South East region, from 38.8% in 2017 to 46.6% in 2018. Provincially, Uruzgan (63.9), Jawzjan (63.3%), and Samangan (60.9%) stand out with the highest number of respondents who earn income, while the fewest respondents in Panjshir report earning income (27.7%).

### EARNING INCOME, BY PROVINCE



**FIG. 3.6: D-3.** Do you yourself do any activity that generates money? (Percent who say yes.)



The proportion of women who report involvement with any economic activity to earn income remains dramatically low at 12.2%, a slight increase from 10.9% in 2017. Provincially, in this year's sample, no women report earning income in Zabul (0.0%) and very few women in Helmand (0.2%) and Wardak (1.0%), while Uruzgan (38.7%), Jawzjan (37.8%), Ghazni (30.5%), and Logar (29.7%) are the only provinces where over one-fourth of women respondents say they earn income.

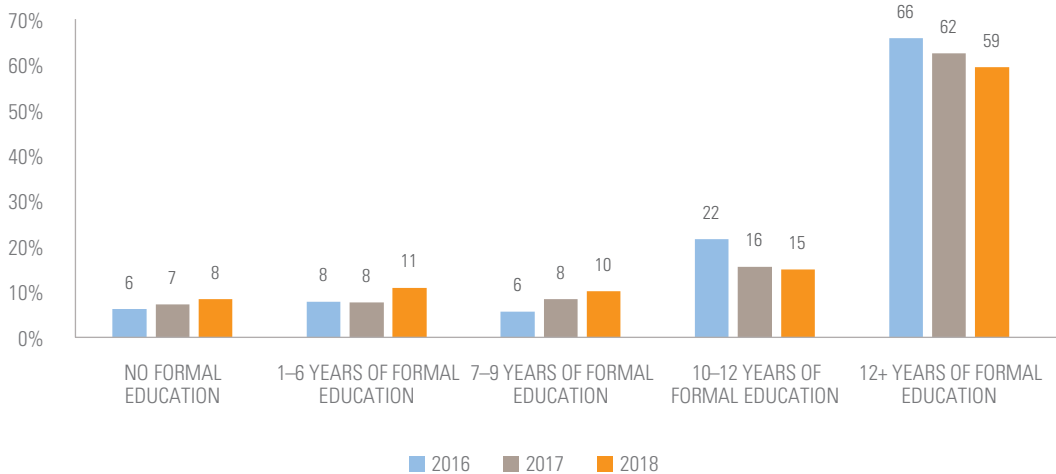
### WOMEN EARNING INCOME, BY PROVINCE



**FIG. 3.7: D-3.** Do you yourself do any activity that generates money? (Percent who say yes, female respondents only.)

The *Survey* findings confirm that a formal education plays an important role in women's employment. Among women with no formal education, just 8.4% say they earn income, but the proportion rises to 59.4% among women who have more than 12 years of formal schooling.

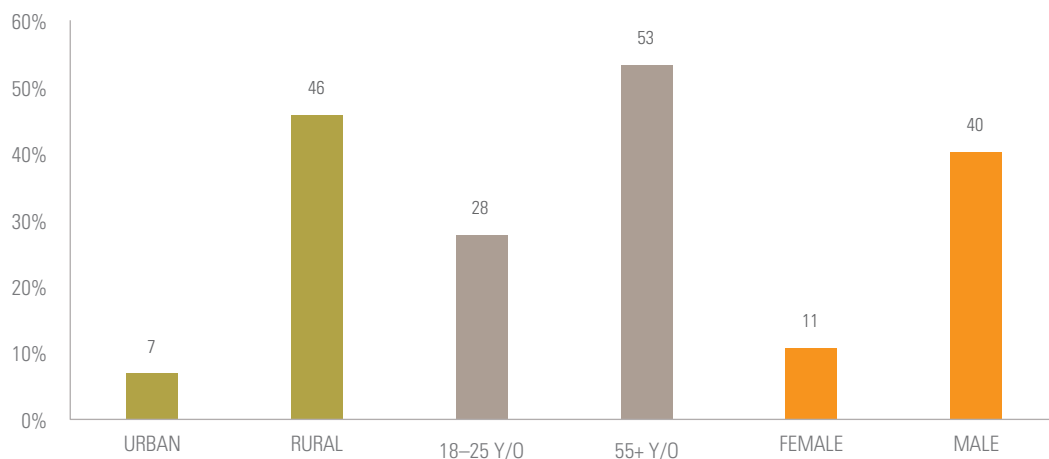
## EARNING INCOME, BY EDUCATION LEVEL (FEMALE RESPONDENTS ONLY)



**FIG. 3.8: D-3.** *Do you yourself do any activity that generates money? (Percent who say yes.)*

Among those who are earning income, farming, either as a freeholder, tenant farmer or a farm laborer on another's land, is the most common activity (36.4%). Not surprisingly, farming is more common in rural areas (45.8%) than in urban areas (6.9%). Farming is also correlated with less education and older age. Over half of respondents who do not have any formal education are farmers (53.7%), but the proportion of farmers decreases to 6.5% among those who have more than 12 years of formal education. Just 28.7% of those between the ages of 18 and 25 say they are involved in farming, compared to 53.3% of those age 56 and above.

## FARMING AS AN ECONOMIC ACTIVITY TO GENERATE MONEY



**FIG. 3.9: D-4.** (If answer to D-3 is yes.) What type of activity is that? (Percent who say Farmer (own land / tenant farmer)) **D-1.** Gender. **D-2.** How old are you?

Among female respondents, the most common income-generating activities are schoolteacher (25.6%, 21.6 percentage points higher than men), skilled worker/artisan (19.8%, 7.8 percentage points higher than men), and domestic/unskilled laborer (12.1%, 2.0 percentage points higher than men).

### 3.4 WOMEN AND THE ECONOMY

#### KEY QUESTIONS

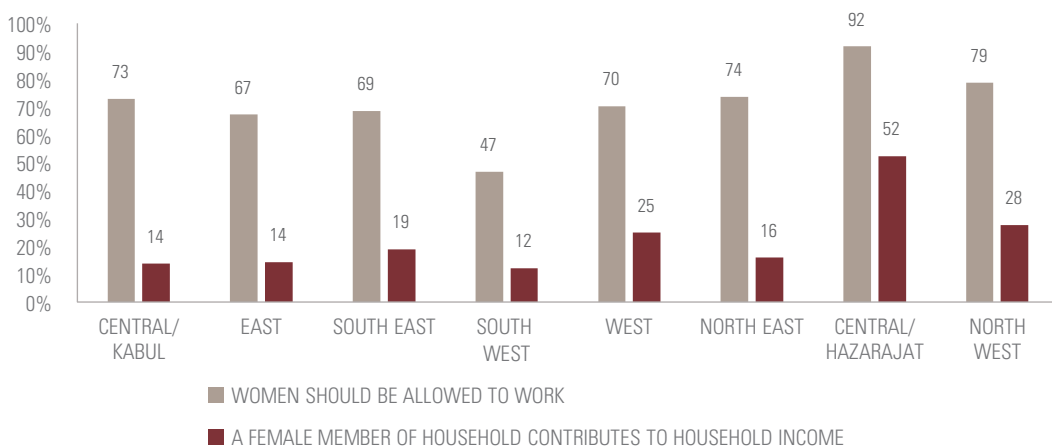
**D-8.** Do female members of the family contribute to this household's income, or not?

**Q-72.** Some people say that women should be allowed to work outside the home, while others say that women should not be allowed to work outside the home. What is your opinion on this?

Women's lives have improved significantly since the Taliban were ousted from power in 2001. Afghan women continue to face problems, however, particularly with economic issues. When Afghans are asked to name the two biggest problems facing women in their local area, one-third cite economic issues such as lack of job opportunities (25.5%) and poverty (9.2%). Both women and men cite a lack of job opportunities (26.7% of women and 24.4% of men) more than domestic violence (19.2% of women and 16.5% of men), forced marriage (12.5% of women and 10.7% of men), and insecurity (4.0% of women and 4.2% of men).

This year, 19.1% of Afghans say that female members contribute to their household income, an increase of 5.5 percentage points since 2009 (13.6%), when this question was introduced. Consistent with past years, female members of the household are more likely to contribute to the family income in rural areas than in urban areas (20.3% vs. 15.5%). Looking at regional differences, respondents from Central/Hazarajat are more likely to say a female member of their household contributes to the family income than other regions (52.4%). This is consistent with the fact that a majority of respondents in Central/Hazarajat (91.7%) express support for women working outside the home, in contrast to other regions (figure 3.10).

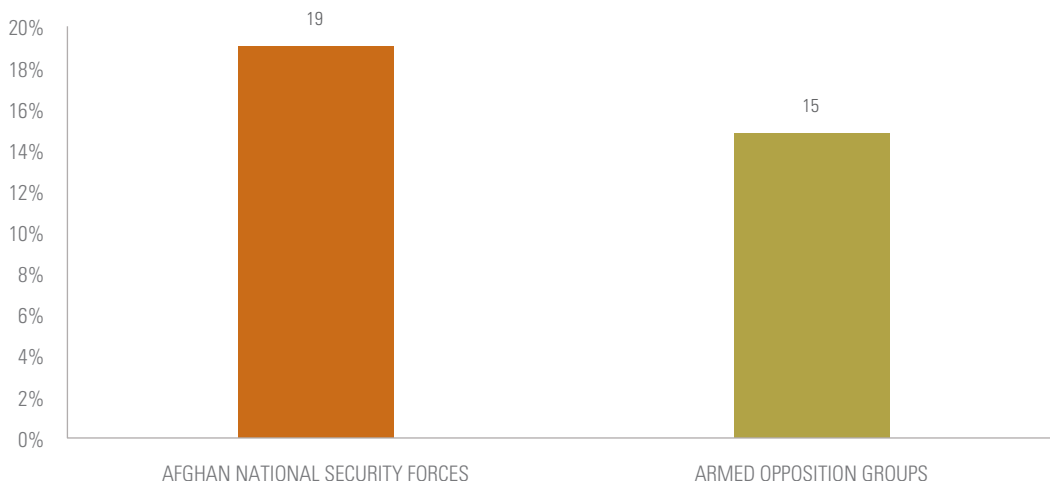
### WOMEN CONTRIBUTING TO HOUSEHOLD INCOME, BY REGION



**FIG. 3.10: Q-72.** Some people say that women should be allowed to work outside the home, while others say that women should not be allowed to work outside the home. What is your opinion on this? (Percent of all respondents) **D-8.** Do female members of the family contribute to this household's income, or not?

Female contribution to household income is also correlated with who provides security in the respondent's local area. In areas where respondents report that the Afghan National Security Forces are responsible for providing security, around four-fifths of respondents (19.0%)<sup>16</sup> say a female member of their household contributes to the household income. This proportion falls to 14.8%<sup>17</sup> in areas where armed opposition groups such as the Taliban and ISIS are responsible for providing security.

## WOMEN CONTRIBUTING TO THE HOUSEHOLD INCOME, BY SECURITY PROVIDER



**FIG. 3.11: Q-15a/b.** Which group would you say is most responsible for providing security in this village/gozar? **D-8.** Do female members of the family contribute to this household's income, or not?

### 3.5 HOUSEHOLD ASSETS

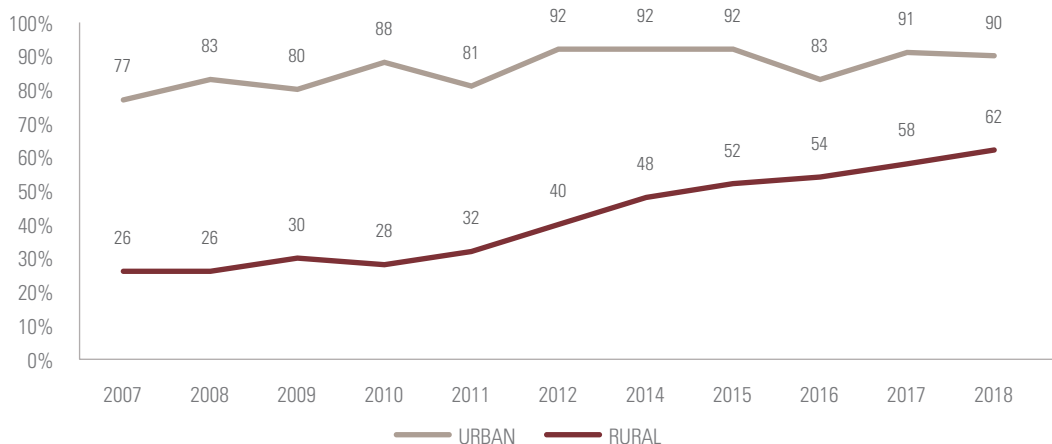
#### KEY QUESTIONS

**D-5.** How many of the following does your household have? (b) Motorcycle. (c) Car. (d) TV. (h) Jeribs of land. (i) Livestock (not poultry).

**D-15c.** How many members of this household who live here have their own mobile phone?

The *Survey* asks respondents to list various household assets such as motorcycles, cars, TVs, and mobile phones as supplementary measures of household well-being. Overall, the 2018 data shows an increase in ownership of household assets. After a slight decrease in 2016, TV ownership has continued to increase in the recent years. This year, 68.6% of Afghans report having one or more TVs in their home, a 2.2 percentage point increase over last year, when 66.4% reported having at least one TV in their home. TV ownership is more common in urban areas (89.7%), where more individuals have access to electricity, than in rural areas (61.6%). However, the rural-urban gap has narrowed over the years. Please see chapter 7, *Access to Information*, for more on television ownership.

## TV OWNERSHIP, BY RURAL AND URBAN



**FIG. 3.12: D-5.** How many of the following does your household have? (d) TV. (Percent who report owning at least one TV.) Note: Trend line uses X-1b in the merged variable list 2007–2012, for comparison with D-5d.

Having a motorcycle for transportation is more common in rural areas and remote parts of the country, while city dwellers and those with higher incomes rely on taxis or private cars. Half of respondents in rural areas report having at least one motorcycle in their household (50.5%), while in urban areas this decreases to 28.2%. Predictably, because it requires greater wealth, slightly more urban Afghans own a car than rural Afghans (27.1% vs. 24.9%).

## HOUSEHOLD ASSET INVENTORY

	RURAL (%)	URBAN (%)	OVERALL (%)
TELEVISION	62	90	69
MOTORCYCLE	50	28	45
CAR	25	27	25

**FIG. 3.13: D-5.** How many of the following does your household have? (b) Motorcycle. (c) Car. (d) Television.

After a slight decrease in 2017, to 86.6%, mobile phone ownership this year hit a record high, with nine out of 10 respondents (89.5%) reporting that at least one family member owns a mobile phone.

Consistently since 2014, when the *Survey* first asked Afghans about land ownership, over half of respondents (58.9%) say they own at least one *jerib*<sup>18</sup> of land. Some 50.7% own 1–10 jeribs of land, 5.2% own 11–20 jeribs of land, and 2.9% own more than 20 jeribs of land. An increase in jeribs owned correlates with a higher monthly household income. Land ownership is more common in rural areas (71.5%), where a majority of residents are farmers, than in urban areas (20.8%).

### HOUSEHOLD LAND OWNERSHIP

	RURAL (%)	URBAN (%)	OVERALL (%)
0	28	79	40
1–10 JERIBS	61	19	51
11–20 JERIBS	7	1	5
20+ JERIBS	4	1	3
DON'T KNOW	1	0	1

**FIG. 3.14: D-5.** *How many of the following does your household have? (h) Jeribs of land.*

Livestock are the main source of income for rural residents, and in some parts of the country they provide the sole source of income. Fifty-seven percent of respondents say they own livestock, a proportion roughly unchanged in recent years (57.5% in 2017, 58.9% in 2016 and 2015, and 58.5% in 2014).

As in previous years, most livestock owners live in rural areas (71.4%) rather than urban areas (13.7%). More than three-fourths (78.8%) of farmers—freeholders, tenant farmers, and farm laborers—report having livestock. Provincially, in 2018, every respondent in Nuristan says their household owns livestock, followed by 98.2% in Wardak, 96.8% in Paktika, and 93.4% in Khost provinces.

## HOUSEHOLD LIVESTOCK OWNERSHIP, BY PROVINCE



**FIG. 3.15: D-5.** How many of the following does your household have? (i) Livestock (not poultry). (Percent who report having at least one livestock.)

## 3.6 HOUSEHOLD INCOME

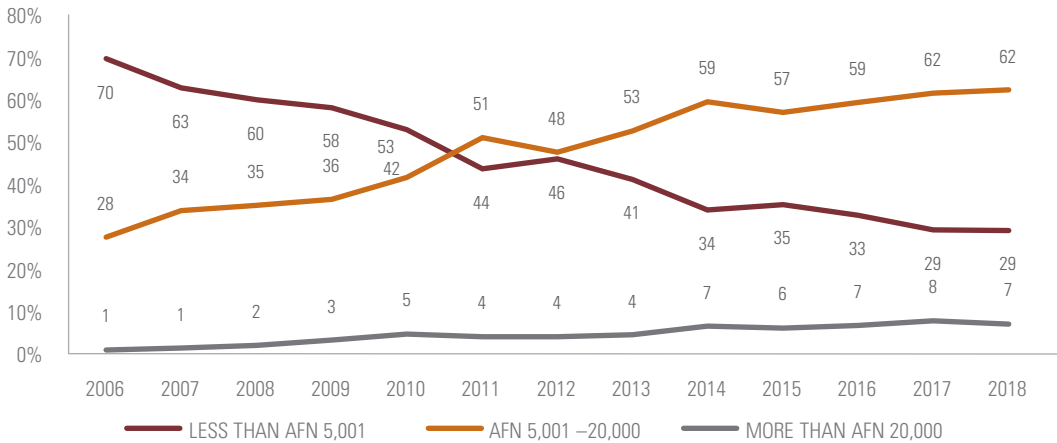
### KEY QUESTION

D-6. For statistical purposes only, can you estimate your average monthly household income?

The *Survey* asked Afghans to estimate their monthly household income. The number of Afghans who report an average of AFN 5,001–20,000 (USD 67)<sup>19</sup> has increased markedly from 27.5% in 2006, to 62.2% in 2018. The proportion who report 20,000 and over shows a steady increase from 1.0% to 7.1%. And those who report less than 5,001 has decreased from 69.6% to 29.1% in 2018.



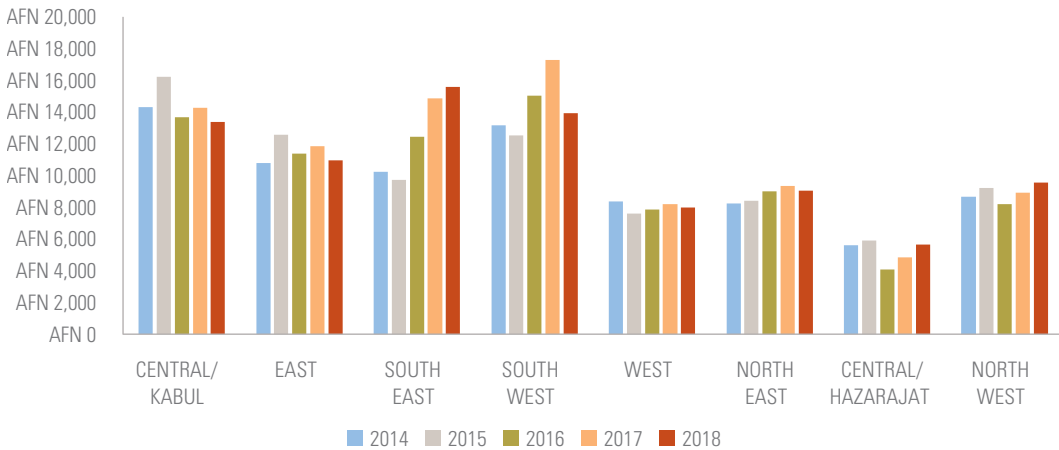
## AVERAGE MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME



**FIG. 3.16: D-6.** For statistical purposes only, can you estimate your average monthly household income?

Household monthly income varies by region. Over the years, the Central/Hazarajat region has reported the lowest monthly household income, while the Southern region has reported the highest.

## AVERAGE MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME, BY REGION



**FIG. 3.17: D-6.** For statistical purposes only, can you estimate your average monthly household income? **D-7.** (If answer to D-6 is “refused” or “don’t know.”) If you are unsure of the actual monthly amount what is the general range? Again, this is for your whole household.

### 3.7 WEALTH AND HAPPINESS

#### KEY QUESTIONS

**D-16.** In general in your life, would you say you are very happy, somewhat happy, not very happy or not at all happy?

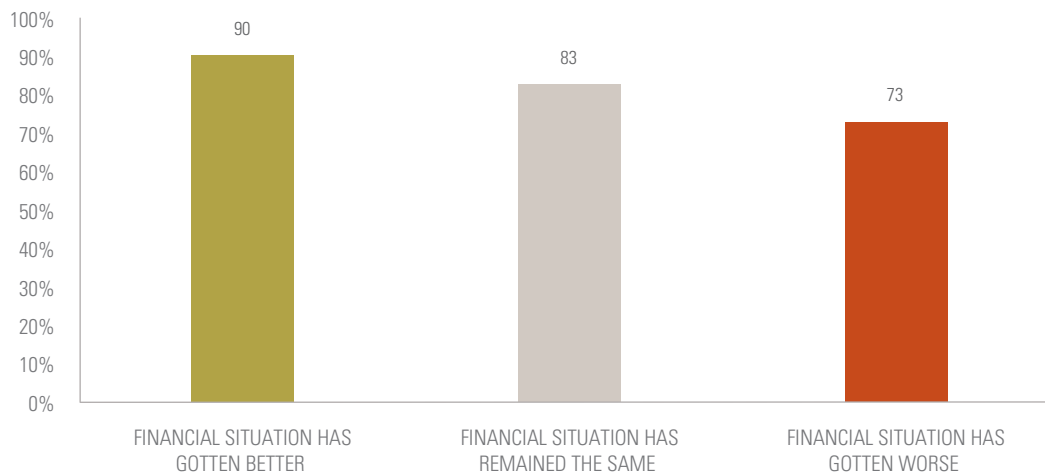
**Q-8.** Compared to one year ago, would you say that the situation for your household has gotten better, remained the same, or gotten worse with respect to the following?

**D-6.** For statistical purposes only, can you estimate your average monthly household income?

The *Survey* also asks respondents how happy they are, and in 2018, 80.8% say they are happy with their lives, 4.0 percentage points higher than last year.

The data shows a positive correlation between the overall economic situation of a household and its members’ level of happiness. Of those who say their household’s financial situation has improved in the last year, 90.2% say they are happy, whereas 72.9% of those whose household finances have worsened say they are happy.

## HAPPINESS AND FINANCIAL SITUATION



**FIG. 3.18: D-16.** *In general in your life, would you say you are very happy, somewhat happy, not very happy, or not at all happy? Q-8. Compared to one year ago, would you say that the situation of your household has gotten better, remained the same, or gotten worsen with respect to the following? (a) Financial situation.*

## ENDNOTES

- 1 World Bank website, “GDP growth (annual %): Afghanistan,” <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG?locations=AF>.
- 2 “The improved availability of key economic data made it possible to grade Afghanistan’s economic freedom for the first time in the 2017 Index.” 2018 Index of Economic Freedom, “Afghanistan” (Heritage Foundation), <https://www.heritage.org/index/country/afghanistan>.
- 3 Worldometers website, “Afghanistan Population,” <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/afghanistan-population/>.
- 4 World Bank, *Afghanistan Development Update* (World Bank, August 2018), <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/985851533222840038/pdf/129163-REVISED-AFG-Development-Update-Aug-2018-FINAL.pdf>.
- 5 World Bank website, “Afghanistan: Annual GDP Growth (%),” <https://data.worldbank.org/country/afghanistan?view=chart>.
- 6 On average, in 2017, USD 1.00 was equivalent to AFN 68.1676. Author’s calculation based monthly average exchange-rates at Da Afghanistan Bank website, “Exchange Rates,” <http://dab.gov.af/en/DAB/currency>.
- 7 Ministry of Finance (MoF), *MoF–E–Weekly Newsletter* no. 123 [in Dari], [http://mof.gov.af/Content/files/%db%b1%db%b2%db%b3\(2\).pdf](http://mof.gov.af/Content/files/%db%b1%db%b2%db%b3(2).pdf).
- 8 Javid Ahmad, “Afghanistan: Recovering from the Brink of Economic Collapse?” *National Interest blog*, July 31, 2018, <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/middle-east-watch/afghanistan-recovering-brink-economic-collapse-27362>.
- 9 Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, *Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework* (ANPDF) 2017 to 2021, <http://extwprlegs1.fao.org/docs/pdf/afg148215.pdf>.
- 10 Central Statistics Organization (CSO), *Afghanistan Living Condition Survey 2016–2017*, Highlights Report (Kabul: CSO, 2018), [http://cso.gov.af/Content/files/Surveys/ALCS/Final%20English%20ALCS%20Highlight\(1\).pdf](http://cso.gov.af/Content/files/Surveys/ALCS/Final%20English%20ALCS%20Highlight(1).pdf).
- 11 By *youth* we mean those 15–25 years old.
- 12 This figure represents a combination of two responses: unemployment (73.4%) and poor economy (14.0%).
- 13 This figure represents a combination of two responses: lack of job opportunities (25.5%) and poverty (9.2%).
- 14 This figure represents a combination of three responses: unemployment (51.5%), bad economy (18.1%), and high prices (1.2%).
- 15 CSO, *Afghanistan Living Condition Survey 2016–2017* (see note 10).
- 16 This figure represents a combination of three responses: Afghan National Police, Afghan National Army, and Afghan Local Police.
- 17 This figure is a combination of two responses: Taliban and ISIS.
- 18 One jerib in Afghanistan is equivalent to 2,000 square meters.
- 19 USD estimates assume an average July 2018 exchange rate of AFN 72.9263 to USD 1.00. Website of the Afghanistan Bank, “exchange rates,” <http://dab.gov.af/en/DAB/currency>





## 4 DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICE DELIVERY

In early 2018, the National Unity Government (NUG) initiated work on a crucial and long-anticipated development project, the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India gas pipeline (TAPI).<sup>1</sup> The project will generate annual revenue of USD 400 million in transit duties, creating thousands of jobs and transporting 500 million cubic meters of gas in its first 10 years. The project is expected to benefit security and economic development across South and Central Asia.<sup>2</sup>

TAPI is one of several regional development projects supported by the NUG, including the Central Asia South Asia Electricity Transmission and Trade Project (CASA-1000) that will export surplus hydroelectricity from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to Pakistan and Afghanistan. Afghanistan's ring road is another project, part of the 3,360km main highway project connecting 16 provinces and major cities including Kabul, Mazar, Herat, Kandahar, Ghazni, and Jalalabad. These projects and others have the potential to boost economic growth in Afghanistan if the political and security stability necessary for their completion can be secured.<sup>3,4</sup>

From 2001 to 2013, Afghanistan experienced economic growth averaging 9% annually and a relatively stable security situation.<sup>5</sup> This resulted in enormous gains in areas like service delivery, access to education, and health outcomes. Today, with growing political instability, deteriorating security, a decline in foreign aid, and slower economic growth, that progress is at risk.<sup>6</sup>

This year The Asia Foundation's *Survey of the Afghan People* points out that security and political stability, which underpin any economic activity, remain elusive. Afghans are deeply concerned about the economic situation of their households and Afghanistan as a whole. When asked about the biggest problems facing the country unemployment and a bad economy are often cited. In addition, the government's Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey (ALCS) reports that the poverty rate has increased from 38% in 2011–2012 to 55% in 2016–2017.<sup>7</sup> Along with poverty and intensifying conflict and violence, at least 20 provinces, with 15 million agricultural workers, face severe drought.<sup>8</sup> Drought is affecting some two-thirds of the country, damaging essential crops including the wheat harvest. As a direct result of the drought, an estimated two million additional Afghans will be affected by food insecurity.<sup>9</sup> According to UN data, food insecurity, may continue to rise in 2018.<sup>10</sup>

The Asia Foundation's *Survey of the Afghan People* reveals a link between perceptions of security and access to quality public services. Afghans in insecure areas are more likely than those in relatively safe areas to say that access to electricity, schools and teachers, health-care services, and good quality food has worsened.

The Afghan education sector has achieved tremendous progress since 2001. In 2016, over 9.2 million students were enrolled in schools across the country, a ninefold increase from 13 years earlier. Since 2005, for example, primary-school enrollment has increased at a rate occasionally exceeding 10% annually.<sup>11</sup>

However, the deteriorating security environment has made schools and students soft targets for militant groups. This summer, Daesh/ISIS claimed responsibility for a brutal suicide attack on an educational center that killed at least 34 students and injured many more.<sup>12</sup> According to the United Nations, 1,000 schools remain closed countrywide, in part due to insecurity, depriving at least three million children of education.<sup>13</sup> One in four respondents in this year's *Survey* (25.9%) report that the quality of education has worsened, the greatest recorded decline since 2007.

This chapter explores Afghans' access to services such as electricity, food, water, health care, and education, their perceptions of the quality of these services, and their awareness of development projects.

## 4.1 ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

### KEY QUESTIONS

Q-8. *Compared to one year ago, would you say that the situation for your household has gotten better, remained the same, or gotten worse with respect to the following?*  
(g) *Electricity supply.*

Q-9a. *What is the main source of electricity in this household?*

Q-9b. *(Ask if response given to Q-9a.) On a typical day, how many hours do you have access to electricity in this household?*

Q-9c. *(Ask if response given to Q-9a.) What are the main uses of electricity?*

In 2018, two power projects were inaugurated, in Balkh and Badghis provinces.<sup>14</sup> Additionally, Naghlo Dam, one of Afghanistan's largest hydropower projects, began operating the first of four hydroelectric turbines, providing electricity to Kabul, Kapisa, and Nangarhar.<sup>15</sup> This year, the *Survey* shows that the public's perception of the nation's electrical system has improved slightly, with 16.4% of respondents saying their electricity supply has gotten better, up from 12.2% in 2017.

Urban respondents (26.5%) are significantly more likely to say their access to electricity has improved than rural respondents (13.0%). Regionally, respondents in the North East (23.4%) and the North West (22.8%) are the most likely to report better access to electricity, while those in Central/Hazarajat (7.3%) and the East (9.8%) are the least likely. Among the provinces, respondents in Badakhshan (26.9%) are the most likely to say their access to electricity has improved, and those in Nuristan are the least (0.0%).

This year, the *Survey* asks respondents about their main source of electricity. Nationally, well over one-third of respondents (43.9%) say it is solar power, followed by power from the grid or city power (41.5%), batteries (4.7%), a community generator (2.0%), and a privately owned or rented generator (1.7%). Some 6.1% of respondents say they have no electricity.



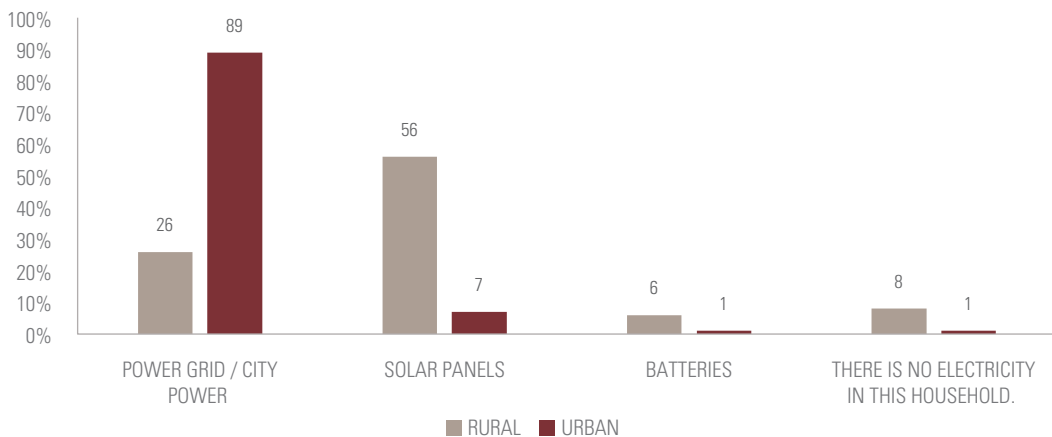
Urban and rural respondents differ significantly in their sources of electricity. Respondents in urban areas are more likely to rely on power from the grid (89.2%), while respondents in rural areas are more likely to say solar panels (56.0 %) and batteries (6.0%). Rural Afghans are also more likely than urban residents to say there is no electricity in their area (7.7% vs. 1.2%) (figure 4.1).

Not surprisingly, responses to this question vary between secure and insecure areas. In intercept interviews, conducted with Afghans from insecure areas where it is more difficult for the government to provide public services, respondents are more likely to say they get their electricity from solar panels or batteries (59.8% and 8.1%, respectively) than respondents in secure areas (43.9% and 4.7%, respectively). Some 12.4% of intercept respondents say “there is no electricity in this area,” compared to 6.1% in secure areas, and respondents in secure areas are more likely to rely on the grid (41.5%) than intercept respondents (14.9%).

Regionally, respondents in Central/Kabul (67.5%) and the North West (53.9%) report the greatest reliance on the power grid. Respondents in Central/Hazarajat (71.1%) and the East (65.0%) report the greatest reliance on solar panels.

Additionally, provinces of Farah (90.5%), Helmand (64.5%) and Kandahar (42.3%) report high rates of using solar panels as a source of electricity. According to a World Bank study, these same provinces including Herat, are more likely to generate solar power from domestic resources, an effort to help reduce the country’s reliance on imported power.<sup>16</sup>

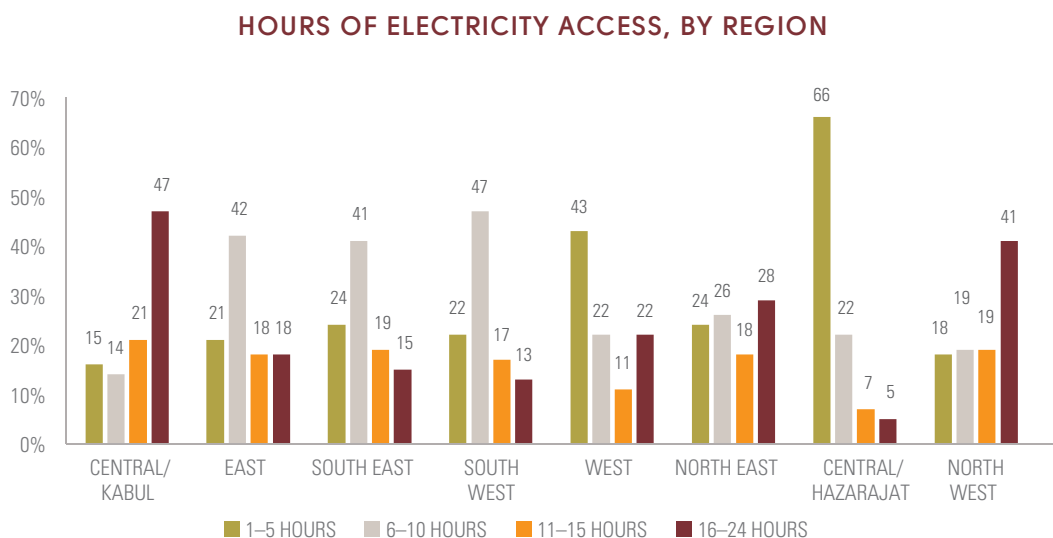
### SOURCE OF ELECTRICITY, BY RURAL AND URBAN



**FIG. 4.1: Q-9a.** What is the main source of electricity in this household?

The *Survey* also asks respondents who have access to electricity how many hours per day it is available. Nationally, 29.3% say 16–24 hours, 26.7% say 6–10 hours, 24.3% of respondents report having 1–5 hours of electricity per day, and 17.6% say 11–15 hours. The differences between the main sample and intercept interviews are significant. For instance, 35.5% of intercept interview respondents report 1–5 hours of electricity per day, compared to 24.3% of respondents in the main sample.

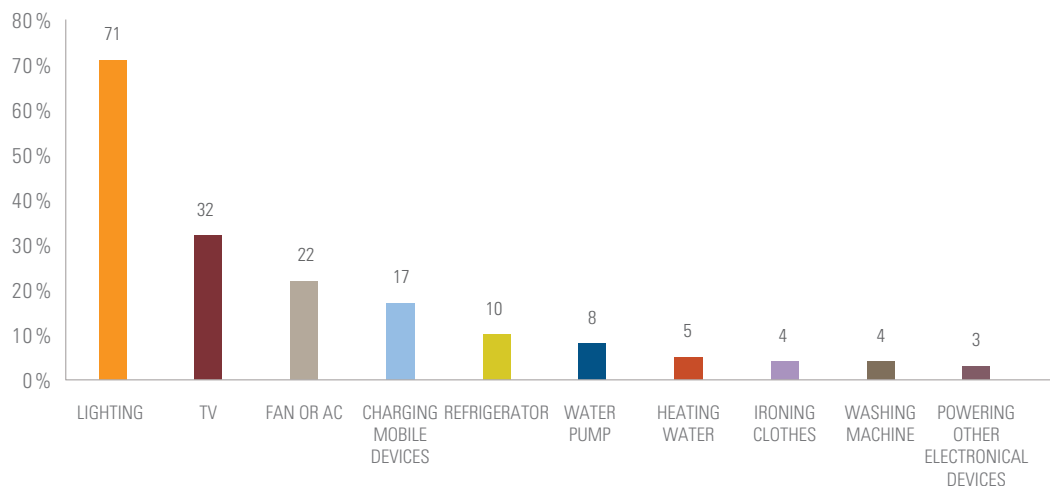
Looking at the urban-rural divide, Afghans in urban areas more frequently report having longer hours of electricity than Afghans in rural areas. For example, 54.6% of urban respondents say they have 16–24 hours of electricity, compared to 20.3% of rural respondents. By region, Central/Kabul and the North West are the most likely to report 16–24 hours of electricity per day, while respondents in Central/Hazarajat and the South West are the least likely (figure 4.2).



**FIG. 4.2: Q-9b.** (Ask if response given to Q-9a.) On a typical day, how many hours do you have access to electricity in this household?

In 2018, the *Survey* asks respondents how they mainly use electricity. Nationally, 71.0% say their main use is for lighting, followed by watching television (32.0%), a fan or air conditioner (22.2%), charging mobile devices (17.0%), a refrigerator (10.2%), a water pump (8.3%), and heating water (4.5%) (figure 4.3). Afghans living in urban areas (19.7%) are substantially more likely to say their main use of electricity is for refrigeration than those in rural areas (6.8%). Rural respondents are more likely than urban respondents to say they mainly use electricity for lighting (73.2% vs. 64.8%) and charging mobile devices (21.1% vs. 5.5%). The differences by region, gender, and province are insignificant.

## MAIN USES OF ELECTRICITY



**FIG. 4.3: Q-9c.** (Ask if response given to Q-9a.) What are the main uses of electricity?

## 4.2 NUTRITION AND ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

### KEY QUESTIONS

**Q-5.** In your view what are the biggest problems in your local area?

**Q-8.** Compared to one year ago, would you say that the situation for your household has gotten better, remained the same, or gotten worse with respect to the following?  
(d) Quality of food in your diet. (f) Health/well-being of your family members. (j) Access to clean drinking water. (k) Access to irrigation facilities.

**Q-11.** In the past 12 months, have you or anyone in your household visited a public hospital or clinic for any health-related reasons or medical treatment?

**Q-12a.** (Ask if answer to Q-11 is yes.) What type of services did you receive at the public hospital or clinic? (Allow two mentions.)

**Q-12b.** (Ask if answer to Q-11 is yes.) How satisfied were you with the services you received at the public hospital or clinic? Were you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?

**Q-12c.** (Ask if answer to Q-11 is yes.) How many minutes did it take you to reach the public hospital or clinic from your home?

**Q-13.** In the past 12 months, have you or anyone in your household visited a private hospital or clinic for any health-related reasons or medical treatment?

Q-14a. (Ask if answer to Q-13 is yes.) What type of services did you receive at the private hospital or clinic? (Allow two mentions.)

Q-14b. (Ask if answer to Q-13 is yes.) How satisfied were you with the services you received at the private hospital or clinic? Were you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?

Q-14c. (Ask if answer to Q-13 is yes.) How many minutes did it take you to reach the private hospital or clinic from your home?

## QUALITY OF FOOD

The *Survey* asks respondents about the quality of food in their diet. At the national level, 17.1% say it has gotten better, 52.6% say it is the same, and 29.9%, similar to last year (29.4%), indicate that it has gotten worse.

The number of Afghans who say the quality of their food has gotten worse has increased over time. This year's figure of 29.9% is 13.4 percentage points higher than the 16.5% in 2007 who said their food had gotten worse (figure 4.4).

### PERCEPTIONS OF FOOD QUALITY 2007



## PERCEPTIONS OF FOOD QUALITY 2018



**FIG. 4.4: Q-8.** Compared to one year ago, would you say that the situation for your household has gotten better, remained the same, or gotten worse with respect to the following? (d) Quality of food in your diet. (Percent who say it has gotten worse.)

There do not appear to be any differences by gender. Rural respondents are more likely to say that their food quality has improved (18.7%) than urban Afghans (12.2%). Regionally, respondents in the West are the most likely to say their quality of food is worse (35.5%). Residents of the western province of Badkhis are experiencing a dire situation, as severe drought has forced some 120,000 to evacuate to the provincial capital, Qala-e-Naw, where they remain with inadequate shelter, food, water, and sanitation.<sup>17</sup>

Afghans in insecure areas are somewhat more likely than those in more secure areas to say that their food has gotten worse. Some 33.0% of intercept interview respondents say their food has gotten worse, compared to 29.9% of respondents from the main sample.

## HEALTH CARE

In the past 17 years, the Afghan health-care system has undergone many improvements. In 2002, the death rate was 1,600 per 100,000. In 2018 the rate has dropped dramatically, to 400 per 100,000.<sup>18</sup> To reach global standards, however, the country still has work to do. The Afghan health sector, like other sectors such as education, is deeply affected by the country's insecurity. According to the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), violence like suicide bombings and armed conflicts is now the nation's third-

leading cause of death and disability, forcing it to devote financial resources to the treatment of injuries and trauma rather than improving health care for women and children, one of their goals.<sup>19</sup>

The percentage of Afghans who have access to health services is now 60%,<sup>20</sup> meaning care is available to more than half the country. However, Afghanistan has a shortage of female health-care providers, particularly in provinces like Nuristan, Paktika, Zabul, and Uruzgan, where there are no female providers at all.<sup>21</sup> Because of the lack of health workers and the poor quality of health care and medicines, Afghans annually divert about \$300 million for treatment outside Afghanistan, mainly in India and Pakistan.<sup>22</sup> Meanwhile, the health sector continues to rely heavily on donor support.<sup>23</sup>

Since 2007, the *Survey* has asked Afghans about the health and well-being of their households. In 2018, 53.2% of respondents say it is the same as 12 months ago, 21.3% say it has gotten better, and 24.9% say it has gotten worse. This last figure is an improvement over last year, when 28.8% said their family's health and well-being had declined, but it is worse than the 2007 figure of 11.2%.

There is no significant variation by gender, as men and women report at the same rate (24.4% male, 25.4% female) that their household's health and well-being has declined. Rural and urban respondents also report worsening health and well-being at nearly the same rate (24.5% rural, 26.2% urban). Regionally, respondents in the South West are the most likely to report a decline (28.5%), while those in the South East are the least likely (18.3%).

Significant variations emerge across provinces. Respondents in Zabul (42.3%), Nimroz (35.7%), and Wardak (35.2%) report declining health and well-being of their households at the highest rates, while respondents in Panjshir (8.3%), Badakhshan (11.9%), and Kapisa (12.1%) have the lowest rates.

In 2018, the *Survey* asks Afghans whether they visited a public hospital or clinic in the past 12 months. Nationally, 59.0% of all respondents say they did. Of these, the greatest number (43.9%) say the purpose of their visit was "good quality medicine," followed by "better examination" (31.5%), "health services" (20.6%), "vaccination" (18.5%), "better attention from doctors" (6.8%), "extensive care" (4.4%), and "blood pressure check-up" (4.0%).

The only significant difference by gender is that female respondents are more likely than males to say they visited the public hospital for vaccination (21.2% vs. 15.6%). There are more interesting differences between rural and urban respondents. Afghans who live in rural areas are more likely than urban Afghans to say they visited a public hospital to receive good-quality medicine, health services, and vaccination. Urban Afghans are more likely than rural respondents to say they visited a public hospital for advanced procedures like laboratory tests and ultrasound (figure 4.5).

## REASONS FOR VISITING PUBLIC HOSPITALS OR CLINICS, BY RURAL AND URBAN

	RURAL	URBAN
	%	%
GOOD QUALITY MEDICINE	45	39
BETTER EXAMINATION	31	34
DON'T KNOW	27	23
HEALTH SERVICES	21	19
VACCINATION	20	15
BETTER ATTENTION FROM DOCTORS	8	4
EXTENSIVE CARE	5	4
BLOOD PRESSURE CHECK AND TREATMENT	4	3
LABORATORY TESTS	3	8
MIDWIFE ADVISORY	3	4
ULTRASOUND	3	5

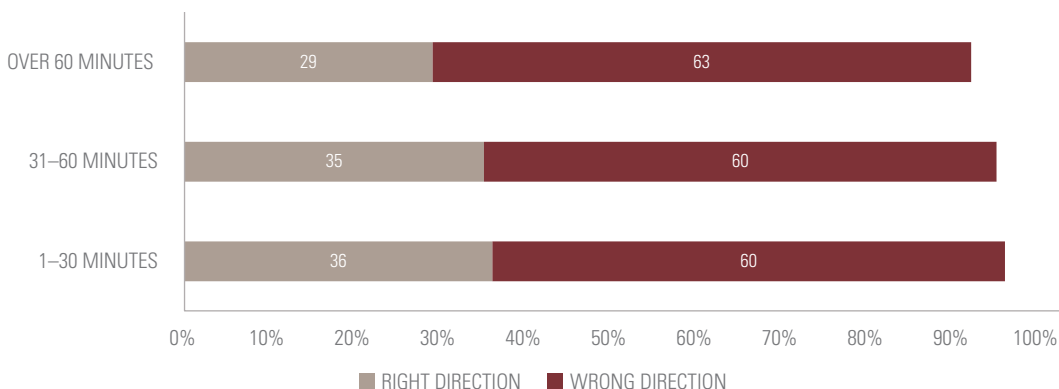
**FIG. 4.5: Q-12a.** (Ask if answer to Q-11 is yes.) What type of services did you receive at the public hospital or clinic?

Among respondents who visited a public hospital, 46.2% say they were “somewhat satisfied” with the services they received, 29.5% say they were “very satisfied,” 14.8% say they were “somewhat dissatisfied,” and 8.8% say they were “very dissatisfied.”

The *Survey* asked respondents how long it took to get to the public hospital or clinic from their home. Nationally, 55.6% say it took them 1–30 minutes, 32.9% say 31–60 minutes, and 9.7% say it took over 60 minutes.<sup>24</sup> Rural respondents are significantly more likely than urban respondents take longer to reach the public hospital. For example, 11.6% of rural respondents say it took over 60 minutes to reach the public hospital, compared to just 3.6% of urban respondents. Regionally, respondents in the South West (5.1%) are the least likely to say it took over 60 minutes to reach the public hospital, while respondents in Central/Hazarajat (54.1%) are the most likely.

Interestingly, the *Survey* shows a correlation between the length of time it took to reach the public hospital and a respondent’s assessment of the direction of the country. Respondents who say it took over 60 minutes to reach a public hospital are significantly less likely to say the country is moving in the right direction (figure 4.6).

## PERCEIVED DIRECTION OF THE COUNTRY, BY HOURS TO REACH PUBLIC HOSPITAL OR CLINIC



**FIG. 4.6: Q12c.** (Ask if answer to Q-11 is yes.) How many minutes did it take you to reach the public hospital or clinic from your home? **Q-1.** Overall, based on your own experience, do you think things in Afghanistan today are going in the right direction, or do you think they are going in the wrong direction?

In addition to public hospitals, the *Survey* asks Afghans whether they visited a private hospital in the past 12 months. At the national level, 39.2% of respondents say they visited a private hospital, compared to 59.0% who visited public hospitals. This preference for public over private hospitals may be due to the country's growing poverty, due in part to population growth that is outstripping economic growth.<sup>25</sup>

In rural areas, where more people experience poverty,<sup>26</sup> 37.0% say they visited a private hospital in past 12 months, compared to 45.8% of urban respondents. When asked why they visited a private hospital, respondents nationally give almost the same reasons as those who visited public hospitals: good quality medicine (42.2%), better examination (34.8%), health services (19.7%), laboratory tests (7.1%), and better attention from doctors (6.7%).

When asked if they are satisfied with the care they received, 44.3% of respondents say they are somewhat satisfied, 35.6% very satisfied, 12.8% somewhat dissatisfied, and 6.3% very dissatisfied. When asked how long it took to reach the private hospital, 52.9% of respondents nationally say 1–30 minutes, 30.6% say 31–60 minutes, and 14.8% say over 60 minutes.



## ACCESS TO CLEAN DRINKING WATER

Water is of greater concern in Afghanistan today than at any time in the past. Inadequate precipitation during the winter of 2017- 2018 has brought severe drought to much of the country, affecting 20 provinces.<sup>27</sup> In some provinces, livestock has died as pastures turn to dust. The drought has caused the displacement of thousands of Afghans across the country, adding to the two million internally displaced persons fleeing from conflict and increasing violence.<sup>28</sup> While drought isn't a new phenomenon in this landlocked country, its effects have been more severe during this time of political infighting, increasing violence and conflict, dwindling foreign aid, and preoccupation with elections.<sup>29</sup>

---

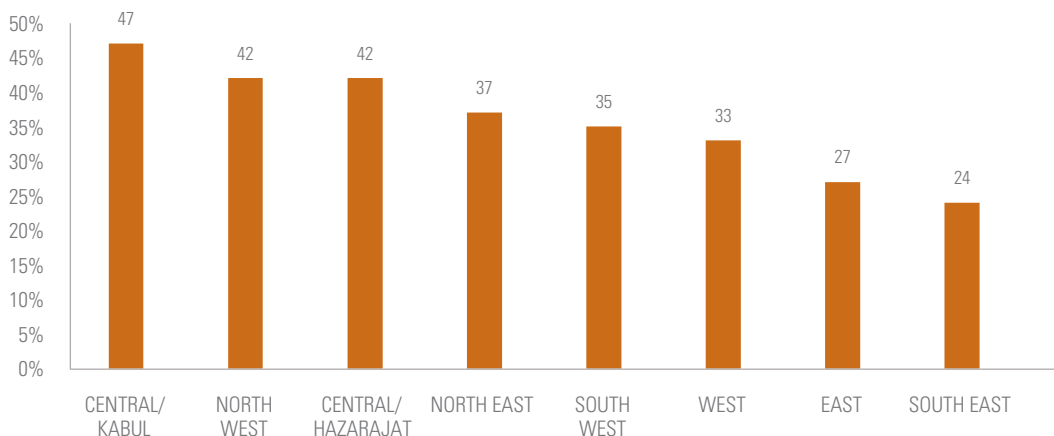
While drought isn't a new phenomenon in this landlocked country, its effects have been more severe during this time of political infighting, increasing violence and conflict, dwindling foreign aid, and preoccupation with elections.

---

When asked if access to drinking water has gotten better, gotten worse, or stayed the same in the past 12 months, 43.8% of respondents in 2018 say it has stayed the same, 37.2% say it has gotten worse, and 18.6% say it has gotten better. Analyzing the data by rural or urban residence, urban Afghans (45.7%) are significantly more likely than rural Afghans (34.3%) to say that access to drinking water has worsened.

Regionally, respondents in the South East (24.1%) and the East (27.2%) are least likely to say that access to drinking water has gotten worse, while respondents in Central/Kabul (46.6%) and the North West (42.0%) are the most likely (figure 4.7). In Central/Kabul in particular, the capital city of Kabul has experienced a sharp drop in groundwater levels, and scientists are becoming increasingly concerned that underground water reserves will dry up in next the 10 years.<sup>30</sup>

## ACCESS TO CLEAN DRINKING WATER, BY REGION

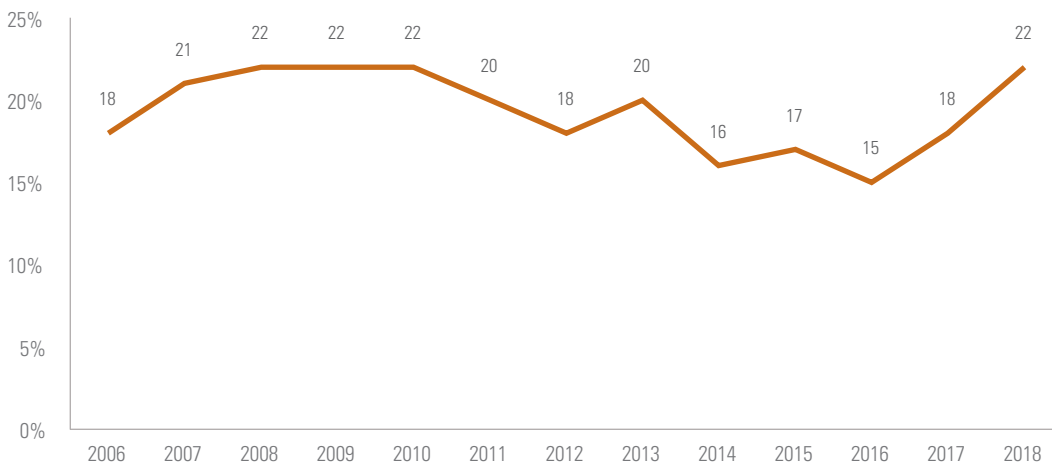


**FIG. 4.7: Q-8.** Compared to one year ago, would you say that the situation for your household has gotten better, remained the same, or gotten worse with respect to the following? (j) Access to clean drinking water. (Percent who say worse.)

Provincially, respondents in Nimroz (68.0%), Jawzjan (57.0%), Kabul (55.4%), and Farah (53.0%) report the four highest rates of worsening access to clean drinking water, while the lowest rates are reported in Logar (11.0%) and Laghman (13.1%). Reinforcing the results from Nimroz, there have been reports that one of the province's two main rivers, Khasrod, has dried up, resulting in severe water shortages that are expected to affect 80% of the spring harvest there.<sup>31</sup>

Some 22.4% of respondents cite access to drinking water as a major problem in their local area, a significant increase from 15.2% in 2016, (figure 4.8).

## ACCESS TO DRINKING WATER AS BIGGEST PROBLEM, BY LOCAL AREA



**FIG. 4.8: Q-5.** *In your view, what are the biggest problems in your local area? (Allow up to two mentions.) (Percent who say “drinking water.”)*

### IRRIGATION FACILITIES

Related to drought and water insecurity, the 2018 *Survey* for the first time asks respondents about their access to irrigation facilities—has it improved, gotten worse, or stayed the same in the past 12 months. Nationally, 51.4% of respondents report that access has stayed the same, 36.8% say it has gotten worse, and 9.3% say it has improved.

Respondents in rural areas (38.1%) are significantly more likely than urban respondents (32.7%) to say access to irrigation has gotten worse. Respondents in the North West are the most likely to report that access to irrigation has gotten worse (47.5%), while respondents in the East are the least likely (31.0%). Provincially, respondents in Zabul (68.1%), Nimroz (65.8%), and Jawzjan (60.4%) most frequently say that access to irrigation facilities has worsened, while respondents in Logar (17.1%), Laghman (18.7%), and Kapisa (18.9%) say this the least. By occupation, farmers (44.6%) and farm laborers (47.2%) report worsening access to irrigation facilities more than any other occupations.

## 4.3 EDUCATION

### KEY QUESTIONS

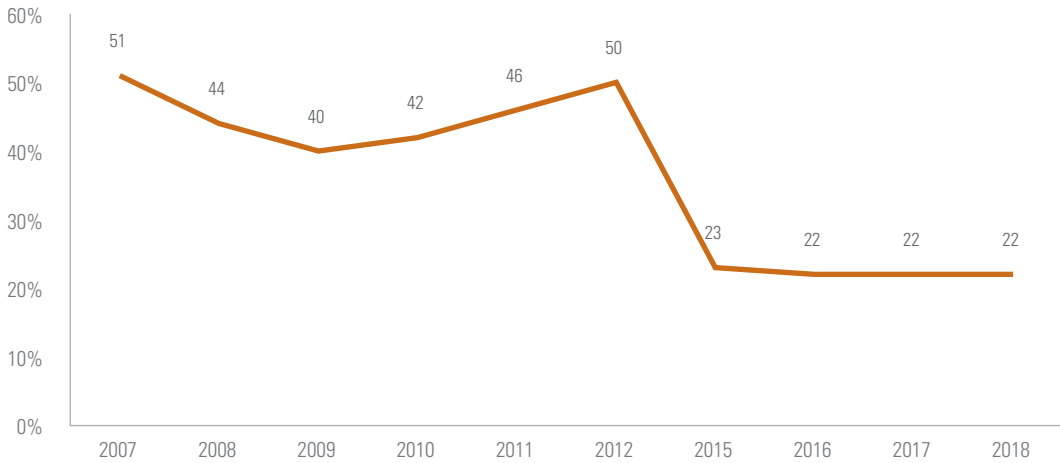
- Q-8. *Compared to one year ago, would you say that the situation for your household has gotten better, remained the same, or gotten worse with respect to the following? (h) Quality of school services (teachers and curriculum).*
- Q-15. *Which group would you say is most responsible for providing security in this village/ gozar? And the second most?*

In fragile states, education is considered to be an important tool to reduce poverty, unemployment, and ongoing conflict, and the Afghan government declared 2018 to be the Year of Education.<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, Afghanistan's education sector continues to face challenges.

According to UNICEF, 3.7 million children between the ages of 7 and 17 are out of school, with girls accounting for 60% of this figure. As violence spreads across the country, militants are increasingly targeting schools, considered a soft target, for deadly attacks.<sup>33</sup> In their dual role as polling stations, schools have become even more visible targets in the lead-up to elections.<sup>34</sup>

In 2018, 22.0% of Afghans nationally say that the quality of school services is better, roughly the same as 2017 (22.2%) and the lowest proportion since the *Survey* first asked this question in 2007 (50.7%). (figure 4.9).

## QUALITY OF SCHOOL SERVICES



**FIG. 4.9: Q-8.** Compared to one year ago, would you say that the situation for your household has gotten better, remained the same, or gotten worse with respect to the following? (h) Quality of school services (teachers and curriculum).<sup>35</sup> (Percent who say better.)

By gender, men are more likely to say school services have worsened (29.0%) than women (22.8%). Rural Afghans are significantly more likely to say school services have worsened (27.5%) than urban Afghans (21.1%). Respondents in Uruzgan, Farah, and Zabul are the most likely to say that school services have gotten worse (50.3%, 43.5%, and 41.4%, respectively), while respondents in Kapisa, Laghman, and Badakhshan are the least likely (13.1%, 15.0%, and 16.3%, respectively).

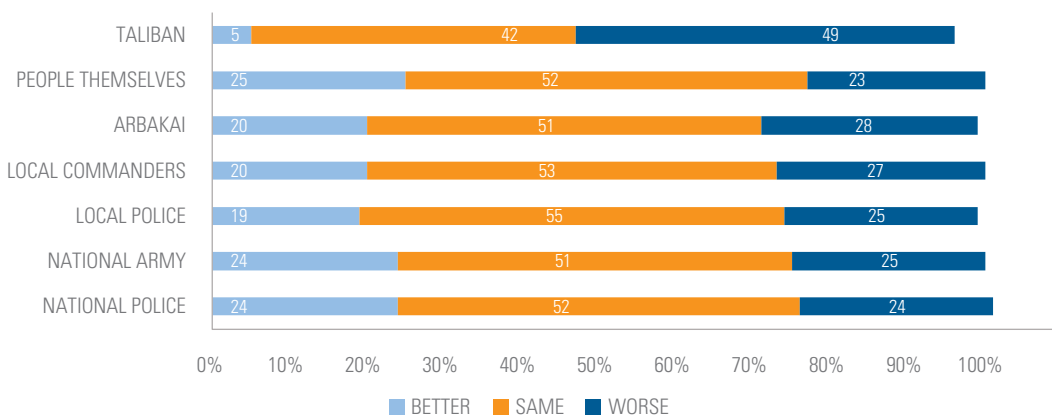
## SECURITY AND EDUCATION

Respondents who live in insecure areas or areas controlled by militants are more likely to say education services have gotten worse. Some 48.9% of respondents who say the Taliban provides security in their local area, and 27.0% of those who say local commanders provide security, say the quality of education services has worsened, compared to 24.5% in National Police areas and 24.8% in National Army areas (figure 4.10). In 2018, the Taliban closed 27 schools in the northern province of Takhar, affecting 11,000 pupils.<sup>36</sup> One in four respondents in Takhar (25.9%) say education has gotten worse, the same as the national level.

The differences between the main sample and intercept interviews are significant. Intercept respondents, who usually come from insecure areas under militant control, are significantly more likely to say that the quality of education services has worsened in the past 12 months (42.3%) than main-sample respondents (25.9%).

In Nangarhar, more respondents today say the quality of education has worsened than in the past (18.5% in 2012 to 28.1% in 2018). This increase can be attributed to the increasing insecurity in the province, where ISIS first appeared some four years ago. Due to subsequent attacks and threats of violence directed at schools, particularly girls' schools, educational services have understandably declined.<sup>37</sup>

### PERCEPTION OF EDUCATION SERVICES, BY SECURITY PROVIDER



**FIG. 4.10: Q-8.** Compared to one year ago, would you say that the situation for your household has gotten better, remained the same, or gotten worse with respect to the following? (h) Quality of school services (teachers and curriculum). **Q-15.** Which group would you say is most responsible for providing security in this village/gozar? And the second most?

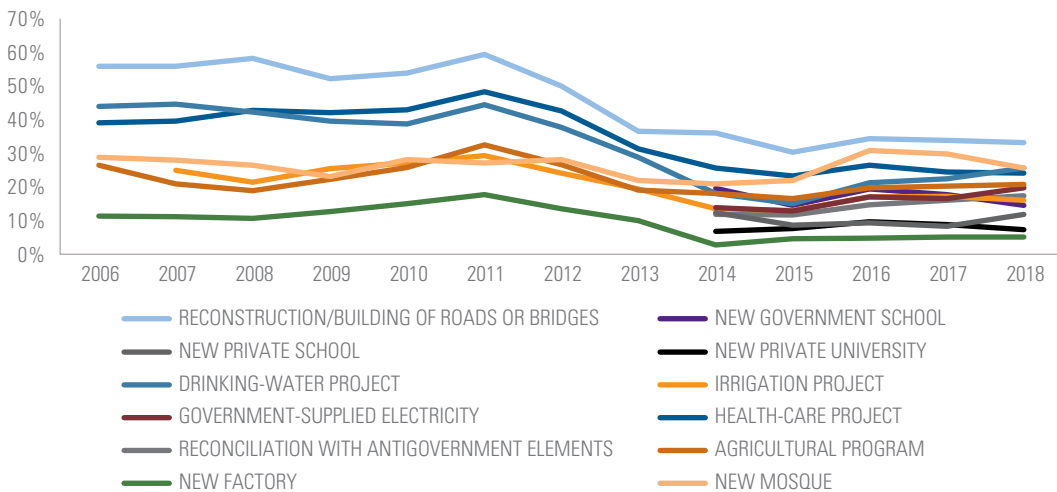
## 4.4 AWARENESS OF DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

### KEY QUESTION

**Q-10.** I am going to read a list of projects that may or may not have been implemented in your area. Please tell me if there has been this type of project in your area in the last 12 months. (a) Reconstruction/building of roads or bridges. (b) New government school. (c) New private school. (d) New private university. (e) Drinking-water project (e.g., new wells, hand pumps, tank system, reservoir). (f) Irrigation project. (g) Government-supplied electricity. (h) Health care (primary health center, regular visits of doctors, etc.). (i) Reconciliation with antigovernment elements. (j) Agricultural programs. (k) New factory. (l) New mosque.

Since 2006, the *Survey* has inquired about Afghans' awareness of development projects. In 2018, the awareness of development projects remains similar to last year. This year, road construction is most prominent in the public's awareness (33.1% of respondents), followed by health care (25.7%), new mosques (25.7%), drinking-water projects (24.2%), agricultural programs (20.8%), government-supplied electricity (19.8%), new private schools (17.4%), irrigation projects (16.1%), new government schools (14.5%), reconciliation with antigovernment elements (11.8%), new private universities (7.4%), and new factories (5.1%) (figure 4.11). There have been some interesting changes in the awareness of new government schools and reconciliation with antigovernment elements. Respondents are slightly less likely to say they know about new government school projects this year (14.5%) than in 2017 (17.7%). Respondents are slightly more likely, however, to say they are aware of reconciliation with antigovernment elements this year (11.8%) than last year (8.4%).

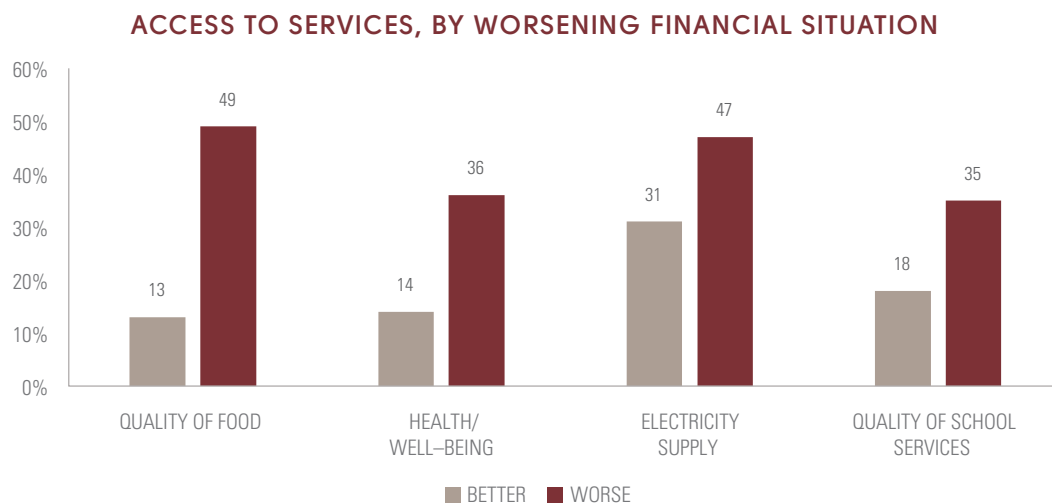
### AWARENESS OF DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN THE LOCAL AREA



**FIG. 4.11: Q-10.** *I am going to read a list of projects that may or may not have been implemented in your area. Please tell me if there has been this type of project in your area in the last 12 months. (a) Reconstruction/building of roads or bridges. (b) New government school. (c) New private school. (d) New private university. (e) Drinking-water project (e.g., new wells, hand pumps, tank system, reservoir). (f) Irrigation project. (g) Government-supplied electricity. (h) Health care (primary health center, regular visits of doctors, etc.). (i) Reconciliation with antigovernment elements. (j) Agricultural programs. (k) New factory. (l) New mosque. (Percent who say yes in each category.)*

## ECONOMIC STATUS AND ACCESS TO SERVICES

The *Survey* shows that respondents whose financial situation and employment opportunities are getting worse are more likely to report that their access to services like schools, health care, electricity, and good quality food has gotten worse (figure 4.12). Some 49.4% of respondents who say their household financial situation has worsened also say the quality of food in their diet is worse than 12 months ago, compared to just 13.1% of those who say their financial situation has improved. Afghans who say their employment opportunities have gotten worse are more likely to say their food quality has worsened (38.2%) than those who say their employment opportunities have improved (16.2%).



**FIG. 4.12: Q-8.** Compared to one year ago, would you say that the situation for your household has gotten better, remained the same, or gotten worse with respect to the following? (a) Financial situation of your household. (d) Quality of food in your diet. (f) Health/well-being of your family members. (g) Electricity supply. (h) Quality of school services. (Percent of those with a worsening financial situation who say “better” or “worse” for items d, f, g, and h.)

Poor families are less likely to say that their family’s health has improved. Some 36.0% of those who say their financial situation has worsened also say their household health and well-being is worse than 12 months ago, compared to just 14.0% of those who say their financial situation has improved. And employment has a strong impact on the health and well-being of Afghans. Those who say their employment opportunities have gotten worse are more likely to say their household health and well-being have declined (31.0%) than those who say their employment opportunities have improved (13.4%).



Access to electricity has a positive relationship with respondents' financial situation and job opportunities. Close to half (47.1%) of Afghans who say their financial situation has gotten worse also say their access to electricity is worse, but just 31.3% those whose financial situation has improved say their electricity access is worse. Employment opportunities also have a positive correlation with respondent's access to electricity. Some 24.2% of respondents whose job opportunities have improved report improved access to electricity, compared 14.1% of those who say their job prospects have worsened.

## ENDNOTES

- 1 Marat Gurt, "Leaders launch start of Afghan section of TAPI gas pipeline," *Reuters*, February 23, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkmenistan-afghanistan-gas-pipeline/leaders-launch-start-of-afghan-section-of-tapi-gas-pipeline-idUSKCN1G70PU>.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 "Ring Road Construction Restarts After Five Years," *TOLONews*, August 28, 2012, <http://prod.tolonews.com/business/ring-road-construction-restarts-after-five-years>.
- 4 Kathy Whitehead, "SIGAR Finds Only 15% Of Qaysar-Laman Road Complete After 12 Years," *TOLONews*, June 21, 2018, <https://www.tolonews.com/afghanistan/sigar-finds-only-15-qaysar-laman-road-complete-after-12-years>.
- 5 World Bank, *Afghanistan Development Update* (Washington, DC: World bank, August, 2018), <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/985851533222840038/pdf/129163-REVISED-AFG-Development-Update-Aug-2018-FINAL.pdf>.
- 6 World Bank, *Afghanistan Poverty Status Update: Progress at Risk* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2018), <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/afghanistan/publication/afghanistan-poverty-status-update-report-2017>.
- 7 World Bank, *Afghanistan Development Update* (see note 5).
- 8 "Drought raises food security fears in Afghanistan," *Aljazeera*, August 12, 2018, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/08/drought-raises-food-security-fears-afghanistan-180812063301371.html>.
- 9 Mujib Mashal, "Drought Adds to Woes of Afghanistan, in Grips of a Raging War," *New York Times*, May 27, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/27/world/asia/afghanistan-drought-war.html>.
- 10 World Food Programme (WFP), *WFP Afghanistan Country Brief* (WFP, August 2018), [https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP0000074428/download?\\_ga=2.204955408.1052383538.1538561434-374711956.1538561434](https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP0000074428/download?_ga=2.204955408.1052383538.1538561434-374711956.1538561434).
- 11 World Bank, *Afghanistan Development Update* (see note 5).
- 12 "Afghanistan: ISIL Suicide bomber targets school in Kabul," *Aljazeera*, August 16, 2018, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/08/afghanistan-huge-explosion-hits-kabul-city-180815114313817.html>.
- 13 Murtaza Mohammadi, "Safe learning' in Afghanistan," UNICEF website, September 7, 2018, <https://www.unicef.org/afghanistan/stories/safe-learning-afghanistan>.
- 14 Karim Amini, "Ghani Inaugurates Balkh Energy Projects," *TOLONews*, May 30, 2018, <https://www.tolonews.com/business/ghani-inaugurates-balkh-energy-projects>.
- 15 World Bank, "Afghanistan Resurrects its Largest Hydropower Plant Toward a Brighter Future," World Bank website, May 14, 2018, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2018/05/14/largest-plant-restarts-operations-in-first-step-developing-afghanistan-hydropower>.
- 16 World Bank, "Afghanistan Renewable Energy Development Issues and Options," World Bank website, June 6, 2018, <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/352991530527393098/Afghanistan-Renewable-Energy-Development-Issues-and-Options.docx>
- 17 WFP, *Afghanistan Country Brief* (see note 10).
- 18 Serena Chaudhry, "Worsening security in Afghanistan threatens health gains, minister says," *Reuters*, May 17, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-afghanistan-healthcare-funding-interv/worsening-security-in-afghanistan-threatens-health-gains-minister-says-idUSKCN1I12P4>.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Hayat Amanat, "60% Of Afghans Now Have Access To Health Services," *TOLONews*, August 26, 2018, <https://www.tolonews.com/afghanistan/60-afghans-now-have-access-health-services-moph>.
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 Zia-ul-Islam Shirani, "The Condition of Health Sector and Access to HealthCare Services in Afghanistan," website of the Center for Strategic and Regional Studies, April 14, 2018, <http://csrskabul.com/en/blog/the-condition-of-health-sector-and-access-to-healthcare-services-in-afghanistan/>.
- 23 Chaudhry, "Worsening security" (see note 18).

- 24 Responses to Q-12c and Q-14c are collected in total number of minutes. Here, the responses are divided into intervals of 30 minutes, 31–60 minutes, and over 60 minutes.
- 25 Rupam Jain, “Afghanistan’s poverty rate rises as economy suffers,” *Reuters*, May 7, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-afghanistan-economy/afghanistans-poverty-rate-rises-as-economy-suffers-idUSKBN11818X>.
- 26 World Bank, *Afghanistan Development Update* (see note 5).
- 27 “Drought raises food security fears,” *Aljazeera* (see note 8).
- 28 Mashal, “Drought Adds to Woes” (see note 9).
- 29 Ibid.
- 30 Sharif Amiri, “Kabul’s Underground Water Reserves ‘To Dry Up Within Years,’” *TOLONews*, July 13, 2018, <http://prod.tolonews.com/afghanistan/kabul%E2%80%99s-underground-water-dry-within-years-official>.
- 31 Mashal, “Drought Adds to Woes” (see note 9).
- 32 “‘Nearly Half’ of Afghan Children Out of School: UNICEF,” *TOLONews*, June 3, 2018, <https://www.tolonews.com/afghanistan/nearly-half-children-afghanistan-out-school-unicef>.
- 33 “Up to 60 percent of Afghan girls out of school: report,” *Aljazeera*, June 3, 2018, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/06/60-percent-afghan-girls-school-report-180603150117803.html>.
- 34 Abdul Qadir Sediqi, “Afghan schools hit as militants seek soft targets,” *Reuters*, August 16, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-afghanistan-attack-schools/afghan-schools-hit-as-militants-seek-soft-targets-idUSKBN11L10XI>.
- 35 The wording for question Q-8(h) was modified in 2018 from “access to school” to “quality of school services.”
- 36 “UNICEF: Nearly half of children in Afghanistan do not go to school,” *DW*, June 3, 2018, <https://www.dw.com/en/unicef-nearly-half-of-children-in-afghanistan-do-not-go-to-school/a-44057871>.
- 37 Ben Farmer, “Eighty Afghan girls’ schools close over Islamic State threat,” *Telegraph*, June 6, 2018, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/06/06/eighty-afghan-girls-schools-close-islamic-state-threat/>.



## 5 GOVERNANCE

After four years in power, the National Unity Government (NUG) still faces persistent challenges. The deal originally brokered in 2014 by U.S. secretary of state John Kerry envisioned a president, and a chief executive who would function much like a prime minister. However, the nearly constant rivalry between President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah has interfered with government operations, and the rise in terrorist attacks contributes to a perception that the NUG is unable to protect Afghan citizens from growing violence and instability.<sup>1</sup> President Ghani's push for centralization of the government has been met by criticism, as has Chief Executive Abdullah's strategy of decentralization. Appointments to top posts continue to be hampered by accusations of ethnic favoritism.<sup>2</sup> Nascent coalitions of current or former governors, warlords, and politicians are forming in anticipation of the scheduled 2019 presidential elections, but there are ongoing concerns that they could be delayed.

---

Despite delays in elections, well over half of all Afghans surveyed say that the NUG is doing a good job, up from 2017, and even more Afghans express satisfaction with their provincial government.

---

Afghan district and parliamentary elections were initially scheduled for June of 2015, the end of the parliamentarians' five-year term. Due to security concerns and logistical problems surrounding the voting process, however, the Afghan parliament voted to extend its own term limits, an action supported by President Ghani.<sup>3</sup> After being rescheduled they finally took place across most of the country in October of this year.

Against this backdrop of profound challenges, well over half of Afghans Surveyed (59.6%) say that the NUG is doing a good job, a 3.4 percentage point increase over 2017 (56.2%). Perceptions of provincial governments have also improved, with 61.3% expressing satisfaction with their provincial government, up from 56.9% in 2017.

This chapter explores Afghans' perceptions of national and day-to-day corruption, their satisfaction with the mechanisms of dispute resolution and local justice, their confidence in government institutions at all levels, and how their opinions have changed over time.

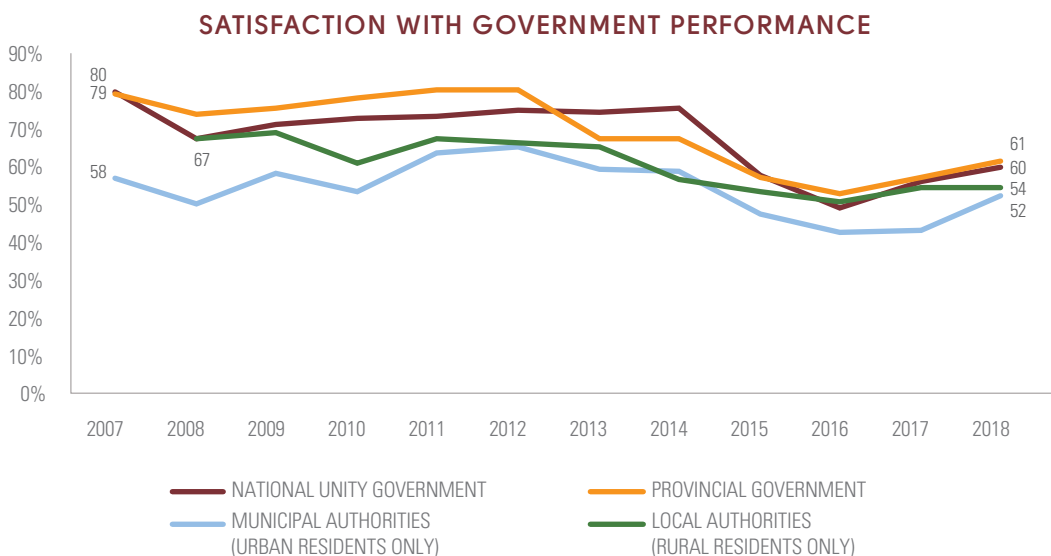
## 5.1 SATISFACTION WITH GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE

### KEY QUESTIONS

**Q-52.** Thinking of the different levels of government in Afghanistan, do you think that overall the [insert item] is doing a very good job, a somewhat good job, a somewhat bad job, or a very bad job? (a) National Unity Government. (b) Provincial government. (c) Municipal authorities (ask urban residents only). (d) District government (ask rural residents only).

**Q-91.** How successful do you think the government has been in improving the living condition of people living in your area—a lot, a little, or not at all?

Afghans' assessment of the performance of various government institutions has continued to rebound this year (figure 5.1). Over half of Afghans surveyed (59.6%) report that the NUG is doing a good job (16.4% very good, 43.2% somewhat good), a 3.4-point increase over 2017 (56.2%) and a 10.5-point increase over the 2016 low of 49.1%. Perceptions of provincial governments have also improved, with 61.3% reporting their performance as "very good" (16.0%) or "somewhat good" (45.3%), up from 56.9% in 2017. Urban respondents express increased satisfaction with municipal governments this year, with 52.3% ranking them "very good" or "somewhat good," up from 43.2% in 2017. Rural respondents report the same level of satisfaction with district governments as last year: 54.5% in both 2017 and 54.4% in 2018.



**FIG. 5.1: Q-52.** Thinking of the different levels of government in Afghanistan, do you think that overall the [insert item] is doing a very good job, a somewhat good job, a somewhat bad job,

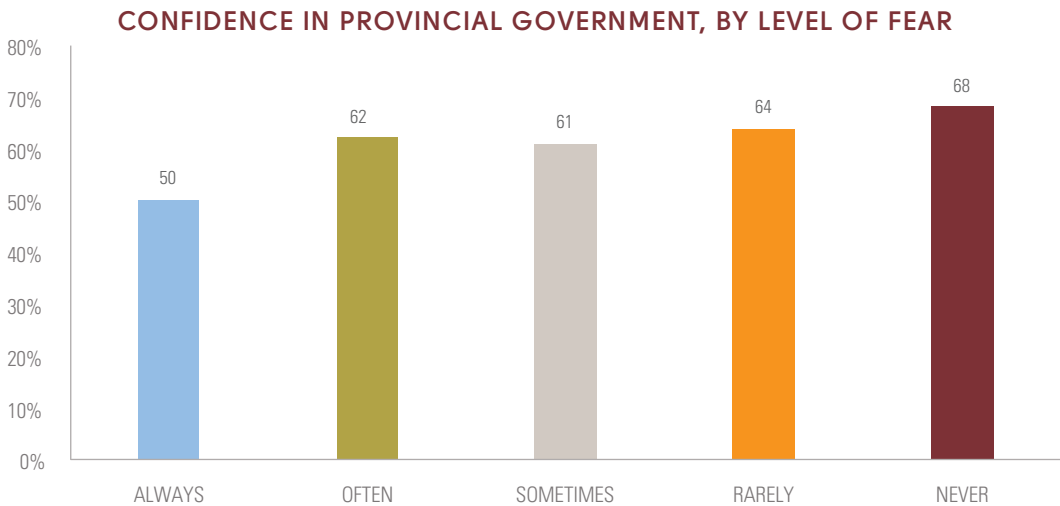
or a very bad job? (a) National Unity Government. (b) Provincial government. (c) Municipal authorities (ask urban residents only). (d) District government (ask rural residents only). (Percent who respond “very good job” or “somewhat good job.”)

Women express higher levels of satisfaction with the NUG than men (61.9% vs. 57.3%). Satisfaction among rural respondents has increased from 57.4% in 2017 to 62.0% this year, while among urban respondents it has remained roughly unchanged, from 52.6% in 2017 to 52.3% in 2018). As in 2017, Afghans in the East are highly likely to say that the NUG is doing a “very good” or “somewhat good” job (82.9%), while Afghans in the North West (48.1%) and Central/Hazarajat (48.4%) are less likely. With increased satisfaction across the board, Pashtuns (70.1%) are more likely than Tajiks (54.7%), Uzbeks (48.5%), or Hazaras (48.6%) to say they are satisfied with the performance of the NUG.

Since 2017, respondents have been asked how successful they think the government has been in improving the living conditions of people in their area. Overall, 65.0% of Afghans say the government has been successful (“a lot” and “a little”) in improving living condition of people in their area. This proportion varies from highest of 79.0% in East, following by 77.7% in South West, and 68.9% in West regions. The lowest of 57.3% is in North West and 58.4% in Central/Kabul regions.

Afghans continue to report increased satisfaction with provincial government, up from a low of 52.9% in 2016 to 56.9% in 2017 and 61.3% in 2018. Rural respondents’ satisfaction has increased from 57.8% in 2017 to 64.3% this year, while urban respondents report decreased satisfaction with provincial government, down from 54.2% in 2017 to 52.1% this year. The highest levels of satisfaction with provincial government are reported in Panjshir (91.0%, up from 77.6% in 2017), Laghman (81.6%, up from 77.1% in 2017), Kandahar (78.3%), and Wardak (78.2%). The lowest levels are in Zabul (32.8%), Kabul (43.0%), Faryab (43.2%), and Baghlan (50.2%). The greatest increase in satisfaction is reported in the provinces of Ghor (up 26 points) and Paktia (up 22.8 points), and the greatest decrease is reported in the provinces of Parwan (down 7.2 points) and Logar (down 5.4 points).

Since the question was first introduced, in 2007, satisfaction with provincial government (“somewhat good” and “very good” job) has been higher among female respondents than male, a trend that continues this year (female, 64.3%; male, 58.3%). Pashtuns are more likely to report a positive view of provincial government (65.5%) than Tajiks (58.4%), Uzbeks (57.4%), and Hazaras (56.9%). The *Survey* reveals a positive relationship between confidence in one’s member of parliament (MP) and confidence in provincial government. Those who express confidence in their MPs are more likely to say that provincial government is doing a “somewhat” or “very” good job (74.6%) than those who report having “not much” or “no confidence” in their MPs (51.2%). Level of fear can also predict level of confidence in provincial government (see figure 5.2). Afghans who fear for their personal safety or security are less likely to have confidence in their provincial government. On the other hand, Afghans who do not express fear for their personal safety or security have significantly more confidence in their provincial government.



**FIG. 5.2: Q-52.** Thinking of the different levels of government in Afghanistan, do you think that overall the [insert item] is doing a very good job, a somewhat good job, a somewhat bad job, or a very bad job? (b) Provincial government. (Percent who say “very good job” or “somewhat good job.”) **Q-21.** How often do you fear for your own personal safety or security or for that of your family these days? Would you say you always, often, sometimes, rarely, or never fear for you and your family’s safety?

## 5.2 CONFIDENCE IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

### KEY QUESTIONS

**Q-50.** In your opinion, which of the following does your member of parliament care about most? (a) National issues. (b) Provincial issues. (c) District or municipal issues. (d) Ethnic issues. (e) Personal interests.

**Q-51.** I would like to ask you about some officials, institutions, and organizations. As I read out each, please tell me how much confidence you have in them to do their jobs. Do you have a lot, some, not much, or no confidence at all? (c) Independent Election Commission. (d) Community development councils. (e) Community shuras/jirgas. (f) Government ministers. (g) International NGOs. (h) Media such as newspapers, radio, TV. (i) National NGOs. (j) Parliament as a whole. (k) Provincial councils. (l) Religious leaders. (m) Your member of parliament.

Each year, respondents are asked to rate their confidence in different governmental and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). With one exception, confidence in these institutions has increased or held steady



since 2017 (figure 5.3). (The one exception, community shuras/jirgas, decreased slightly, from 65.7% in 2017 to 65.2% this year.) For the third consecutive year, Afghans express the greatest confidence in religious leaders (69.3%, a 2-point increase over 2017), with men expressing greater confidence than women (71.1% vs. 67.5%) and rural respondents expressing greater confidence than urban respondents (70.7% vs. 65.0%). The media were next (67.0%), followed by community shuras/jirgas (65.2%), community development councils (57.6%), and provincial councils (50.9%). Respondents had the least confidence in government ministers (38.3%), parliament as a whole (39.7%), their own members of parliament (42.3%), international NGOs (42.4%), and national NGOs (49.3%). For the second consecutive year, Afghans expressed increased confidence in the Independent Election Commission (43.3%, up from 38.1% in 2017 and a record low of 33.7% in 2016).

### CONFIDENCE IN OFFICIALS, INSTITUTIONS, AND ORGANIZATIONS

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
INDEPENDENT ELECTION COMMISSION		57	67	54	59	60		66	36	34	38	43
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS	64	65	64	61	68	66	63	65	61	53	58	58
COMMUNITY SHURAS/JIRGAS	72	69	67	66	70	68	65	69	64	62	66	65
GOVERNMENT MINISTERS	57	51	53	54	56	55	45	47	42	36	36	38
INTERNATIONAL NGOS	64	64	66	54	56	53	51	53	44	44	42	42
MEDIA	62	63	62	57	69	71	67	73	67	65	66	67
NATIONAL NGOS	60	62	61	55	54	54	51	57	50	48	48	49
RELIGIOUS LEADERS					74	73	65	70	64	66	67	69
PARLIAMENT				59	62	62	50	51	42	37	37	40
PROVINCIAL COUNCILS	70	65	62	62	67	66	58	58	52	47	48	51
YOUR MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT							47	52	43	35	35	42

**FIG. 5.3: Q-51.** *I would like to ask you about some officials, institutions, and organizations. As I read out each, please tell me how much confidence you have in them to do their jobs. Do you have a lot, some, not much, or no confidence at all? (c) Independent Election Commission. (d)*

Community development councils. (e) Community shuras/jirgas. (f) Government ministers. (g) International NGOs. (h) Media such as newspapers, radio, TV. (i) National NGOs. (j) Parliament as a whole. (k) Provincial councils. (l) Religious leaders. (m) Your member of parliament. If you don't know, it's OK, just say you have no opinion. (Percent who respond "some" or "a lot of" confidence.) Note: Blanks represent year(s) the question was not asked.

Perceptions of what MPs care about most have changed since last year, with respondents more likely to cite provincial issues (2017, 18.1%; 2018, 21.4%) and national issues (2017, 10.4%; 2018, 20.4%). Over district, ethnic, or personal issues, Afghans who say their MPs care most about personal issues fell by 9.5 points, from 37.0% in 2017 to 27.5% this year. Afghans are more likely to say their MPs care most about ethnic issues (19.4%) than about district or municipality issues (9.2%). The greatest variation in responses is between urban and rural Afghans. Substantially more rural respondents (23.7%) than urban respondents (14.2%) say their MPs care most about provincial issues, while substantially more urban respondents (40.7%) than rural (23.2%) say their MPs care most about personal interests.

## 5.3 CORRUPTION

### KEY QUESTIONS

**Q-37.** Next I am going to list several different organizations or situations where people have said they experienced corruption in the past. Thinking back to your interactions in the past 12 months, please tell me how often you had to give money or a gift or perform a favor for these organizations or in these situations? Was it in all cases, in most cases, in some cases, or in no case? If you had no contact with the organization, please tell me so.

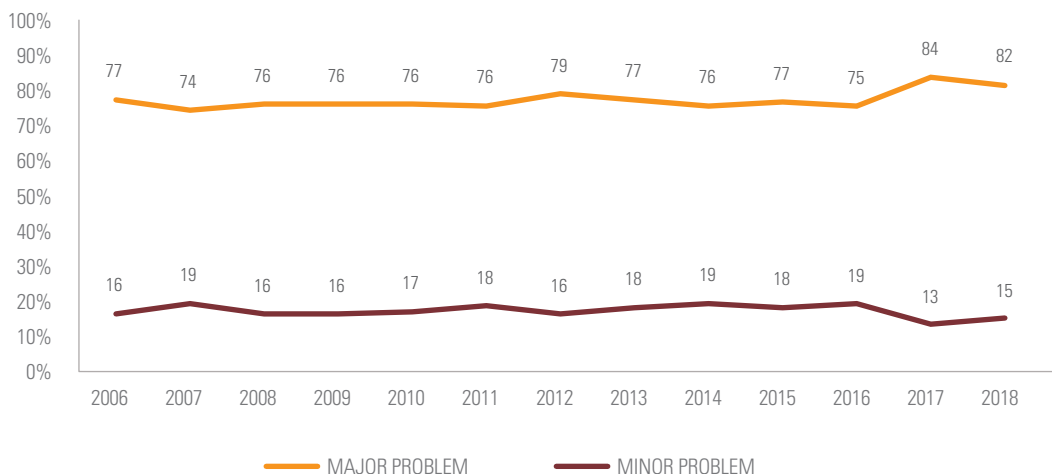
**Q-38.** Please tell me whether you think corruption is a major problem, a minor problem, or no problem at all in the following areas. (a) In your daily life. (b) In Afghanistan as a whole.

Corruption has plagued Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban. A recent report by the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction highlighted the anticorruption strategy spearheaded by the NUG in 2017 and the flaws in its implementation, including a failure to engage ministries and civil society, to clearly align goals and benchmarks, and to incorporate other anticorruption efforts active in the country. The anticorruption strategy also lacks a sustainable, independent mechanism for managing long-term oversight of corruption.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, recent changes to the penal code should make it easier to prosecute corruption offenses, although enforcement will still be a challenge.<sup>5</sup>

Each year, the *Survey* explores perceptions of corruption to understand how respondents view corrupt practices and whether such practices are perceived as a major problem for the country. Perceptions of corruption as a major problem in Afghanistan have fallen slightly, from a record high of 83.7% in 2017 to 81.5% this year, accompanied by an increase in Afghans who say corruption is a minor problem, from 13.1% in 2017 to 14.8% in 2018 (figure 5.4). Like perceptions of corruption in daily

life, the greatest variation is seen by province. Respondents in Panjshir (97.6%), Kabul (96.1%), Baghlan (93.4%), and Uruzgan (91.5%) are the most likely to report corruption as a major problem in Afghanistan, while respondents in Wardak (54.0%), Ghor (59.9%), Kandahar (61.2%), and Paktia (62.8%) are the least likely.

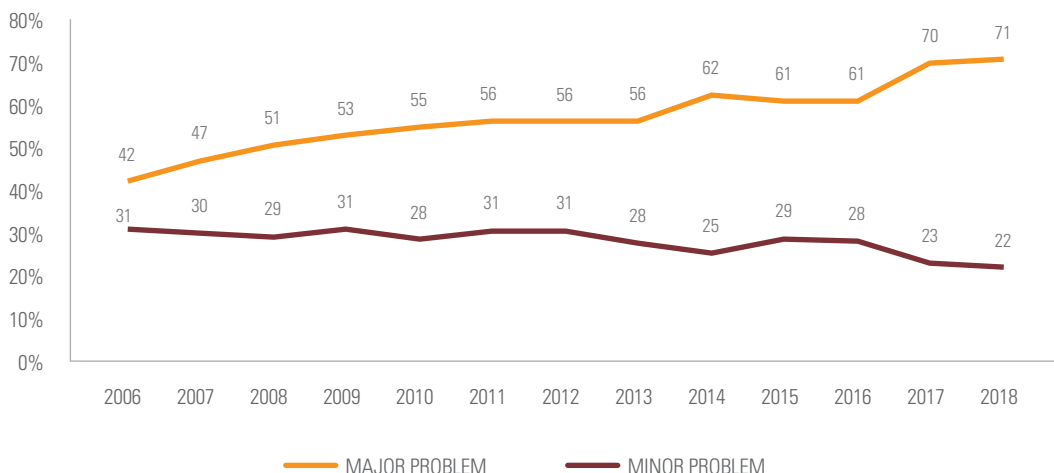
### PERCEPTION OF CORRUPTION AS A PROBLEM IN AFGHANISTAN



**FIG. 5.4: Q-38.** Please tell me whether you think corruption is a major problem, a minor problem, or no problem at all in the following areas. (a) In your daily life. (b) In Afghanistan as a whole. (Percent who say “major problem” and “minor problem.”)

A record 70.6% percent of Afghans in 2018 say corruption is a “major problem” in their daily life, similar to in 2017 (69.8%). Respondents in Helmand (87.7%), Parwan (87.5%), Uruzgan (86.4%), and Kabul (85.4%) are the most likely to say corruption is a major problem in their daily life, and respondents in Panjshir (25.6%), Nimroz, (39.1%), Paktika (53.4%), and Balkh (55.7%) are the least likely.

## PERCEPTION OF CORRUPTION AS A PROBLEM IN DAILY LIFE



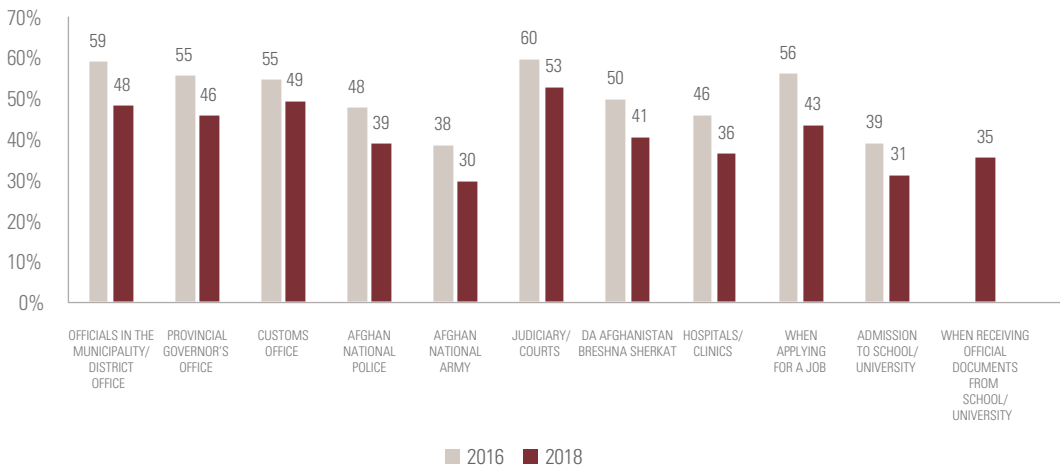
**FIG. 5.5: Q-38.** Please tell me whether you think corruption is a major problem, a minor problem, or no problem at all in the following areas. (a) In your daily life. (b) In Afghanistan as a whole. (Percent who say “major problem” and “minor problem.”)

The *Survey* asks respondents how frequently they experience corruption in their interactions with authorities and institutions, and while a record proportion of respondents this year say corruption is a major problem in their daily lives, reports of corruption in specific institutions other than the Customs Office have also fallen, with many more respondents saying they encounter corruption “in no case” (figure 5.6).

Afghans were more likely in 2018 (11.5%) than in 2016 (8.5%) to answer “in all cases” when asked how often they experience corruption at the Customs Office, yet more respondents also say they encounter corruption at the Customs Office “in no case” in 2018 (48.3%) than in 2016 (43.2%). Respondents are most likely to say they encounter corruption “in no case” in interactions with the Afghan National Army (68.1%), admission to school/university (67.5%), and when receiving documents from a school/university (63.2%). In addition to the Customs Office, they are least likely to report corruption “in no case” in interactions with the judiciary/courts (45.0%) and officials in the municipality/district office (50.6%).

Reported encounters with corruption do not vary by reported educational attainment or by gender or age, but urban respondents report encountering corruption “in no case” more often than rural respondents in interactions with all institutions.

## EXPERIENCES WITH CORRUPTION, BY INSTITUTION



**FIG. 5.6: Q-37.** Next I am going to list several different organizations or situations where people have said they experienced corruption in the past. Thinking back to your interactions in the past 12 months, please tell me how often you had to give money or a gift or perform a favor for these organizations or in these situations. Was it in all cases, in most cases, in some cases, or in no case? If you had no contact with the organization, please tell me so. (Percent who say “in all cases,” “in most cases,” or “in some cases.”)

## 5.4 JUSTICE AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION

### KEY QUESTIONS

**Q-29.** How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the available dispute-resolution services in your area? Are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?

**Q-30.** In the past two years, have you had a dispute or a formal case that you couldn't settle with the other party and had to go to the state court, huquq department, or village/neighborhood-based shura/jirga to resolve it, or not?

**Q-31.** (Ask if answer to Q-30 is yes.) What kind of a case or dispute was it? (Single response. If more than one case or dispute, ask for the most recent one.)

**Q-32.** (Ask if answer to Q-30 is yes.) Were you fully satisfied, somewhat satisfied, or not satisfied with the outcome of the proceedings?

**Q-33.** (Ask if answer to Q-30 is yes.) Where have you taken this case or dispute? (Allow more than one response.)

- Q-34. (Ask if answer to Q-33 is “huquq department”) Now let’s turn to the local huquq department. Tell me, do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements about the huquq department? (a) Local huquqs are fair and trusted. (b) Local huquqs follow the local norms and values of our people. (c) Local huquqs are effective at delivering justice. (d) Local huquqs resolve cases quickly and efficiently.
- Q-35. (Ask if answer to Q-33 is “state courts.”) Tell me, do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements about state courts? (a) State courts are fair and trusted. (b) State courts follow the local norms and values of our people. (c) State courts are effective at delivering justice. (d) State courts resolve cases quickly and efficiently. (e) State courts treat men and women equally.
- Q-36. (Ask if answer to Q-33 is “shura/jirga.”) Now let’s turn to village/neighborhood-based shuras/jirgas. Tell me, do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements about village/neighborhood-based shuras/jirgas? (a) Local shuras/jirgas are fair and trusted. (b) Local shuras/jirgas follow the local norms and values of our people. (c) Local shuras/jirgas are effective at delivering justice. (d) Local shuras/jirgas resolve cases quickly and efficiently. (e) There should be local women’s shuras/jirgas.

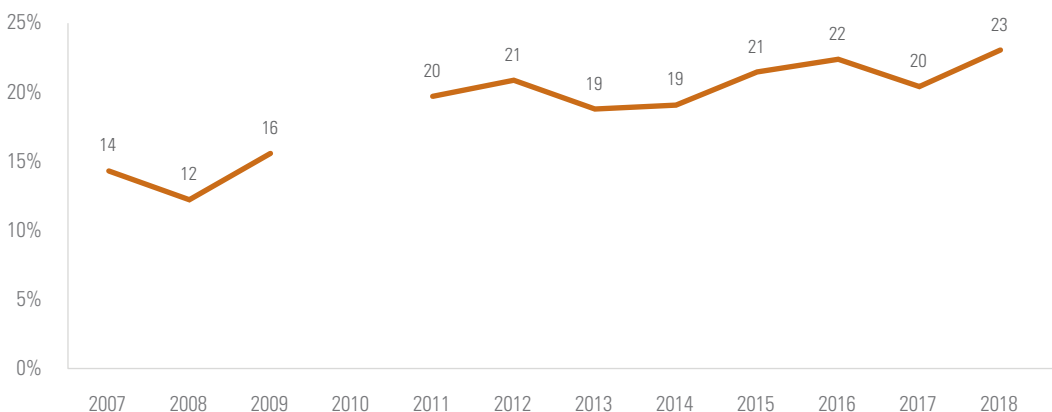
Dispute resolution and judicial proceedings are a challenge in Afghanistan, where a constitution and legal code exist but informal justice mechanisms are predominant. The formal judicial system is known for its corruption, high cost, and lengthy process, whereas informal justice mechanisms are expeditious and often less expensive, so many Afghans choose to use these informal systems. This is not always a matter of choice, however: many women are forced to use these informal systems when they try to report violent crimes to formal authorities, which too often leaves perpetrators unpunished and women still in danger (see chapter 8, *Women in Society*, for a full analysis).

When asked if they are satisfied with the available dispute-resolution services in their area, most Afghans in 2018 say they are “very satisfied” (15.8%) or “somewhat satisfied” (50.8%), similarly to last year. The greatest variation in satisfaction is from region to region. Respondents in Central/Hazarajat are the most likely to report being “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” (83.1%), followed by the East (73.3%), North East (71.5%), North West (69.9%), West (65.0%), and South East (61.1%). Those in Central/Kabul are the least likely, at 60.9%.

The *Survey* asks respondents if they have applied to the state court, *huquq* (rights) department, or a local shura/jirga in the last two years to settle a dispute or a formal case. After a slight decline in 2017, to 20.4%, the proportion of respondents answering yes in 2018 has risen to 23.1% (figure 5.7). The sharpest variation in the use of these institutions is between rural respondents (26.2%) and urban

respondents (13.5%). It also varies by ethnicity, with Pashtuns (29.2%) far more likely to have used one of these dispute-resolution mechanisms than Uzbeks (20.8%), Tajiks (18.9%), or Hazaras (16.3%).

### USE OF STATE COURT, HUQUQ, OR SHURA/JIRGA TO RESOLVE A DISPUTE



**FIG. 5.7: Q-30.** *In the past two years, have you had a dispute or a formal case that you couldn't settle with the other party and had to go to the state court, huquq department, or village/neighborhood-based shura/jirga to resolve it, or not? (Percent who say yes.) Note: Gap represents year(s) the question was not asked.*

Among respondents who have used a dispute-resolution service, 45.4% report using a shura/jirga, up from 43.2% in 2017; 41.9% report using a state court; and 27.0% report using the huquq department. As in previous years, more rural respondents (47.6%) than urban respondents (32.5%) report using shuras/jirgas. These are most likely to be used by respondents in the provinces of Wardak (76.9%), Nuristan (76.5%), Jawzjan (69.7%), and Paktia (62.9%), and least likely to be used by respondents in Paktika (16.7%), Kapisa (21.7%), Bamyān (26.4%), and Ghor (26.9%). When those who sought dispute resolution are asked if they are satisfied with the outcome, 23.1% say they are “fully satisfied,” up from 20.2% last year, and 47.3% say they are somewhat satisfied, similar to last year (47.6%).

The *Survey* also asks Afghans for their opinion of the institutions they use for dispute resolution. As in previous years, Afghans who used local shuras/jirgas for dispute resolution are significantly more likely to say that the institution is fair and trusted (81.4%), follows the norms of the people (74.2%), is effective at delivering justice (71.2%), and resolves cases quickly and efficiently (66.2%) than users of the huquq department or the state court (figure 5.8).

Of those who used the state courts, 54.9% say they treat men and women equally, up from 51.5%, and women are more likely to “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” (59.8%) than men (50.5%). Users of shuras/jirgas are slightly less likely this year (64.2%) than last year (66.0%) to say that there should be local women’s shuras, though women (69.2%) still agree more often than men (59.4%).

## OPINIONS ABOUT DISPUTE RESOLUTION INSTITUTIONS

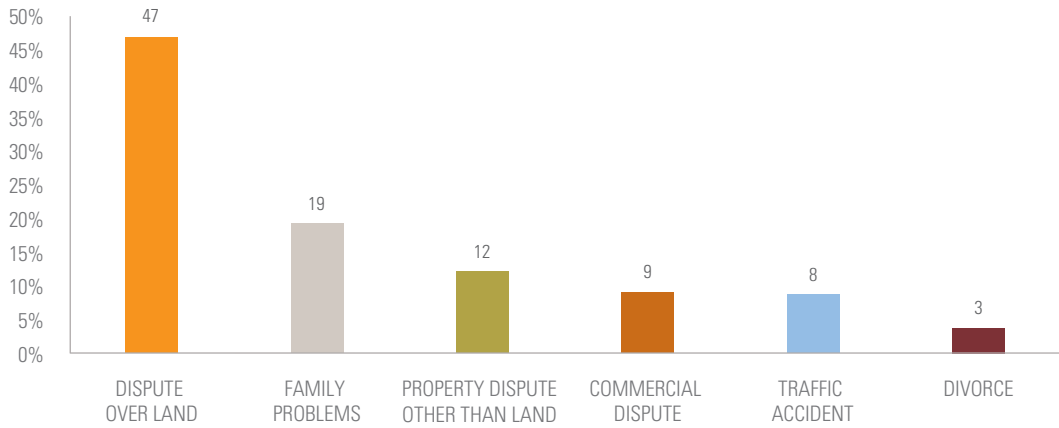
	HUQUQ DEPARTMENT	STATE COURT	LOCAL SHURA/JIRGA
	%	%	%
FAIR AND TRUSTED	75	65	81
FOLLOWS NORMS OF THE PEOPLE	66	59	74
EFFECTIVE AT DELIVERING JUSTICE	65	57	71
RESOLVES CASES QUICKLY AND EFFICIENTLY	59	45	66

**FIG. 5.8: Q-30 to Q-36.** *And now let’s turn to the [institution]. Tell me, do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements about [institution]? (a) It is fair and trusted. (b) It follows the norms and values of our people. (c) It is effective at delivering justice. (d) It resolves cases quickly and efficiently. (Percent who “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” about the institution they used.)*

The disputes most commonly taken to dispute resolution were land disputes (46.7%), family problems (19.0%), property disputes other than land (11.9%), commercial disputes (8.9%), traffic accidents (8.5%), and divorce (3.5%). Of respondents who report bringing disputes for resolution, women report bringing more disputes involving family problems (21.8%) and divorce (5.2%) than men (16.4% and 1.8%, respectively).



## TYPES OF CASES TAKEN TO DISPUTE RESOLUTION



**FIG. 5.9: Q-31.** (If answer to Q-30 is yes) What kind of a case or dispute was it? (Single response. If more than one case or dispute, ask for the most recent one.)

## ENDNOTES

- 1 Antonio Giustozzi and Ali Mohammad Ali, “The National Unity Government and the Re-Shaping of Political Coalitions in Afghanistan,” *Center for Research and Policy Analysis*, January 10, 2018, <https://www.crpaweb.org/single-post/2018/01/10/The-National-Unity-Government-and-the-Re-Shaping-of-Political-Coalitions-in-Afghanistan-Antonio-Giustozzi-Ali-Mohammad-Ali>.
- 2 Frud Bezhan, “Leaked Memo Fuels New Allegations Of Ethnic Bias In Afghan Government,” *Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty*, November 20, 2017, <https://www.rferl.org/a/afghanistan-ethnic-tensions-ghani-government-abdullah/28865180.html>.
- 3 GlobalSecurity.org website, “October 2018 – Parliamentary Election,” accessed October 12, 2018, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/afghanistan/politics-2018.htm>.
- 4 Special Investigator General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), Afghanistan’s Anti-Corruption Efforts: The Afghan Government Has Begun to Implement an Anti-Corruption Strategy, but Significant Problems Must Be Addressed, *SIGAR 18-51 Audit Report* (Kabul: SIGAR, May 2018), <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/audits/SIGAR-18-51-AR.pdf>.
- 5 United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA), Afghanistan’s Fight Against Corruption: From Strategies to Implementation (Kabul: UNAMA, May 2018), [https://unama.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/afghanistans\\_fight\\_against\\_corruption\\_from\\_strategies\\_to\\_implementation-14\\_may\\_2018.pdf](https://unama.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/afghanistans_fight_against_corruption_from_strategies_to_implementation-14_may_2018.pdf).





## 6 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

After a three-year delay, parliamentary elections were held in October 2018 across most of the country. As with previous elections, security was a main concern for Afghans, particularly given the deadly attacks on voter-registration centers across the country.<sup>1</sup> And, for the first time in Afghanistan's history, elections were put on hold indefinitely in an entire province, Ghazni, because voter registration had not occurred.

Likewise, in early August 2018, the Independent Election Commission (IEC), declared April 20, 2019 as the date of Afghanistan's fourth presidential election since the ousting of the Taliban in 2001.<sup>2</sup> According to the IEC however, several issues still need to be addressed before the vote can take place, including funding and security for the elections and the willingness of most stakeholders to accept the election results. The World Bank has warned that anticipated electoral violence could potentially compromise economic growth.<sup>3</sup>

---

For the first time in the 17-year war in Afghanistan, the government and the Taliban observed a three-day truce.

---

The year 2018 was marked by progress in peace talks between the government and opposition groups. During the second Kabul Process Conference in early 2018 the Afghan government offered a generous peace package to the Taliban. The package proposed by President Ashraf Ghani included release of Taliban prisoners with no preconditions and the opening of a political office for the Taliban in Kabul, provided that the Taliban recognize government legitimacy.<sup>4</sup> For the first time in the 17-year war in Afghanistan, the government and the Taliban observed a three-day truce, from June 15 to 18, during the Muslim celebration of Eid-ul-Fitr.<sup>5</sup> After the ceasefire, the Taliban renewed attacks. But President Ashraf Ghani said the door to negotiations will remain open.

Since its establishment, the National Unity Government (NUG) has experienced persistent political unrest, including disagreements over the appointment and dismissal of ministers,<sup>6</sup> election-related issues, electronic identity cards, and the crackdown on warlords. The political situation remains unstable: this year a provincial governor refused a presidential order to resign for several months until his demands were met.<sup>7</sup> Several new political coalitions began criticizing the government's inability to improve governance, create jobs, ensure transparent elections, and maintain security across the country.<sup>8</sup> In late July, supporters of General Rashid Dostum, the exiled first vice president, took to the streets in the Northern provinces to demand his return. These protests concluded with the return of General Dostum from a yearlong exile in Turkey.<sup>9</sup>

According to a Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction report, 56% of the country is under government control, 30% is contested, and 14% is under insurgent control.<sup>10</sup> The United Nations reports that 1,692 civilians were killed in the first half of 2018 and another 3,430 wounded, a record high since casualty tracking began, in 2009.

This year's fieldwork for the *Survey* was conducted in July 2018, prior to the parliamentary elections and just after deadly attacks on voter-registration centers. Indeed, 62.4% of respondents reported fear while voting, a significant increase since 2013 (57.2%), just before the 2014 presidential election.

Insecurity is cited among the top reasons for not voting in the parliamentary election. This fear is understandable, given the recent attacks on 2018 parliamentary candidates across the country.<sup>11</sup> Among victims of these attacks was the sole candidate from the minority Sikh community, killed in a suicide blast in Nangarhar,<sup>12</sup> and another, a former army general, murdered at his residence in Kabul.<sup>13</sup>

Security is not the only challenge for Afghanistan's election planners; they must also win the public's confidence and establish a genuinely transparent electoral process. Election watchdogs and observers have expressed concern over security threats and electoral fraud.<sup>14</sup> In the 2018 parliamentary elections, the Independent Electoral Complaints Commission (IECC) has disqualified 35 parliamentary candidates who were found to have direct links with illegal armed groups.<sup>15</sup> The *Survey* shows that 20.5% of respondents consider fraud one of the main reasons for their reluctance to vote in the upcoming elections.

Turning to women's access to political rights: Afghanistan's new constitution granted women the right to vote and to run for political office. Women now occupy 68 of the 249 seats in parliament. Despite challenges such as insecurity, the inaccessibility of rural polling stations, and cultural taboos, the female turnout in the 2014 presidential election was significant (38%).<sup>16</sup>

This chapter explores Afghans' feelings about participating in the political process through voting, running, or criticizing their government, level of satisfaction with democracy, their attitudes towards women's political participation, their awareness of the upcoming elections, and factors associated with their decision to vote.

## 6.1 EXERCISING BASIC POLITICAL FREEDOMS

### KEY QUESTIONS

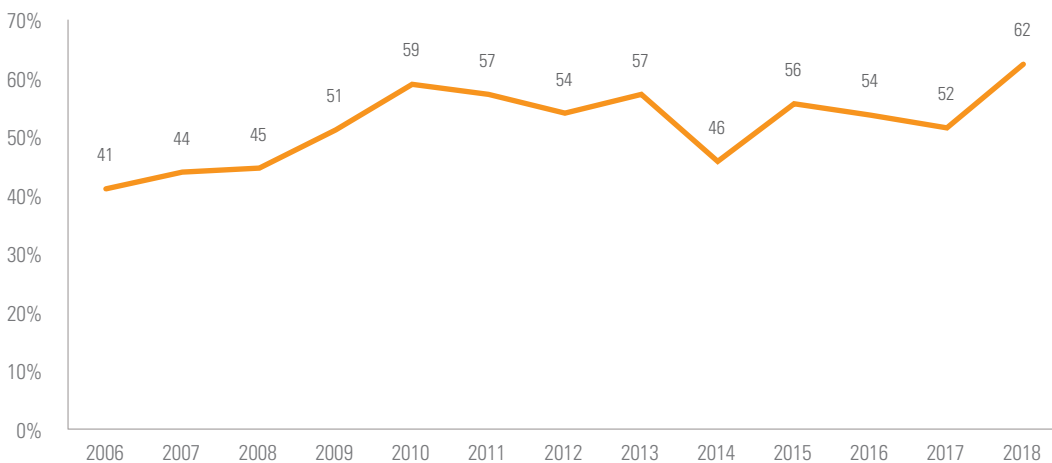
- Q-41.** *Please tell me how you would respond to the following activities or groups. Would you respond with no fear, some fear, or a lot of fear? (a) Voting in a national/provincial election. (b) Participating in a peaceful demonstration. (c) Running for public office.*
- Q-42.** *In some countries, people do not feel able to publicly criticize their government, while in other countries they feel quite free to do so. Thinking back to a year ago, how safe did you feel expressing your opinions about the government in public?*

The *Survey* findings show that fear while voting has increased significantly, from 51.5% last year to 62.4% in 2018, the highest level of fear yet recorded. This significant rise in fear while voting is associated with the deteriorating security situation in the country, and in particular the attacks on voter-registration centers just before the *Survey* fieldwork was conducted.<sup>17</sup>

Female respondents are significantly more likely to report fear while voting (67.1%) than male respondents (57.7%), which may be one of the reasons fewer women, roughly 3 million out of 8 million, have registered to vote in the upcoming elections.<sup>18</sup> Urban respondents are more likely to report fear while voting than rural respondents (67.0% vs. 60.9%, respectively).

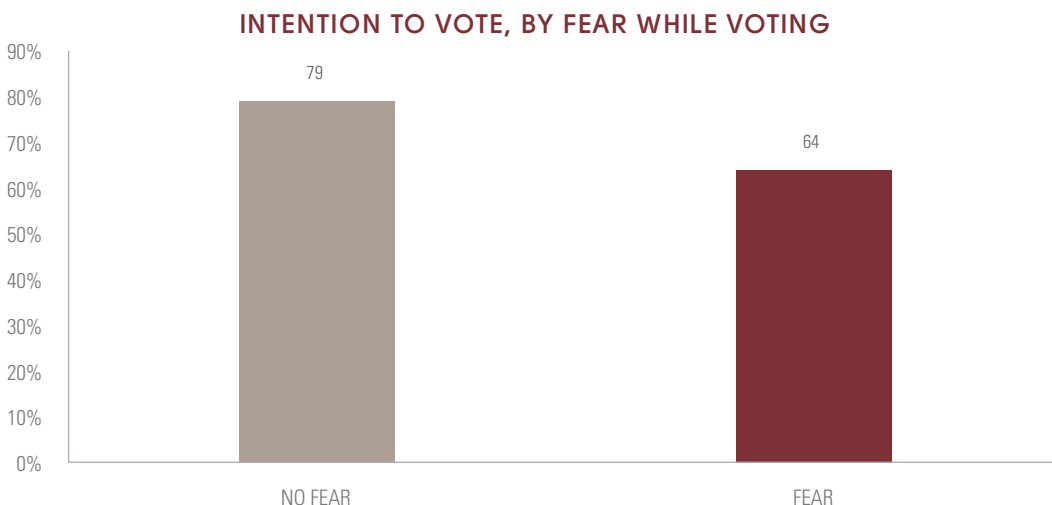
Variations can be seen at the provincial level. Fear while voting is least common in Panjshir (1.5%), Daikundi (11.9%), and Bamyan (20.4%) Coincidentally, these are provinces where respondents also report very low fear for personal safety. The greatest fear was reported in Nuristan (89.3%), Wardak (86.2%), and Farah (83.1%). There is significant variation in responses to this question along ethnic lines: Pashtuns (67.5%) are significantly more likely to report fear while voting than Tajiks (59.3%), Uzbeks (61.5%), or Hazaras (55.4%).

### FEAR WHILE VOTING



**FIG. 6.1: Q-41.** Please tell me how you would respond to the following activities or groups. Would you respond with no fear, some fear, or a lot of fear? (a) Voting in a national/provincial election. (Percent who say “some fear” or “a lot of fear.”)

Fear while voting is negatively correlated with Afghans' decision to vote. Respondents who report fear while voting are less likely to say they will vote in the upcoming elections (63.9%) than respondents who report no fear (79.3%) (figure 6.2). Fear while voting is also negatively correlated with support for women's right to vote. Respondents who report fear while voting are slightly less likely to say women should be allowed to vote (85.8%) than those who report no fear (90.9%).



**FIG. 6.2: Q-48a.** (Ask if answer to Q-44a is yes.) Do you plan to vote in this election? (Percent who say yes, they will vote.) **Q-41.** Please tell me how you would respond to the following activities or groups. Would you respond with no fear, some fear, or a lot of fear? (a) Voting in a national/provincial election. (Percent who say “no fear” and “some fear” or “a lot of fear.”)

An overwhelming majority of Afghans (73.1%) report fear while participating in a peaceful demonstration. This fear has increased significantly, by 12.6 percentage points, since 2006, when the question was first asked. This rise in fear may be due to the rising number of recent attacks on political gatherings. For example, in September 2018, 68 demonstrators were killed and 168 wounded during a political gathering in Nangarhar, where residents were demanding the removal of a local police commander.<sup>19</sup> In addition to growing attacks on peaceful demonstrations, the number of journalists killed has increased sharply since 2014, rendering Afghanistan one of the world's deadliest countries for journalists.<sup>20</sup>

Fear while participating in a peaceful demonstration varies by region. Respondents in insecure regions like the South East and the South West report the highest level of fear (79.6% and 79.4%, respectively), while respondents in secure regions like Central/Hazarajat report the lowest (40.9%).

Respondents in urban locations (79.2%) are more likely than rural respondents (71.1%) to say they fear participating in a peaceful demonstration. Women (77.9%) are more likely to report fear than men



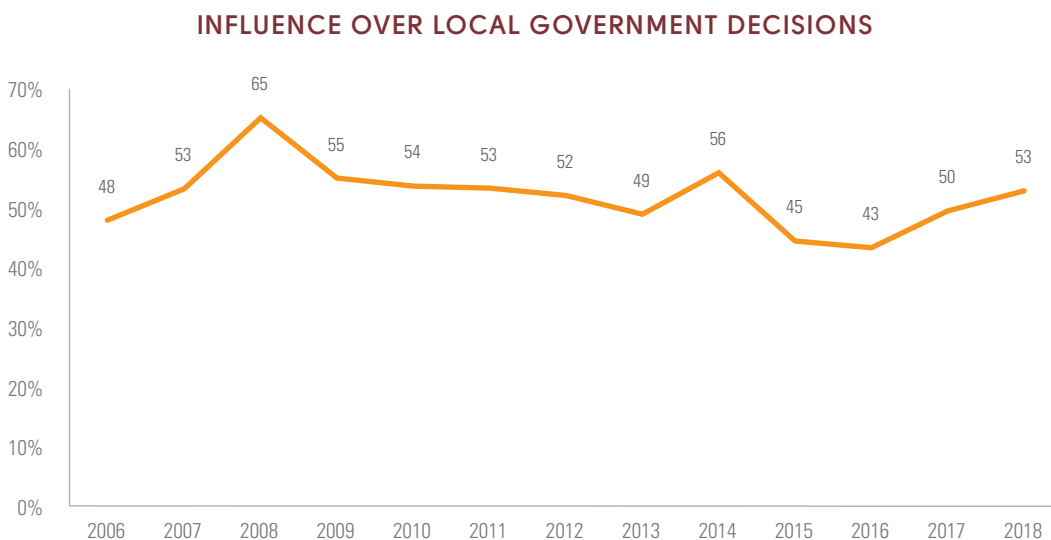
(68.3%). This year, over two-thirds of respondents (73.8%) report fear while running for political office, a slight increase from 72.7% in 2017.

## 6.2 ABILITY TO INFLUENCE LOCAL GOVERNMENT DECISIONS

### KEY QUESTION

**Q-43.** *How much influence do you think someone like you can have over local (district/provincial) government decisions—a lot, some, very little, or none at all?*

This year, over half of respondents (52.9%) say that they have some or a lot of influence over local government decisions. This has risen slightly since last year, but it is still lower than the record high in 2008, when 65.1% of respondents believed they had some or a lot of influence (figure 6.3). The longitudinal *Survey* data shows that belief in the ability to influence government decisions often shifts upward significantly near election time, likely due to the campaigns in advance of the elections.



**FIG. 6.3: Q-43.** *How much influence do you think someone like you can have over local (district/provincial) government decisions—a lot, some, very little, or none at all? (Percent who respond “a lot” or “some.”) Note: Trend line uses X-30 in the merged variable list 2006-2012, for comparison with Q-43.*

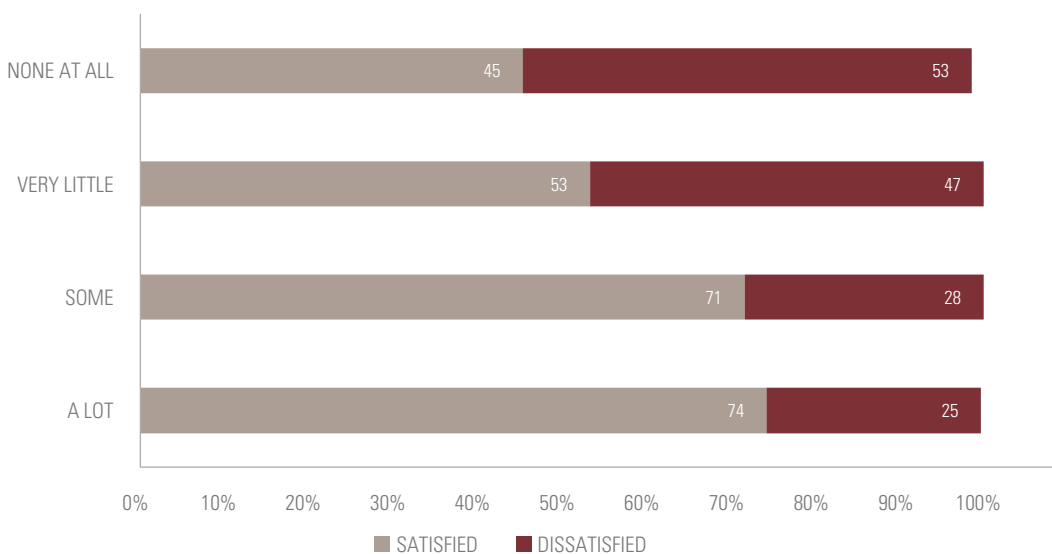
The perceived ability to influence government decisions is similar among men (52.7%) and women (53.2%). Rural respondents (54.7%) are more likely to say they have influence over local government

decisions than urban respondents (47.7%). Across the regions, respondents in the East (65.3%) and the West (60.1%) are the most likely to believe in their influence over government, while respondents in the South East and Central/Kabul are the least likely (45.0% and 46.8%, respectively).

The perceived influence varies by province. Paktika, Samangan, and Badghis report the highest perceived influence (80.3%, 77.7%, and 77.2%, respectively) while Zabul, Khost, and Panjshir report the lowest (29.6%, 34.3, and 36.0%, respectively).

Interestingly, the *Survey* data shows a significant positive association between perceived influence over local government decisions and satisfaction with democracy. The respondents who believe they have a lot of ability to influence local government decisions are more satisfied with democracy than those who believe they have no influence at all (figure 6.4).

### SATISFACTION WITH DEMOCRACY, BY PERCEIVED INFLUENCE OVER LOCAL GOVERNMENT DECISIONS



**FIG. 6.4: Q-40.** On the whole, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way democracy works in Afghanistan? By democracy, we mean choosing the president and parliament by voting rather than appointment or selection by some leaders. Are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied? (Responses for “satisfied” and “somewhat satisfied” are combined; similarly, “somewhat dissatisfied” and “very dissatisfied” are combined) **Q-43.** How much influence do you think someone like you can have over local (district/provincial) government decisions—a lot, some, very little, or none at all?

## 6.3 ELECTIONS

### AWARENESS OF ELECTIONS

#### KEY QUESTIONS

**Q-44a.** *Are you aware of the elections in Afghanistan upcoming in the next few months?*

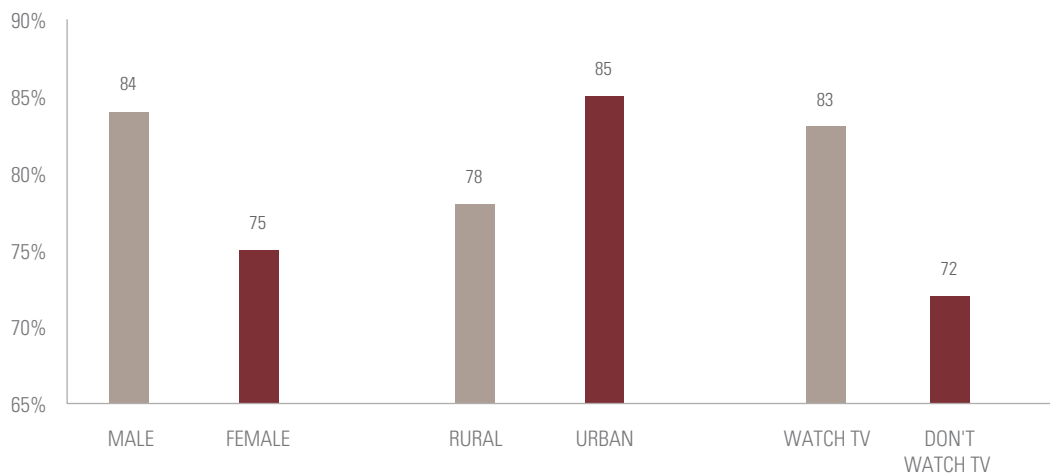
**Q-44b.** *(Ask if answer to Q-44a is yes.) What type of election is the upcoming election? Is it a presidential election, a parliamentary election, a provincial council election, or something else?*

**Q-45.** *(Ask if answer to Q-44a is yes.) What was your main source of information about the elections?*

In 2018, when respondents were asked whether they were aware of the upcoming election, a majority (79.7%) said yes. This is consistent with 2009 (81.9%), when the same question was asked regarding the presidential election.

Men are significantly more likely to say they are aware of the upcoming elections. Respondents who watch television are more likely to be aware than those who don't watch television. Urban respondents are more likely than rural to say they are aware of the upcoming elections (figure 6.5).

#### ELECTION AWARENESS, BY GENDER, LOCATION, AND EXPOSURE TO TELEVISION

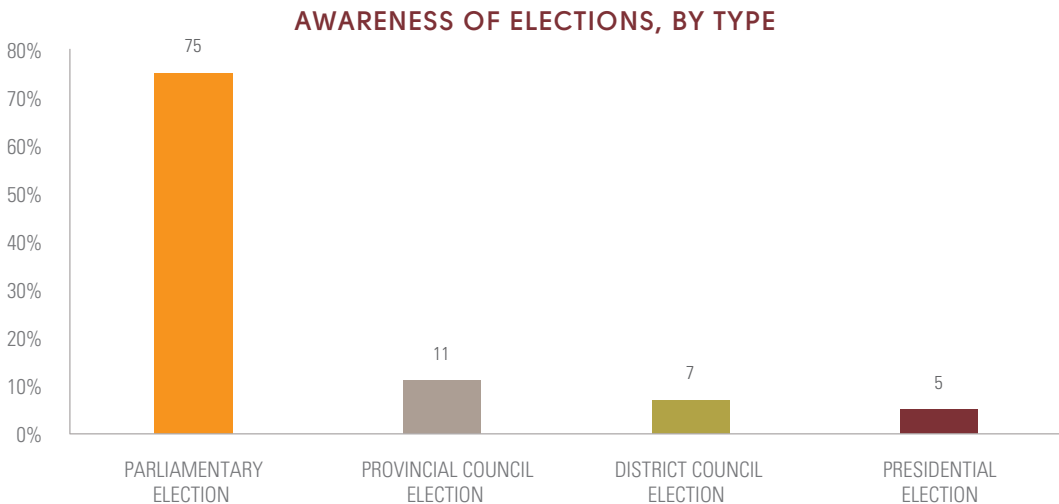


**FIG. 6.5: Q-44a.** *Are you aware of the elections in Afghanistan upcoming in the next few months? (Percent who say yes.) Q-61.* *Do you watch television programs?*

At the national level, 79.7% of respondents report awareness of the upcoming elections, although smaller proportions are found in Logar (56.3%), Kandahar (61.2%), and Daikundi (62.8%). Regionally, respondents in the South East and Central/Kabul show the highest level of awareness (88.8% and 85.6%, respectively) while residents of Central/Hazarajat and the West have the lowest (72.6% and 73.0%, respectively).

Likewise, education appears to affect awareness of elections. Respondents with more education are more likely to report awareness than respondents with less education. For instance, 90.2% of those with a university education report awareness of the elections, compared to 81.2% of those with only a primary education.

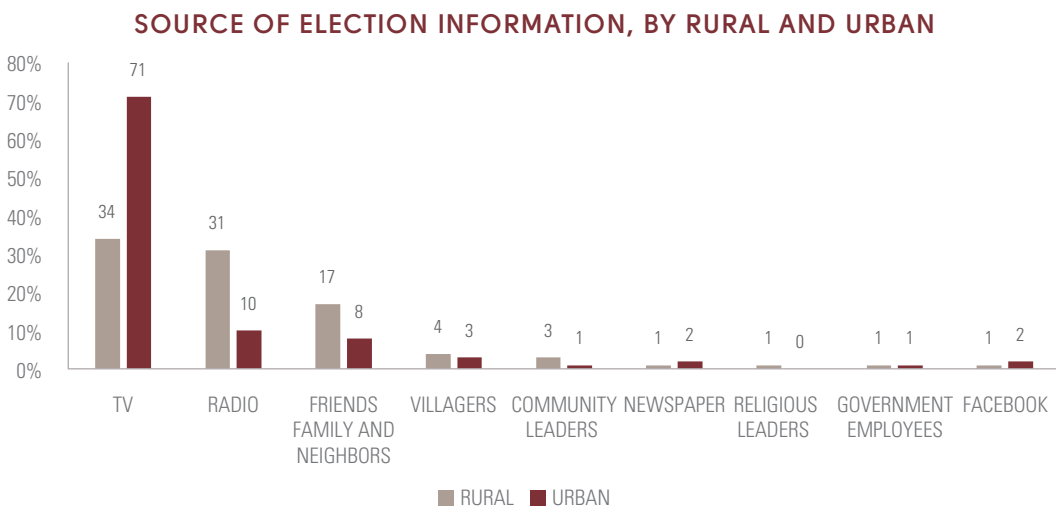
In a follow-up question, respondents who are aware of the upcoming election are asked what type of election it is. Over two-thirds (74.8%) accurately say a parliamentary election, followed by 10.7% who say a provincial council election, 7.0% who say a district council election, and 4.9% who say a presidential election (figure 6.6)<sup>21</sup>.



**FIG. 6.6: Q-44b.** (Ask if answer to Q-44a is yes.) What type of election is the upcoming election? Is it a presidential election, a parliamentary election, a provincial council election, or something else?

This year the *Survey* also asks where respondents get their information about elections. Television (43.9%); radio (25.1%); and friends, family, and neighbors (14.7%) are the main sources of information about the elections. The *Survey* found that urbanites (70.7%) are more likely to use television than rural

respondents (34.2%), while rural respondents are more likely use radio (30.6% rural vs. 9.8% urban), friends, family and neighbors (17.2% rural vs. 7.8% urban), and fellow villagers (3.8% rural vs. 2.9% urban) (figure 6.7).



**FIG. 6.7: Q-45.** (Ask if answer to Q-44a is, yes.) What was your main source of information about the elections?

## FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS

### KEY QUESTIONS

**Q-46a.** (Ask if answer to Q-44a is yes.) When people talk about elections, they often use the term “free and fair.” By “free,” they generally mean that all people have the chance to vote as they wish. By “fair,” they generally mean that all candidates/parties follow the rules and are given equal access to the public, and votes were counted correctly and not manipulated. Thinking about what is meant by “free” and “fair,” do you think that in general the next election in Afghanistan will be free and fair, or not?

**Q-46b.** (Ask if answer to Q-46a is no.) What makes you think this election will not be free and fair?

Free and fair elections play an important role in post-conflict countries, as they are critical to the peaceful transfer of political power. Importantly, economists argue that free and fair elections in developing countries like Afghanistan can enhance economic development by making governments accountable,

while elections perceived as unfair can make things worse.<sup>22</sup> The *Survey* gauged the perceptions of Afghans on the freedom and fairness of the upcoming elections. In 2018, over half of respondents (52.4%) believe that the next election will be free and fair, which is similar to in 2006 (54.3%),<sup>23</sup> when the question was asked for the first time.

There is insignificant variation by gender, and almost the same proportion of male respondents (52.0%) and female respondents (52.8%) believe that the upcoming elections will be free and fair. The variation between rural and urban respondents, however, is significant, with rural respondents far more likely to say that the next elections will be free and fair (57.0%) than urban respondents (39.5%).

Regionally, respondents in the East and Central/Hazarajat report the greatest optimism that elections will be free and fair (69.4% and 63.5%, respectively). Respondents in Central/Kabul and the South East are more skeptical (36.3% and 53.5%, respectively).

Provincially, respondents in Panjshir, Kabul, and Kapisa (24.5%, 30.6%, and 33.0%) are substantially less likely to believe that the next elections will be free and fair than respondents in Paktika, Daikundi, and Ghor (84.9%, 78.8%, and 77.5%).

The *Survey* also reveals some differences along ethnic lines. Uzbeks (57.0%) are the ethnic group most likely to believe that the next elections will be free and fair, followed by Pashtuns (56.8%), Hazaras (49.7%), and Tajiks (48.0%).

It appears that thinking the next elections will be free and fair is positively correlated with national optimism. Respondents who believe that the next elections will be free and fair are significantly more likely to think the country is moving in the right direction than those who believe the opposite (42.2% vs. 24.2%).

Insecurity has also been a key problem in every election since 2001. This year's election is no exception, as violence has been a constant presence during the run-up. In early August 2018, the Taliban launched a deadly attack on strategic Ghazni Province, a key link between the capital, Kabul, and Kandahar in the south. The Taliban set government offices and supermarkets on fire, and according to United Nations sources, 400 civilians were killed as a result of the violence.<sup>24</sup> The following month, the IECC body announced they would suspend the parliamentary election in Ghazni for reasons including insecurity.<sup>25</sup>

Interestingly, the *Survey* suggests that Afghans who do not fear for their family's safety are more likely to say that the next elections will be free and fair. For example, 55.9% of Afghans who never fear for their personal safety believe that the upcoming elections will be free and fair, compared to 41.8% of those who always fear for their personal safety. In a follow-up question, the *Survey* asks respondents *why* they think the upcoming elections will not be free and fair. Almost half (50.5%) of those who think elections will not be free and fair cite fraud as a reason. Corruption is the next-most common reason, cited by 14.7% of respondents. This is consistent with allegations of corruption related to the 2018 parliamentary elections. As a case in point, in August 2018 an individual was arrested after he

fraudulently introduced himself as a representative of the IEC in an attempt to extort money from a disqualified parliamentary candidate in exchange for returning his name to the final candidate list.<sup>26</sup> In another case, the IEC reported about 60 voter-registration books missing in six provinces.<sup>27</sup> Other reasons mentioned by respondents include insecurity (8.9%), interference of warlords (5.3%), and bad leadership (3.6%).

## DECISION TO VOTE

### KEY QUESTIONS

Q-47. (Ask if answer to Q-44a is *yes*.) Have you registered yourself for the elections?

Q-48a. (Ask if answer to Q-44a is *yes*.) Do you plan to vote in this election?

Q-48b. (Ask if answer to Q-48a is *no*.) Why don't you plan to vote in this election?

The *Survey* asked respondents whether they have registered for the elections. This year there is a significant drop in the proportion who say they have registered compared to the first time this question was asked, prior to the presidential election in 2009. At that time, 77.4% of respondents said they had registered, compared to 67.6% in 2018, a significant 9.8-percentage-point difference.

To gather more insight on Afghans' decision to vote, this year the *Survey* asks respondents about their plans to vote in the election. Findings indicate that over two-thirds of Afghans (69.7%) plan to vote. Among those who have registered to vote, men (76.2%) are significantly more likely to say they plan to vote than women (62.4%), and rural respondents (71.4%) are more likely to say they plan to vote than urban respondents (65.0%).

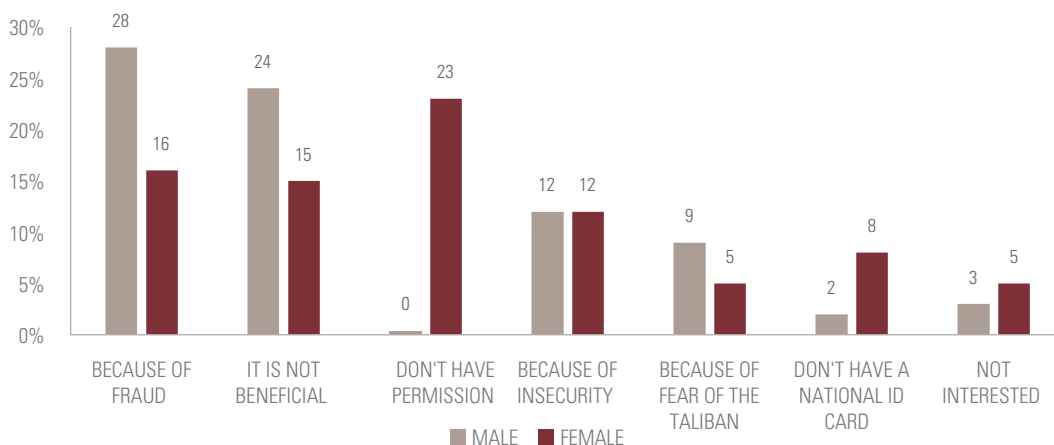
Among those who plan to vote, further differences appear at the regional level. Respondents in Central/Hazarajat express the most widespread intention to vote in the upcoming election (95.4%). On the other hand, in Central/Kabul, where an Islamic State suicide bomber killed 57 civilians during an attack on a voter registration center in April, and in the South West, respondents express the least intention to vote in the upcoming elections (63.4% and 63.9%, respectively).<sup>28</sup>

And, among those who have registered to vote, those who are more satisfied are significantly more likely to say they plan to vote in the upcoming elections than those who are dissatisfied (60.8%).

When respondents declared that they would not vote, the *Survey* asked them why. The most-common answers include fraud (20.5%), "it is not beneficial" (18.6%), not having "permission" (13.8%), insecurity (12.1%), fear of the Taliban (6.7%), and lack of a Tazkira, the national ID card (5.5%).

The reasoning is significantly different between genders: male respondents are more likely to cite fraud, and that voting is not beneficial, while females are more likely to say they lack permission or an ID card (figure 6.8).

## REASONS FOR NOT VOTING, BY GENDER



**FIG. 6.8: Q-48b.** (Ask if answer to Q-48a is no.) Why don't you plan to vote in this election?

Urban respondents are significantly more likely than rural respondents to say that it is not beneficial to vote (22.3% vs. 16.9%, respectively). Rural respondents are more likely to cite insecurity than urban respondents (14.2% vs. 7.8%, respectively). Rural respondents are also more likely to cite fear of the Taliban as a reason for not planning to vote (8.4% rural vs. 3.2% urban).<sup>29</sup>

## 6.4 ATTITUDES TOWARDS DEMOCRACY

### KEY QUESTIONS

**Q-40.** *On the whole, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way democracy works in Afghanistan? By democracy, we mean choosing the president and parliament by voting rather than appointment or selection by some leaders. Are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?*

**Q-49.** *In your opinion, what are your most important criteria for an ideal MP?*

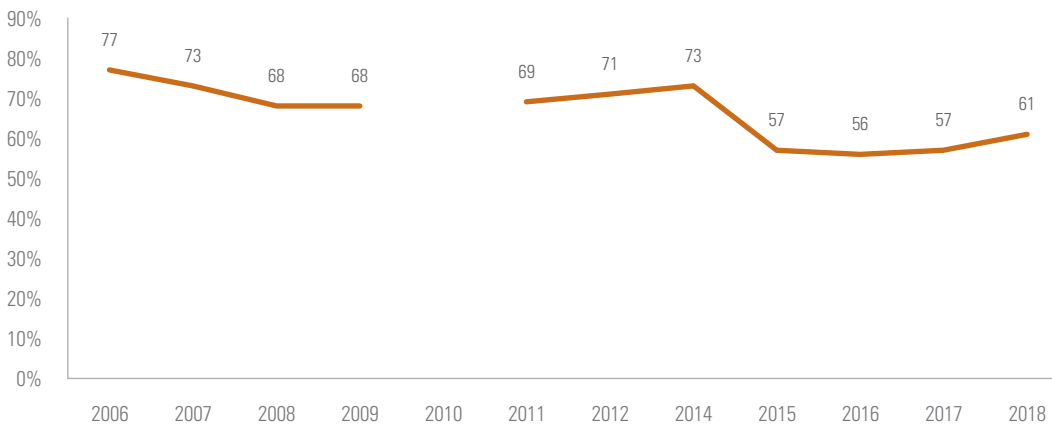
### SATISFACTION WITH DEMOCRACY

Afghans' satisfaction with democracy has increased from 57.0% in 2017 to 61.4% this year (figure 6.9). One cannot be entirely optimistic, however, for at least two reasons. First, this increase is very small compared to the high level of satisfaction with democracy recorded during the last election, in 2014



(73.1%). Afghans' satisfaction with democracy has declined significantly since then, perhaps due to the political stalemates and allegations of electoral fraud in the aftermath of the run-off election. Second, experts believe that the failure of the election body and the government to hold transparent elections may result in further political crisis, and this year's small increase in satisfaction with democracy may not be sustainable.<sup>30</sup>

### SATISFACTION WITH DEMOCRACY



**FIG. 6.9: Q-40.** *On the whole, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way democracy works in Afghanistan? By democracy, we mean choosing the president and parliament by voting rather than appointment or selection by some leaders. (Percent who respond “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied.”) Note: Gap represents year(s) the question was not asked.*

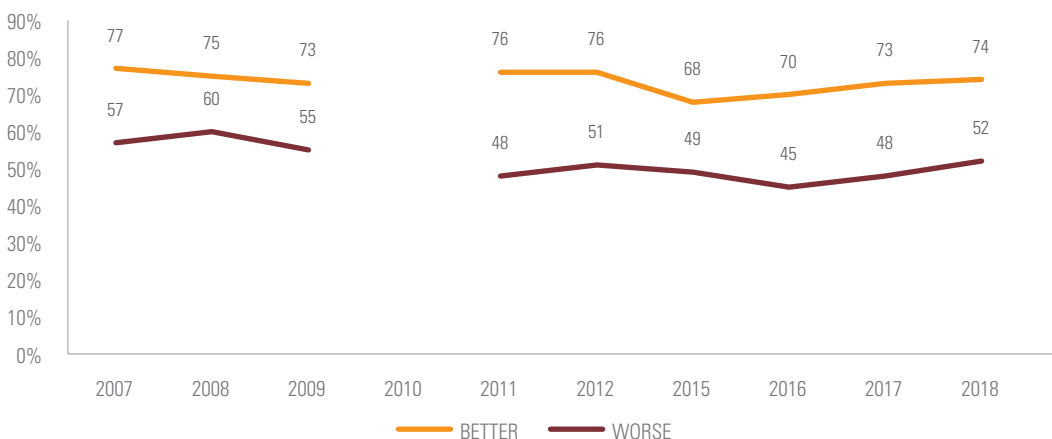
Women (66.2%) are significantly more likely to report satisfaction with democracy than men (56.6%). There is little difference between rural and urban respondents (62.3% and 58.9%, respectively); however, differences do emerge at the regional level. Respondents in Central/Hazarajat (75.8%) and the East (74.2%) report the highest levels of satisfaction, whereas respondents in Central/Kabul (54.9%) and the North West (58.4%) report the lowest.

Pashtuns (64.2%) more frequently express satisfaction with democracy than Tajiks (61.1%), Hazaras (59.2%), and Uzbeks (53.5%). Respondents in Paktika (85.8%), Kunar (83.7%), and Daikundi (81.4%) report the highest satisfaction, while those in Panjshir (26.0%), Zabul (33.0%), and Faryab (37.3%) report the lowest. Those who say that religion and politics should not mix are more likely to report satisfaction with democracy (65.0%) than those who say they should be mixed (59.8%).

## SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS AND SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRACY

There is evidence to suggest that socioeconomic status affects support for democracy.<sup>31</sup> The *Survey* shows a significant positive correlation between economic status and satisfaction with democracy. Respondents who say that their household financial situation has improved since a year ago are significantly more likely to express satisfaction with democracy than those who report a worsening situation. This relationship has been consistent over the years (figure 6.10).

### SATISFACTION WITH DEMOCRACY, BY HOUSEHOLD FINANCIAL SITUATION



**FIG. 6.10: Q-40.** *On the whole, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way democracy works in Afghanistan. By democracy, we mean choosing the president and parliament by voting rather than appointment or selection by some leaders. (Percent who say “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied”).* **Q-8.** *Compared to one year ago, would you say that the situation for your household has gotten better, remained the same, or gotten worse with respect to the following? (a) Financial situation of your household. Note: Gaps represent year(s) the question was not asked.*

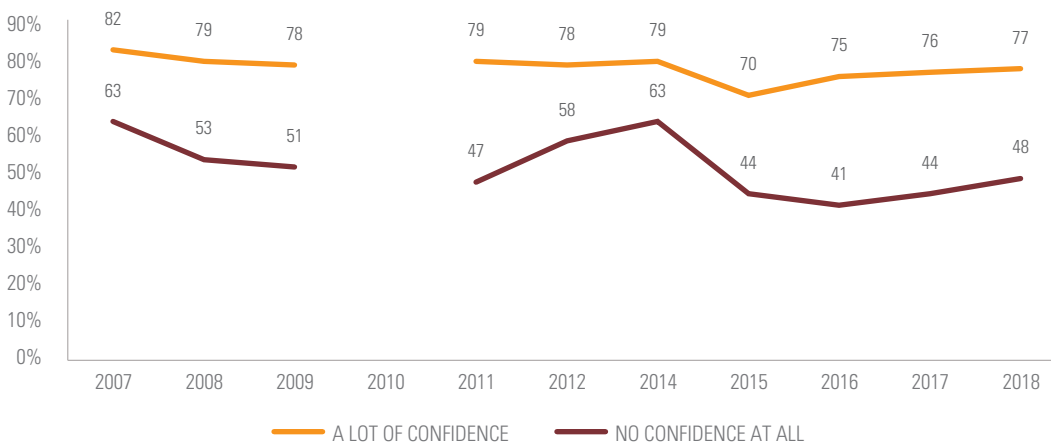
Employment status also appears to have a significant positive correlation with satisfaction with democracy. Respondents who say their employment opportunities have improved in the last 12 months are significantly more likely to say they are satisfied with democracy than those who say they have grown worse (75.7% vs. 56.3%), and they are also significantly more likely to say they will vote in the upcoming elections (81.9% vs. 65.7%). Tellingly, those who say their job opportunities have grown worse are more likely to say they don’t plan to vote because voting “isn’t beneficial” (18.8%) than those whose job opportunities have improved (14.1%).

## CONFIDENCE IN GOVERNMENT AND SATISFACTION WITH DEMOCRACY

It is commonly assumed that trust in government institutions and their performance is associated with satisfaction with democracy.<sup>32</sup> The *Survey* examines this relationship and reveals a significant correlation. Some 76.8% of respondents who believe that the NUG is doing a very good job are satisfied with the way democracy works in Afghanistan, while just 38.6% of those who say the NUG is doing a very bad job are satisfied with democracy. Likewise, respondents who say their provincial government is doing a very good job are significantly more likely to be satisfied with democracy than those who say it is doing a very bad job (76.1% vs. 34.5%).

Confidence in government ministers also appears to be associated with satisfaction with democracy. Respondents with a lot of confidence in government ministers are significantly more likely to be satisfied with democracy (76.8%) than those with no confidence at all (48.0%). Interestingly, this relationship has held true across the years (figure 6.11). Finally, respondents who have a lot of confidence in their members of parliament (MPs) are significantly more likely to be satisfied with democracy (74.2%) than those who have no confidence at all in their MPs (47.8%).

### SATISFACTION WITH DEMOCRACY, BY CONFIDENCE IN GOVERNMENT MINISTERS



**FIG. 6.11: Q-51.** *I would like to ask you about some officials, institutions, and organizations. As I read out each, please tell me how much confidence you have in them to do their jobs. Do you have a lot, some, not much, or no confidence at all? If you don't know, it's ok, just say you have no opinion. (f) Government ministers. (Percent who say "a lot of confidence" and "no confidence at all" in government ministers).* **Q-40.** *On the whole, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way democracy works in Afghanistan. By democracy, we mean choosing the president and*

parliament by voting rather than appointment or selection by some leaders. (Percent who say “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied.”) Note: Gap represents year(s) the question was not asked.

## PUBLIC SERVICES AND SATISFACTION WITH DEMOCRACY

In addition to trust in public institutions, satisfaction with the quality of public services is assumed to be correlated with citizens’ support for democracy. Unsurprisingly, then, respondents who say their household’s access to electricity has improved since last year are significantly more likely to say they are satisfied with democracy (65.7%) than those who say their access has worsened (59.2%).

Similarly, respondents who say the roads have improved since a year ago are significantly more likely to say they are satisfied with democracy (68.6%) than those who say the roads are worse (55.6%). Services provided by public hospitals have the same relationship to satisfaction with democracy. Some 71.1% of respondents who say they are very satisfied with public hospital services say they are satisfied with democracy, compared to just 46.0% of those who are very dissatisfied with hospital services.

## MOST IMPORTANT CRITERIA FOR AN IDEAL MP

Additionally, this year the *Survey* asked Afghans what are important criteria for an ideal member of parliament. Over half (53.9%) of the respondents indicated an ideal MP should possess honesty and fairness. Other participants suggested an ideal MP should be; “a good servant” (27.5%), “educated” (24.1%), “Muslim” (14.0%), “fulfill their promises” (7.3%), “patriotic” (6.4%), “intelligent (5.8%), and “shouldn’t be corrupt” (5.3%).

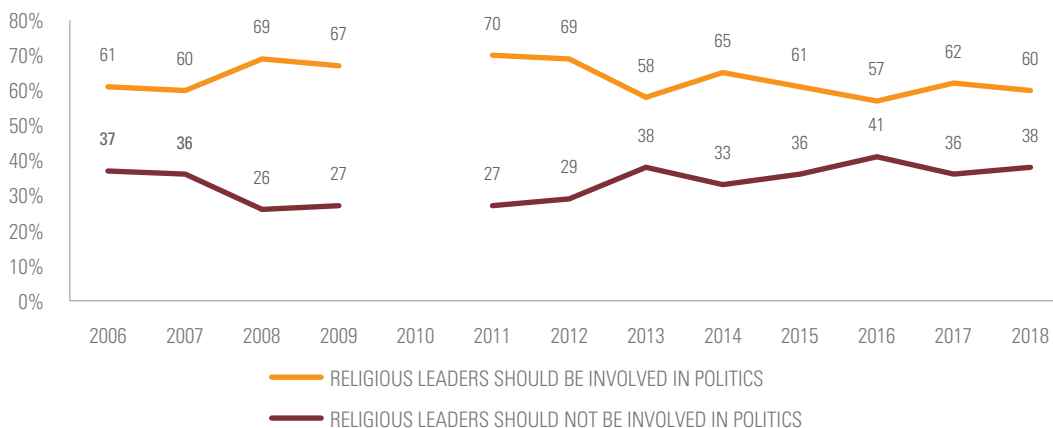
## 6.5 POLITICS AND RELIGION

### KEY QUESTION

*Q-39. Some people say that politics and religion should be mixed. Other people say politics and religion should not mix. For example, some say religious scholars should only manage religion and should not take part in politics. Which is closer to your view?*

Support for the involvement of religious leaders in politics is slightly lower this year (60.2%) than it was in 2017 (61.6%), but it is virtually the same as 2006 (60.6%), when the question was first asked.

## ATTITUDE TOWARDS RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN POLITICS



**FIG. 6.12: Q-43.** Some people say that politics and religion should be mixed. Other people say politics and religion should not mix. For example, some say religious scholars should only manage religion and should not take part in politics. Which is closer to your view? Note: Gaps represent year(s) the question was not asked.

As in previous years since 2006, male respondents (63.8%) are more likely to say that religious leaders should be involved in politics than female respondents (56.6%). Rural respondents (61.3%) are more likely than urban residents (56.6%) to support the idea. Regionally, respondents in the East (71.7%) express the highest support for mixing religion and politics, followed by the South West (68.8%), North East (68.5%), and South East (61.0%) regions. By ethnicity, Pashtuns are the most likely to support the idea (65.0%), followed by Uzbeks (64.3%), Tajiks (58.1%), and Hazaras (49.8%). No significant differences emerge across levels of education.

## 6.6 WOMEN IN POLITICS

### KEY QUESTIONS

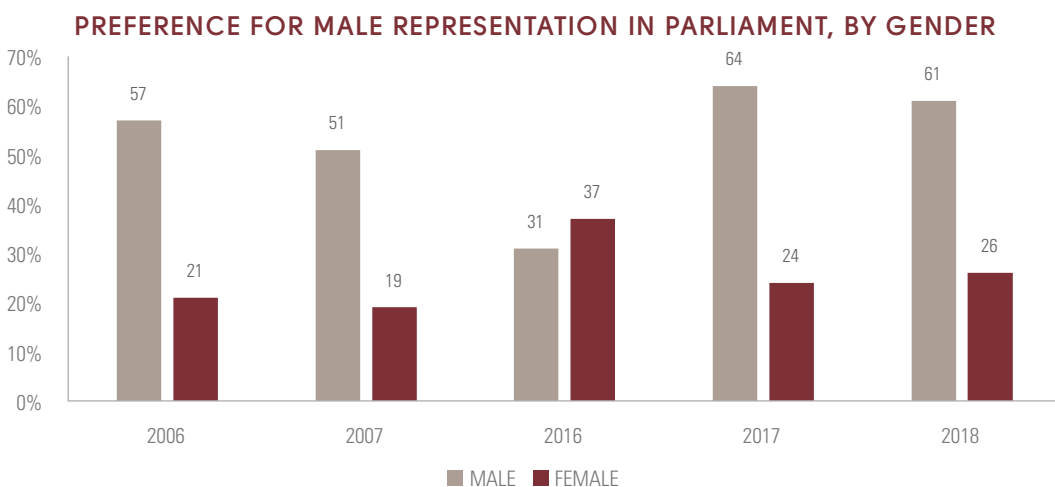
**Q-76.** Would you prefer to be represented by a man or a woman in the national parliament?

**Q-79.** Do you think women should be allowed to vote in elections?

**Q-80.** If women vote, do you think that women should decide for themselves whom to vote for, or should men decide for women whom they should vote for?

The *Survey* asked respondents whether they prefer to be represented in parliament by a woman or a man, or if gender makes no difference. There has been little change in attitudes in this regard since 2006, when this question was first asked. This year, 19.9% of respondents say they would prefer to be represented in parliament by a woman, the same percentage as 2006, while 43.7% in 2018 would prefer to be represented by a man, up from 38.9% in 2006.

When these responses are disaggregated by gender, however, significant differences do emerge. Men are significantly more likely to say they prefer a male MP (61.3%) than are women (26.1%). This has been true every year of the *Survey* except 2016 (figure 6.13). Women (37.8%) are slightly more likely than men (33.4%) to say it makes no difference, and women are far more likely than men to prefer a female MP (35.3% vs. 4.5%, respectively).



**FIG. 6.13: Q-76.** *Would you prefer to be represented by a man or a woman in the national parliament? (Percent who prefer to be represented by a man.)*

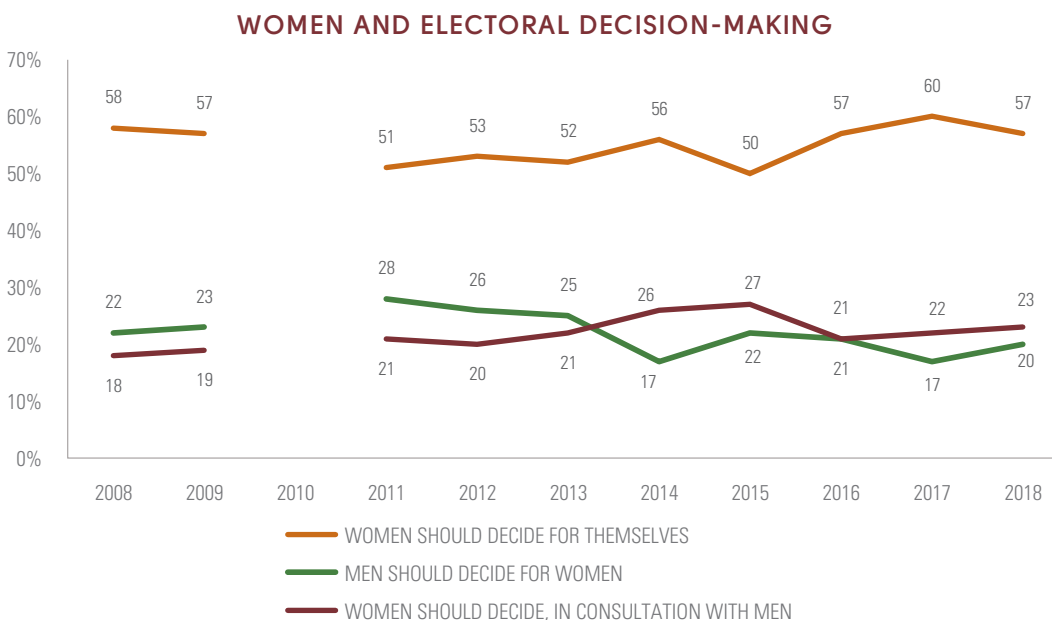
Considered by ethnicity, Pashtuns (54.5%) are the most likely to prefer a male MP, followed by Uzbeks (39.7%), Tajiks (38.1%), and Hazaras (24.5%). Hazaras are the most likely to prefer a female MP (24.5%), followed by Tajiks (21.8%), Uzbeks (19.8%), and Pashtuns (18.0%). By region, respondents in the South West (60.9%) and the East (53.7%) have the highest preference for a male MP, while Central/Hazarajat (24.4%) and the North West (38.0%) report the lowest.

Provincially, respondents in Nuristan (90.2%), Zabul (77.0%), and Kandahar (73.5%) are the most likely to prefer male representation, while respondents in Bamyan (27.5%) and Daikundi (21.4%) are the least likely. Respondents in Bamyan (56.2%) and Daikundi (57.2%) were the most likely to say it makes no difference.

The *Survey* asked respondents whether women should be allowed to vote. Fully 87.6% of Afghans in 2018 support women's right to vote, just slightly fewer than last year (89.0%). Nationally, this support is virtually the same among men (87.0%) and women (88.3%). Differences do emerge, however, between rural respondents (86.0%) and urban respondents (92.6%). This disparity may be due to the different sources of news and information available to urban and rural residents. Urban respondents, for example, are more likely to watch television as a source of information (91.2%) than rural respondents (61.2%), and those who watch television are significantly more likely to say they support women's right to vote (92.1%) than those who do not watch television (77.8%).

Provincially, over 80% of respondents support the idea of women voting, except in Zabul (34.1%), Kandahar (49.1%), Uruzgan (63.8%), Wardak (65.9%), Farah (67.6%), and Helmand (71.8%).

Finally, while there is strong support for women's right to vote, fewer Afghans support the notion that women should decide independently whom to vote for. In 2018, 56.6% of respondents believe women should decide this question for themselves, a slight decline from last year's 59.7%. The same proportion of respondents this year as in 2017 believe that women should decide for themselves, but in consultation with men, and slightly more respondents this year than last say men should decide how women vote (figure 6.14).



**FIG. 6.14: Q-80.** *If women vote, do you think that women should decide for themselves whom to vote for, or should men decide for women whom they should vote for? Note: Gaps represent year(s) the question was not asked.*

Women are more likely (59.2%) than men (53.9%) to say that women should decide for themselves whom to vote for, and urban respondents (67.5%) are significantly more likely to say so than to rural respondents (53.0%).

Across the regions, respondents in Central/Hazarajat are the most likely to agree that women should decide independently (79.9%), followed by Central/Kabul (66.7%). Support for this proposition is weaker in the South West (30.3%) and the East (45.2%). Respondents in Bamyan (82.0%), Ghor (81.8%), and Panjshir (81.7%) exhibit the most widespread approval for women voting independently, while Zabul (25.6%), Helmand (25.6%), and Kandahar (29.0%) exhibit the least.



## ENDNOTES

- 1 “Afghanistan: 63 dead in attacks on voter registration centres,” *Al Jazeera*, April 22, 2018, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/04/afghanistan-deaths-attack-id-voter-registration-centre-kabul-180422063114761.html>.
- 2 “Afghanistan to hold presidential elections in April next year,” *Al Jazeera*, August 1, 2018, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/08/afghanistan-hold-presidential-elections-april-20-2019-180801082206475.html>.
- 3 Tobias Haque et al., *Afghanistan Development Update: August 2018* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2018), <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/30293/129163-REVISED-AFG-Development-Update-Aug-2018-FINAL.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.
- 4 Hamid Shalizi and James Mackenzie, “Afghanistan’s Ghani offers talks with Taliban ‘without preconditions,’” *Reuters*, February 28, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-afghanistan-taliban/afghanistans-ghani-offers-talks-with-taliban-without-preconditions-idUSKCN1GC0J0>.
- 5 “Afghan Taliban raise hopes with surprise Eid ceasefire,” *Reuters*, June 9, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-afghanistan-ceasefire/afghan-taliban-raise-hopes-with-first-of-its-kind-eid-ceasefire-idUSKCN1J5050>.
- 6 Sayed Sharif Amiri, “‘Sacked’ Minister Stands His Ground,” *TOLONews*, June 10, 2018, <https://www.tolonews.com/afghanistan/%E2%80%98sacked%E2%80%99-minister%C2%A0stands-his-ground>.
- 7 Syed Sharif Amiri, “Noor Accused Of ‘Making A Deal’ With ARG,” *TOLONews*, April 1, 2018, <https://www.tolonews.com/index.php/afghanistan/noor-accused-%E2%80%98making-deal%E2%80%99-arg>.
- 8 “Political Leaders Launch New Coalition,” *TOLONews*, July 28, 2018, <https://www.tolonews.com/afghanistan/political-leaders-launch-grand-national-coalition>.
- 9 Abdul Qadir Sediqi and Omar Sobhani, “Afghan vice president Dostum escapes blast on return from exile,” *Reuters*, July 22, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-afghanistan-dostum/afghan-vice-president-dostum-escapes-blast-on-return-from-exile-idUSKBN1KC0IU>.
- 10 “Taliban Control Of Districts Remains Unchanged: SIGAR,” *TOLONews*, May 2, 2018, <https://www.tolonews.com/afghanistan/taliban-control%C2%A0%C2%A0districts-remains-unchanged-sigar>.
- 11 Tamim Hamid, “IEC Concerned About Security As Another Candidate Killed,” *TOLONews*, September 3, 2018, <https://www.tolonews.com/index.php/elections-2018/iec-concerned-about-security-another%C2%A0candidate%C2%A0killed>.
- 12 “Afghanistan blast: Sikhs among 19 dead in Jalalabad suicide attack,” *BBC News*, July 1, 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-44677823>.
- 13 Abdul Wadood Salangi, “Ex-Afghan Army General Mysteriously Murdered In Kabul,” *TOLONews*, August 10, 2018, <http://prod.tolonews.com/afghanistan/ex-afghan-army-general-mysteriously-murdered-kabul>.
- 14 Massoud Ansar, “Watchdogs Predict Deadlock Around Afghanistan’s Elections,” *TOLONews*, September 3, 2018, <https://www.tolonews.com/elections-2018/watchdogs-predict-deadlock-around-afghanistan%E2%80%99s-elections>.
- 15 “Afghan candidates linked to armed groups disqualified from parliamentary polls: IECC,” *Reuters*, August 11, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-afghanistan-election/afghan-candidates-linked-to-armed-groups-disqualified-from-parliamentary-polls-iecc-idUSKBN1KW0FP>.
- 16 “Afghan election: Run-off vote held amid violence,” *BBC News*, June 14, 2014, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-27844674>.
- 17 “Afghanistan to hold presidential elections in April next year,” *Al Jazeera*, August 1, 2018, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/08/afghanistan-hold-presidential-elections-april-20-2019-180801082206475.html>.
- 18 Rajab Taieb, “UNSC Announces Its Support To Afghan Elections,” *TOLONews*, July 23, 2018, <https://www.tolonews.com/elections-2018/uns-announces-its-support-afghan-elections>.
- 19 “Afghanistan: Death toll soars to 68 in suicide bomb attack,” *Al Jazeera*, September 12, 2018, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/09/afghanistan-suicide-bomber-kills-32-attack-protesters-180911132240204.html>.
- 20 Sayed Tariq Majidi, “Sharp Rise In Deaths Of Journalists Noted Under NUG,” *TOLONews*, September 6, 2018, <https://www.tolonews.com/afghanistan/sharp-rise-deaths-journalists-noted-under-nug>.

- 21 At the time of fieldwork (6–27 July, 2018), parliamentary and district council elections were planned for October; therefore these responses are considered correct. After the fieldwork, on July 30th, 2018, IEC announced that district council elections will be postponed due to lack of sufficient candidates in most districts around the country (<https://www.tolonews.com/elections-2018/iec-proposes-delay-district-council-elections>).
- 22 Paul Collier and Lisa Chauvet, “Elections in developing countries: do they improve economic policy?” *Vox CEPR Policy Portal*, November 21, 2009, <https://voxeu.org/article/do-elections-developing-countries-improve-economic-policy>.
- 23 This similar question was asked in 2006 just after parliamentary elections, however, in 2018 it was asked prior to the parliamentary elections. Please use variable X-224 in the merge data set.
- 24 Shereena Qazi, “‘We won’t survive’: Residents speak of ongoing battle in Ghazni,” *Al Jazeera*, August 14, 2018, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/08/won-survive-residents-speak-ongoing-battle-ghazni-180814060051550.html>.
- 25 Massoud Ansar, “IEC Says Govt Yet To Decide On Ghazni Elections,” *TOLONews*, September 1, 2018, <https://www.tolonews.com/elections-2018/iec-saysgovt%C2%A0yet-decide%C2%A0-ghazni-elections>.
- 26 Karim Amini, “Badakhshan Man Takes Bribe From Disqualified Candidate,” *TOLONews*, August 28, 2018, <https://www.tolonews.com/index.php/elections-2018/badakhshan-man-takes-bribe-disqualified-candidate>.
- 27 “60 Voter Registers Go Missing: IEC,” *TOLONews*, September 2, 2018, <https://www.tolonews.com/elections-2018/60-voter-registers-go-missing-iec>.
- 28 “Afghanistan: Kabul voter centre suicide attack kills 57,” *BBC News*, April 22, 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-43855884>.
- 29 “Afghan election: Taliban ‘removed voters’ fingers,” *BBC News*, June 15, 2014, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-27857343>.
- 30 Massoud Ansar, “Watchdogs Predict Deadlock Around Afghanistan’s Elections,” *TOLONews*, September 3, 2018, <https://www.tolonews.com/index.php/elections-2018/watchdogs-predict-deadlock-around-afghanistan%E2%80%99s-elections>.
- 31 Ryan E. Carlin, “The Socioeconomic Roots of Support for Democracy and the Quality [sic] in Latin America,” *Revista de Ciencia Política (Santiago)* 26, no. 1 (2006): 48–66, [https://scielo.conicyt.cl/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S0718-090X2006000100003](https://scielo.conicyt.cl/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0718-090X2006000100003).
- 32 Paul C. Bauer, “Unemployment, Trust in Government, and Satisfaction with Democracy: An Empirical Investigation,” *Socius* 4 (January 5, 2018): 1–14, <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2378023117750533>.





## 7 ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND THE MEDIA

The mass media in Afghanistan have been growing rapidly, giving Afghans more options to obtain news and information in addition to traditional sources such as mosques, shuras, elders, and family.<sup>1</sup> Similar to last year, the most common sources of news and information for Afghans include friends and family (83.7%), television (68.7%), and radio (62.9%). The Internet is showing the most rapid growth, quadrupling since 2013, but it remains a predominantly male and urban source of news and information.

The post-Taliban period has seen an increase in the number of television viewers and broadcasters. According to the Ministry of Information and Culture, 33 registered television stations operate in the capital, Kabul, and 35 registered television stations operate across the provinces.<sup>2</sup> There is also progress in constructing a nationwide fiber optic network, which is necessary infrastructure for fast and reliable Internet service.<sup>3</sup> This has resulted in the Internet being one of the fastest growing sources of news and information. Some parts of the country have had less access, however, due to poor security.

On the legal front, Afghanistan's laws surrounding the right to freedom of expression, access to information, and legitimate activities of the media are perceived as strong.<sup>4</sup> The Canadian Centre for Law and Democracy ranked Afghanistan's Access to Information Law<sup>5</sup> at the top of their Global Right to Information Rating, which assesses the strength of right-to-information legal frameworks around the world.<sup>6</sup> But implementation is another thing.

---

Despite attacks on the press and questions about impartiality, the media remains one of the most trusted institutions in Afghanistan.

---

The strong legal basis and growing media sector have not yet translated into a tangible improvement in the situation of the media and the press overall. Journalists are frustrated by a lack of access to information by government institutions, leading to a perception of mistrust. 2017 was one of the deadliest years for the press in Afghanistan, with 21 reporters killed in the line of duty,<sup>7</sup> and this year has followed suit with an increase in journalist casualties, both targeted and collateral. In April 2018, 10 journalists were killed in two coordinated attacks, one in Kabul and another in Khost.<sup>8</sup> In another attack, in Kabul city in early September, two journalists were killed and four others wounded.<sup>9</sup> Since 2016, the Afghan Journalists Safety Committee (AJSC) has recorded 73 cases of violence and threats against journalists, including deaths, detentions, beatings, and intimidation.<sup>10</sup>

The freedom and impartiality of the press has also been at risk. This year, Reporters Without Borders ranked Afghanistan 118<sup>th</sup> out of 180 countries in its "World Press Freedom Index."<sup>11</sup> In its annual

*Freedom of the Press* report, Freedom House classified Afghanistan's media as "partly free," and ordinary Afghans face major hurdles in accessing information from public institutions.<sup>12</sup>

Despite attacks on the press and questions about impartiality, the media remains one of the most trusted institutions in Afghanistan this year (67.0%). Furthermore, a rapidly growing number of Afghans own televisions (68.6%, up from 66.4% in 2017), making TV one of the most widely used sources of news and information, particularly in urban areas (91.2%). This is significant given the positive impact that television and Internet use have on democracy and support for human rights.

The following chapter explores Afghans' media use, their news and information preferences, and the media's role in shaping Afghan perceptions of politics, security, and women's rights.

## 7.1 SOURCES OF NEWS AND INFORMATION

### KEY QUESTIONS

Q-66. *Do you use any of the following to obtain news and information? (a) Radio. (b) Television. (d) Internet. (e) Mosque. (f) Community shuras. (g) Friends and family.*

Q-59. *Do you listen to radio programs?*

Q-60. *(Ask if answer to Q-59 is yes.) You said you listen to the radio. On an average day when you listen to the radio, how many hours do you listen to it?*

Q-61. *Do you watch television programs?*

Q-62. *(Ask if answer to Q-61 is yes.) You said you watch television. On an average day when you watch television, how many hours do you watch it?*

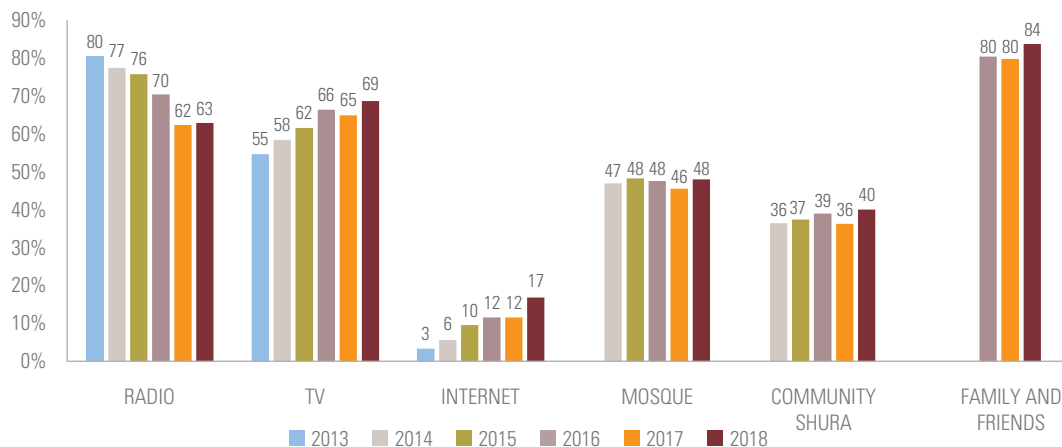
D-5. *How many of the following does your household have? (d) TV.*

D-15a. *Do you personally use a mobile phone or not?*

D-15c. *How many members of this household who live here have their own mobile phone?*

This year witnesses the continued ascent of television and the Internet as sources of news and information among Afghans. Friends and family remain the most-cited source of news and information, however (83.7%), demonstrating the enduring role of informal information-sharing and word of mouth in Afghanistan. Radio remains the third-most-used source of news and information (62.9%), despite gradually decreasing over the years. Mosques (48.0%) and community shuras (40.0%) remain the fourth- and fifth-most-cited sources of news and information, followed by the Internet (16.8%) (figure 7.1).

## SOURCES OF NEWS AND INFORMATION



**FIG. 7.1: Q-66.** Do you use any of the following to obtain news and information? (a) Radio. (b) Television. (d) Internet. (e) Mosque. (f) Community shuras. (g) Friends and family.

### RADIO

Radio was one of the most commonly used sources of news and information in the past, particularly during the Taliban rule, when radio was the only mass medium allowed in the country.

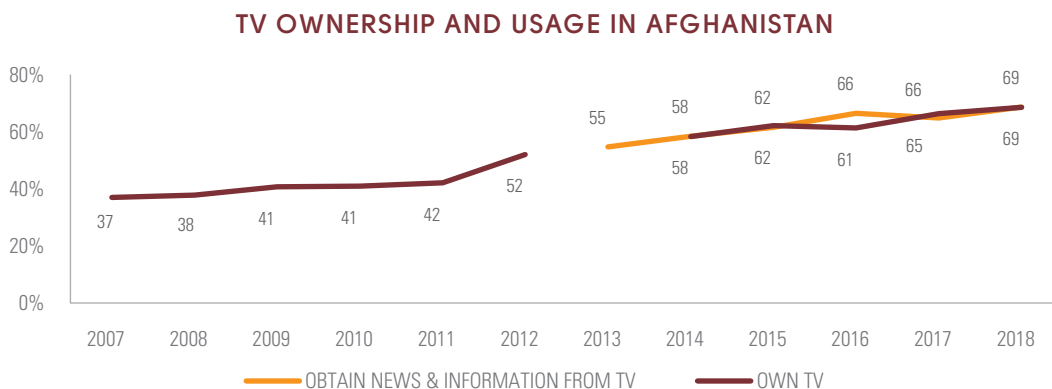
In 2018, more than 15 years after their ousting from power, close to two-thirds (62.9%) of Afghans report using radio as their main source of news and information, just behind television (68.7%). In rural areas, radio leads television as the second-most-used source of news and information, despite a decreasing trend since 2013. In urban areas, radio (46.7%) has fallen behind mosques (47.8%) as a source of news and information. A greater share of Afghan men (69.7%) than women (56.2%) listen to radio for news and information.

Radio is widely used in the East (85.4%), the South East (86.5%), and the South West (87.9%) as respondents' main source of news and information, while fewer than half of respondents in Central/Hazarajat (39.9%) and Central/Kabul (48.5%) report using radio for news and information.

### TELEVISION

This year we see continuing growth in the use of television. More than two-thirds of Afghans (68.7%) say they get their news and information from television, the highest rate since this question was first asked in 2013. This rising trend roughly parallels the rate of household television ownership over time, which stands at 68.6% this year, up from 58.3% in 2014 (figure 7.2).

In urban areas, television is the most-cited source of news and information, named by 91.2% of respondents, but there has not been any substantial change since 2013. The increasing use of television has been driven by rural areas, where the rate has climbed from 43.0% in 2013 to 61.2% in 2018. Respondents from Central/Kabul (82.0%), the North West (74.7%), and the West (73.5%) report the highest regional rates of television use to access news and information, and the lowest rates are in the South West (38.3%) and the East (53.3%). In terms of ethnic groups, Hazaras (81.5%) and Tajiks (75.9%) are the most likely to get their news and information via television. There is no gender difference in getting news and information from television (69.3% male, 68.1% female). In terms of age, younger Afghans rely on television more than older Afghans.<sup>13</sup>



**FIG. 7.2: Q-66.** Do you use any of the following to obtain news and information? (b) Television. D-5. How many of the following does your household have? (d) TV. (Percent who report owning at least one of each.) Note: Trend line uses X-1b in the merged variable list 2007–2012 for comparison with D-5d. Note: A gap in the trend line indicates year(s) the question was not asked.

## THE INTERNET

This year, 16.8% of Afghans report using the Internet as a source of news and information, up from 11.6% last year and 3.3% in 2013 (figure 7.1). Most users access the Internet through their mobile phones. This year, most respondents (89.5%) report having at least one mobile phone in their household, up from 82.5% in 2015, and more than a third of respondents (38.7%) report having access to the Internet in their households, up from 21.0% in 2015.



There are rural-urban differences in Internet use. A third of Afghans living in urban areas (33.2%) report using the Internet for news and information, a much higher proportion than in rural areas (11.4%). As mobile network coverage has grown in rural areas, however, rural Internet use has also been growing, from 1.1% in 2013 to 11.4% in 2018. The highest rate of Internet use for news and information is reported in the Central/Kabul region (26.5%), and the lowest in the remote Central/Hazarajat region (4.1%).

Men use the Internet to get news and information more often than women (24.8% vs. 8.8%). Close to half of urban men (44.1%) use the Internet to get news and information. As might be expected, Internet use is highest among younger Afghans, including a quarter of 18- to 25-year-olds (24.1%).

## MOSQUES

Mosques in Afghanistan serve not only as places of worship, but also as places for education (madrasas) and communal ceremonies and meetings such as Friday sermons. Friday sermons are influential events at which sermons on religion and other important topics are disseminated to the community. There are approximately 160,000 mosques throughout the country, and many have opened in recent years.<sup>14</sup> Mosques are mostly attended by men, but new mosques for women have recently emerged.<sup>15</sup>

The mosque is the fourth-most-cited source of news and information (figure 7.1), named by nearly half of respondents (48.0%). As mosques are more commonly frequented by men, men cite them as a source of news and information (70.8%) far more often than women (25.2%).

Urban and rural Afghans cite the mosque as a source of news and information at similar rates (47.8% and 48.1%, respectively), but there are substantial regional differences. Residents of the West have the highest rate of using the mosque for news and information (59.2%), and residents of the South East have the lowest (31.7%). In terms of age, mosques are used much more frequently by older Afghans than younger Afghans to acquire news and information.<sup>16</sup>

## COMMUNITY SHURA

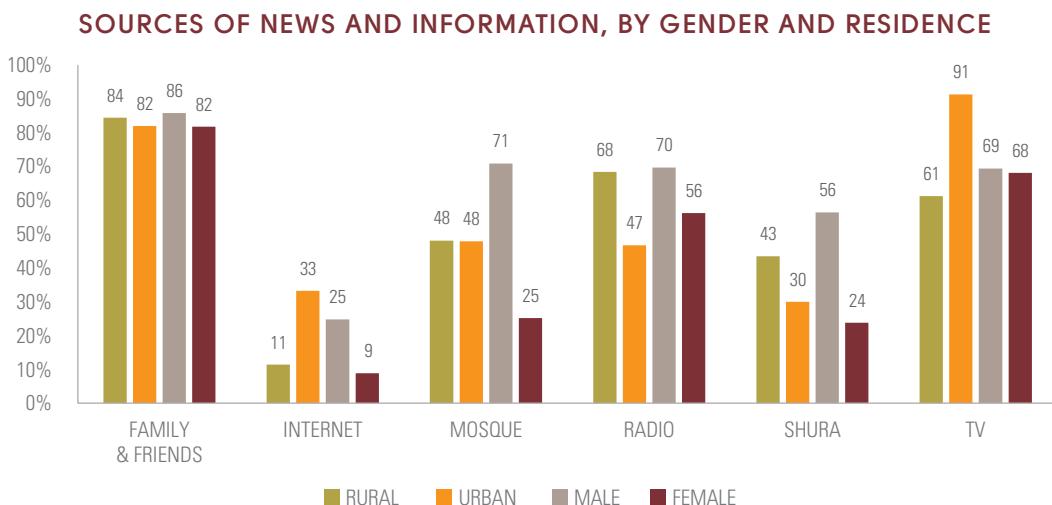
Community *shuras*, or councils, are traditional and informal institutions with a long history in Afghanistan. In the post-Taliban period, some shuras have been formalized by presidential decrees and policy documents as Community Development Councils (CDCs) and District Development Assemblies (DDAs).<sup>17</sup> While the primary mandate of these shuras is development projects, they are also involved in other community affairs such as conflict resolution and organizing communal work.<sup>18</sup>

The 2018 *Survey* shows that 40.0% of Afghans rely on community shuras for their news and information, a proportion that has not changed noticeably in the past five years (figure 7.1). Shuras are more commonly used by rural respondents (43.4%) than urban respondents (29.9%),<sup>19</sup> and more by men (56.4%) than women (23.7%) for news and information. Older Afghans rely more on shuras to get their news and information than do younger Afghans.<sup>20</sup> The highest reliance on shuras for news and information is in Central/Hazarajat (56.4%), while the lowest is in the South East (30.9%). The

province with the highest reliance on shuras is Samangan (69.3%), in the North West, and lowest is Khost (15.0%), in the South East.

## FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Friends and family are the most-cited source of news and information for Afghans (83.7%), ahead of mass media options such as television (68.7%), radio (62.9%), and the Internet (16.8%). Friends and family are the number one source of news and information for males (85.8%), females (81.7%), and rural respondents (84.3%) (figure 7.3); number two for urban respondents (81.9%); and number one for all age groups and most regions.



**FIG. 7.3: Q-66.** Do you use any of the following to obtain news and information? (a) Radio. (b) Television. (d) Internet. (e) Mosque. (f) Community shuras. (g) Friends and family.

## 7.2 ACCESS TO THE INTERNET AND USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

### KEY QUESTIONS

**Q-64.** Do people in this area have access to Internet, either through a cable connection, a wireless/wifi connection, or cellular data (e.g., 2G or 3G)?

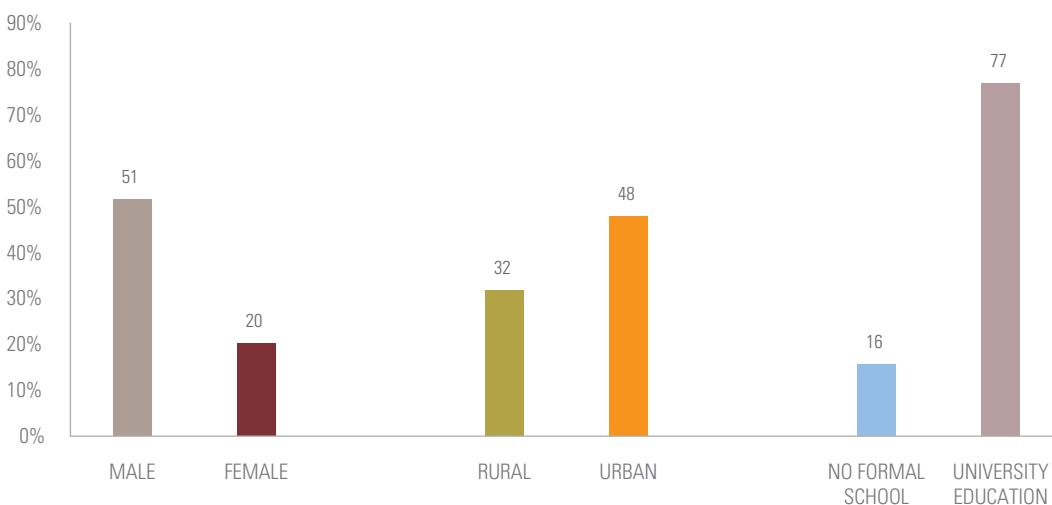
**Q-65.** (Ask if answer to Q-64 is yes.) Do you personally have access to the Internet?

**D-15d.** How many members of your household own mobile phones that can access the Internet, such as the ability to access email, websites, or Facebook?

The Internet is one of the fastest-growing sources of news and information in Afghanistan, having grown over 400%, from 3.3% to 16.8%, since 2013. This year, 40.2% of respondents overall say their area has some form of access to the Internet, similar to 2016 (40.0%). However, the share of respondents with personal access to the Internet in those areas has grown rapidly, from 28.1% in 2016 to 32.8% in 2017 and 37.7% in 2018. This growth from 2016 to 2018 is observed among all subgroups: among men (from 39.4% to 51.5%), women (from 14.9% to 20.2%), urban respondents (from 33.9% to 47.8%), rural respondents (from 24.5% to 31.7%), younger Afghans aged 18–25 (from 36.7% to 50.0%), and those older than 55 (from 16.5% to 21.4%).

The most common platform for accessing the Internet is a smart phone. This year, 38.7% of respondents report that their household has at least one smart phone with Internet access, up from 21.0 % in 2015. A growing number of respondents overall report that they have personal access to the Internet, up from 13.5% in 2017 to 15.1% this year. Personal access to the Internet, as opposed to access through a school, library, or borrowed device, is more common among men (23.1%) than women (7.2%), and is especially common, at 55.6%, among respondents with a university education (figure 7.4).

### PERSONAL ACCESS TO THE INTERNET



**FIG. 7.4: Q-65.** (Ask if answer to Q-64 is yes.) Do you personally have access to the Internet? (Percent who say yes.)



## SECURITY

Despite continued insecurity and violence in various parts of Afghanistan, most Afghans do not directly experience such incidents in their everyday life. Afghans are well-informed by media such as television and radio about security incidents and threats in different parts of the country, however, and it might be expected that this awareness results in more negative perceptions about security and consequently an increase in fear.

Afghans who use mass media—that is, radio and television—to get their information are more likely to report higher levels of fear for their own or their family’s safety.<sup>22</sup> Those who use localized sources of news and information, such as family and friends, shuras, or mosques, are more likely to report lower levels of fear.<sup>23</sup> Radio listeners express the highest level of sympathy with the Taliban (19.9%), while television and Internet users express the lowest sympathy (13.4% and 12.5%, respectively). Sympathy with Daesh/ISIS (1.7%) is too negligible to indicate any meaningful relationship.

Insecurity is the top reason offered by Afghans who say they would leave Afghanistan if they had the opportunity (80.5%) (see chapter 9, *Migration*, for more information). Cross-referencing with sources of news and information, Internet users are the most likely to say they would leave Afghanistan (48.3%), followed by television watchers (39.6%). The least likely are radio listeners (36.0%). It is worth noting that security indicators and migration tendencies are associated with demographic factors such as age, gender, geography, and education that are in turn associated with types of information sources. Therefore, these correlations do not necessarily establish causation, which would require further research.

## DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE

Obtaining news and information from television or the Internet and watching television are associated with positive perceptions of democracy (defined as the popular election of representative government). However, obtaining news and information from the radio or family and friends is associated with negative views of democracy.<sup>24</sup>

Television and radio are associated with contrasting perceptions of the National Unity Government’s (NUG) performance. Getting news from the radio is associated with a positive perception of the NUG’s performance,<sup>25</sup> while television is associated with negative views of the NUG, and more frequent television watching is associated with more negative views.<sup>26</sup>

## WOMEN’S RIGHTS

The media are an important source of depictions of women that differ from the traditional, conservative roles imposed during the Taliban era. Television and the Internet in particular have a significant impact on perceptions of women’s rights. Afghans who rely on the Internet and television to obtain news and information are more supportive of equal educational opportunities for men and women (89.8% Internet and 87.5% television) than radio listeners (82.2%).

Television also exposes Afghans to the notion of women working outside the home. Those who use television (77.1%) and the Internet (76.3%) are the most likely to support women working outside the home. When asked about appropriate dress for women in public, Afghans who rely on television select more liberal, westernized clothing (figure 7.6).

### APPROPRIATE DRESS FOR WOMEN IN PUBLIC, BY MEDIA TYPE

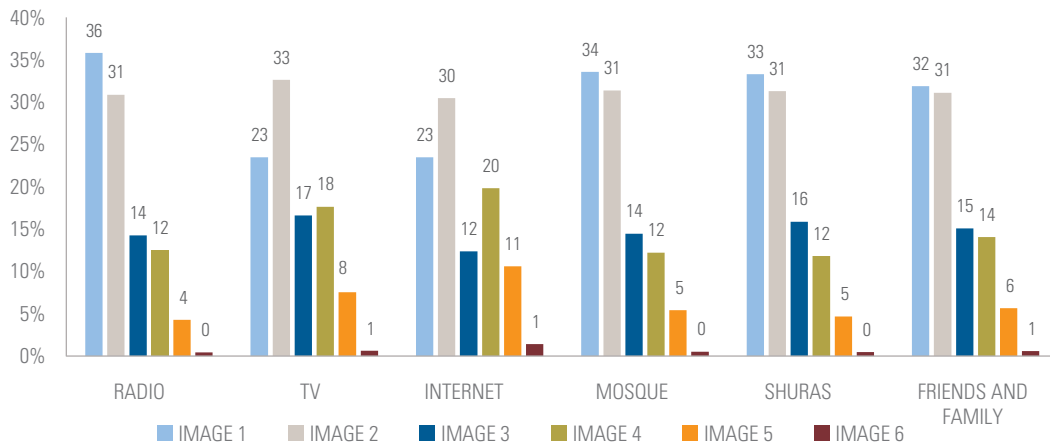


FIG. 7.6: Q-77. In your view, which one of these women is dressed most appropriately for public places?

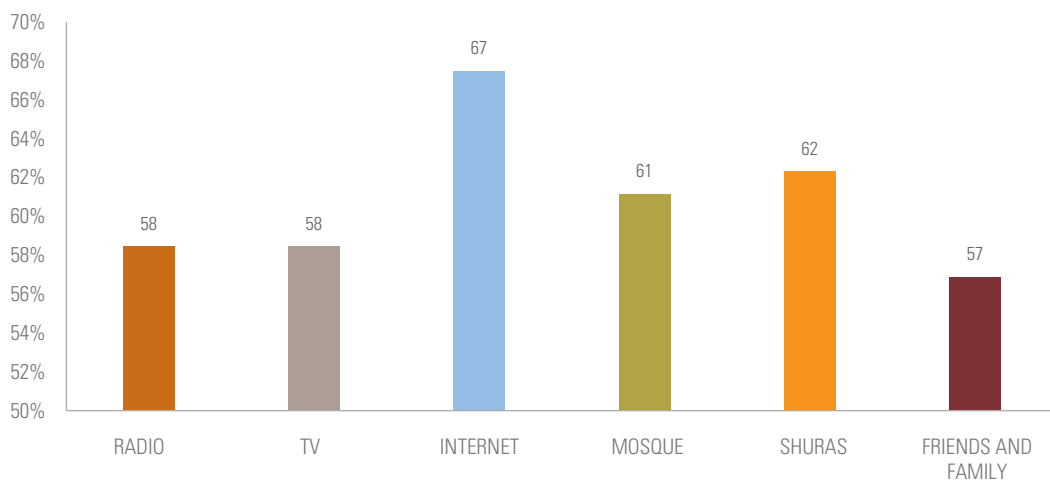
### ELECTIONS

The long-delayed parliamentary election was perhaps the most important event of 2018. In July, when the *Survey* interviews were taking place, the election was being hotly debated in the media, even though official campaigns would not start until October. The *Survey* asks respondents about their awareness of

upcoming elections and their main sources of information about them. Television is the most-cited source of information about the election (43.9%), followed by radio (25.1%) and family and neighbors (14.7%).

Most Afghans, when asked, were aware of the upcoming parliamentary election (79.7%), identified the type of election correctly (65.2%), and planned to vote (55.6%). Comparing different sources of news and information, election awareness and intention to vote were highest among those who rely on the Internet for news and information (awareness, 87.7%; and intention to vote, 67.5%). It is interesting that traditional sources of news and information appear to be associated with slightly higher levels of intention to vote (figure 7.7). Intention to vote is higher among those who use community shuras (62.3%) and mosques (61.1%) than among television watchers (58.5%) or radio listeners (58.5%). This suggests an active role of community shuras and mosques in election participation, although, again, it does not establish causation.

### INTENTION TO VOTE, BY MEDIA TYPE



**FIG. 7.7: Q-48a.** Do you plan to vote in this election? (Percent who say yes.)

## ENDNOTES

- 1 Sayara Research, *Afghan Information Ecosystems: A Design Research Approach*, accessed October 15, 2018, [https://www.internews.org/sites/default/files/resources/Internews\\_Afghan\\_Information\\_Ecosystems\\_2016-09.pdf](https://www.internews.org/sites/default/files/resources/Internews_Afghan_Information_Ecosystems_2016-09.pdf).
- 2 “Television,” Ministry of Information & Culture website [in Dari], accessed October 15, 2018, <http://moic.gov.af/fa/page/press/electronic-media/tvs>.
- 3 “Afghan government approve \$383m project related to Fiber Optics project,” *Khaama Press*, March 12, 2108, <https://www.khaama.com/afghan-government-approve-383m-project-related-to-fiber-optics-project-04630/>.
- 4 Article 34 of the Afghanistan Constitution enshrines freedom of speech and of the press ([http://www.aihrc.org.af/media/files/Laws/afghan\\_constituion\(1\).pdf](http://www.aihrc.org.af/media/files/Laws/afghan_constituion(1).pdf)); Afghanistan’s Mass Media Law, adopted in 2015, prohibits censorship (<http://elections.pajhwok.com/affiles/pdfs/12-Mass Media Law/12-Mass Media Law-English.pdf>); the Access to Information Law, which ensures transparency and accountability to ordinary people, was put in place in 2014 ([https://www.rti-rating.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Afghan.RTI\\_Decree.May2018.pdf](https://www.rti-rating.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Afghan.RTI_Decree.May2018.pdf)).
- 5 Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, “Access to Information Law,” accessed October 11, 2018, [https://www.rti-rating.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Afghan.RTI\\_Decree.May2018.pdf](https://www.rti-rating.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Afghan.RTI_Decree.May2018.pdf).
- 6 “Global Right to Information Rating, by Country,” Centre for Law and Democracy website, accessed October 11, 2018, <https://www.rti-rating.org/country-data/>.
- 7 Hasib Danish Alikozai, “Report: 21 Journalists Killed in Afghanistan in 2017,” *VOA*, January 3, 2018, <https://www.voanews.com/a/report-21-journalists-killed-in-afghanistan-2017/4191693.html>.
- 8 Saeed Kamali Dehghan, “Afghanistan: the 10 journalists who died in deadly day for media,” *Guardian*, April 30, 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2018/apr/30/afghanistan-the-10-journalists-who-died-in-deadly-day-for-media>.
- 9 “53 Journalists Killed in Afghanistan since 2015: NAI,” *Ariana News*, September 10, 2018, <https://ariananews.af/53-journalists-killed-in-afghanistan-since-2015-nai/>.
- 10 Human Rights Watch, “Afghanistan: Events of 2017,” in *World Report 2018: Events of 2017* (Human Rights Watch, 2017), 17–22, <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2018/country-chapters/afghanistan>.
- 11 “2018 World Press Freedom Index,” Reporters Without Borders website, accessed October 11, 2018, <https://rsf.org/en/ranking#>.
- 12 “Afghans’ Access to Information Survey 2017: Citizens face major hurdles in accessing information from public bodies,” *Integrity Watch Afghanistan* (blog), September 27, 2017, <https://iwaweb.org/afghans-access-to-information-survey-2017-citizens-face-major-hurdles-in-accessing-information-from-public-bodies/>.
- 13 Average age of respondents who use television to access news and information is significantly lower than average age of respondents who do not use television to access news and information (34.5 versus 36.0 years,  $p < 0.0001$ ).
- 14 United States Department of State, “Afghanistan 2017 International Religious Freedom Report,” in *2017 Report on International Religious Freedom* (U.S. Department of State, May 29, 2018), <https://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2017/index.htm>.
- 15 Ratbil Shamel, “First mosque for women in Kabul,” *DW* [in German], February 9, 2006, <https://www.dw.com/de/erste-moschee-f%C3%BCr-frauen-in-kabul/a-1890595>.
- 16 Average age of respondents who use the Internet to access news and information is significantly lower than average age of respondents who do not use the mosque to access news and information (33.6 versus 36.6 years,  $p < 0.0001$ ).
- 17 Kristóf Gosztonyi, Basir Feda, and Jan Koehler, “The Future of District and Village Representation,” in *Subnational Governance in Afghanistan, Issues Paper* (Kabul: Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit, July 2016), <https://areu.org.af/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/1615E-Subnational-Governance-in-Afghanistan.pdf>.
- 18 Ibid.
- 19 CDCs were created in rural areas only and used primarily by the National Solidarity Program (NSP), which operated between 2003 and 2017. See “The National Solidarity Program is successfully finished,” Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation & Development website, February 25, 2017, <http://mrd.gov.af/en/news/300485>. Recently, the Citizens’ Charter National Priority Program, which began in 2016, has created and worked with CDCs in urban areas too.



- 20 The average age of respondents who use community shuras to access news and information is significantly greater than the average age of respondents who do not use community shuras to access news and information (36.6 versus 33.8 years,  $p < 0.0001$ ).
- 21 See chapter 7, "Access to Information," in The Asia Foundation, *A Survey of the Afghan People: Afghanistan in 2017* (Kabul and San Francisco: The Asia Foundation, 2017), 123, <https://asiafoundation.org/publication/afghanistan-2017-survey-afghan-people/>.
- 22 Fear for personal safety is positively associated with the use of radio and television as sources of news and information (Spearman correlation coefficient 0.0759 and 0.0207, respectively).
- 23 Fear for personal safety is negatively associated with the use of family and friends, community shura, and mosque as source of news and information (Spearman correlation coefficient -0.0390, -0.0455, and -0.0255, respectively).
- 24 Satisfaction with democracy is positively associated with the use of television and negatively associated with the use of mosque or family and friends as sources of news and information (Spearman correlation coefficient 0.0174, 0.0229, and -0.0242, respectively).
- 25 Perception of NUG's performance is positively associated with the use of radio (Spearman correlation coefficient 0.1114).
- 26 Perception of NUG's performance is negatively associated with the use of television and duration of viewing (Spearman correlation coefficient -0.0403 and -0.0834 respectively).



## 8 WOMEN IN SOCIETY

The National Unity Government has committed to a campaign supporting women's equality and economic empowerment and the eradication of violence against women. It also has a National Action Plan for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, which addresses the disproportionate effects of armed conflict on women.<sup>1</sup> A key provision of this plan is increased participation and representation of women at all levels of decision-making. At the same time, institutionalization of these goals remains a challenge. Many Afghans, including government representatives, still view progress for women as a zero-sum game, and therefore a loss for men.<sup>2</sup> But women's participation is growing. Women's participation in the political process has been, on its face, a great success story since the fall of the Taliban, when women had no rights of participation or representation. Yet the country remains divided, with Afghans in some areas still unsupportive of women's political participation. As of mid-2018, almost one-third of the seats in the Afghan parliament are held by women, and women make up almost one-fifth of the Afghan workforce, a significant rise since the ousting of the Taliban.<sup>3</sup>

---

Women's participation in the political process has been, on its face, a great success story since the fall of the Taliban, when women had no rights of participation or representation. Yet the country remains divided, with Afghans in some areas still unsupportive of women's political participation.

---

The international donor and development community is involved in large-scale initiatives to improve women's economic and social empowerment, access to medical care, and educational opportunities. The British-funded Girls Education Challenge is active in Afghanistan, and committed another USD 80 million in July 2018 to improving the quality and accessibility of girls' education, working with girls in remote and vulnerable communities, and conducting teacher training.<sup>4</sup> USAID-funded PROMOTE is the largest women's empowerment project the United States has ever funded, and is contributing to women's increasing involvement in the economy.<sup>5</sup> These programs have seen success, yet 60% of the 3.7 million children out of school in Afghanistan are girls, and the rate of literacy among girls, at approximately 37%, is half that of boys.<sup>6</sup> PROMOTE has recently incurred criticism and some skepticism that it is achieving its stated goals.<sup>7</sup>

With two-thirds of the population under the age of 24, Afghanistan's youth culture is thriving in major urban areas, and women are increasingly seen in the arts and media, including bold female street artists, painters, and musicians.<sup>8</sup> Women artisans are among those embracing cultural traditions and helping to revive crafts and make their production economically viable.<sup>9</sup>

This year, the *Survey* shows mixed findings for Afghan women, much like those in 2017. Levels of support for the cultural practices *baad* and *baddal* (giving away a daughter as payment and marrying off a daughter in exchange with another family) are steadily dropping countrywide. At the same time, support for women in leadership positions has also fallen several points. Support for women's education has increased marginally, yet men are still significantly less likely than women to support equal access to education, and men are often the family decision-makers on these issues. Afghans are less likely than last year to say that women contribute to their family income, and support for women working outside the home has dropped several points. As in previous years, the problems perceived to most affect women are related to lack of economic opportunities and education.

This chapter examines Afghan attitudes on a range of issues that disproportionately affect women. These include access to justice, certain cultural practices, the right to political participation, educational opportunities, and economic advancement, as well as women's perceptions of safety and security.

## 8.1 WOMEN'S ACCESS TO JUSTICE

### KEY QUESTIONS

- Q-30. *In the past two years, have you had a dispute or a formal case that you couldn't settle with the other party and had to go to the state court, huquq department, or village/neighborhood-based shura/jirga to resolve it, or not?*
- Q-31. *(If answer to Q-30 is yes.) What kind of a case or dispute was it? (Single response. If more than one case or dispute, ask for the most recent one.)*
- Q-33. *(If answer to Q-30 is yes.) Where have you taken this case or dispute? (Allow more than one mention, select all used.)*
- Q-67. *In your area, is there an organization, institution, or authority where women can go to have their problem(s) resolved?*
- Q-68. *(If answer to Q-67 is yes.) What organization, institution, or authority is that?*

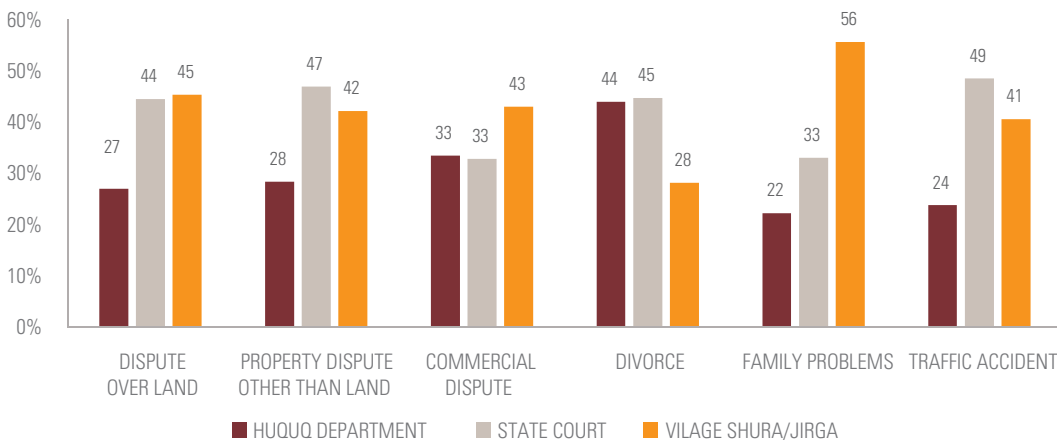
Judicial process has been elusive for Afghan women, who are often stuck between religious and secular law, and constitutional rights and cultural constraints. While the Elimination of Violence Against Women (EVAW) law was adopted in 2009 by presidential decree (the Afghan parliament resisted approval) and is seen as progressive compared to traditional laws on violence against women, its implementation has been hampered by lack of motivation and institutional capacity, with many of the law's provisions remaining unused. In 2018, a new penal code was adopted to increase enforcement of the EVAW law by criminalizing violence against women, but many MPs are resistant to criminalization, as it is understood to be in conflict with cultural traditions.<sup>10</sup> There has been increased focus on enforcing EVAW, but recent reports have found little improvement, and instead of

bringing criminal charges against perpetrators of violence against women, many in the justice system are referring plaintiffs to more traditional mediation practices, which often do not address the crime, or worse, further endanger the woman.<sup>11</sup>

The *Survey* asks Afghans whether in the past two years they have had a dispute with another party that they were unable to settle, and if so, where did they seek resolution (figure 8.1). (See chapter 5, *Governance*, for all data.) A similar percentage of women and men had such disputes in the past two years (women, 22.2%; men, 23.9%—up slightly from 20.3% and 20.6%, respectively, in 2017). Of those respondents who had such an experience, disputes over land, other property, and traffic accidents were similarly common for men and women. Men (11.8%) brought more cases involving commercial disputes to a formal court than women (5.7%), and women (5.2%) brought more cases involving divorce than men (1.8%). A higher percentage of women (21.8%) bring family problems to court than do men (16.4%).

The most common place to take disputes is the neighborhood-based shura/jirga, with men (44.9%) and women (45.9%) taking equal advantage of the institution. Also commonly used are the state courts, with 41.4% of women and 42.4% of men saying they brought their disputes there in the last two years. With a 6.9 percentage point increase from 2017, 28.6% of men say they bring their disputes to the *huquq* (rights) department, slightly more than women, at 25.3%.

### TYPE OF DISPUTE, BY PLACE OF RESOLUTION



**FIG. 8.1: Q-30.** *In the past two years, have you had a dispute or a formal case that you couldn't settle with the other party and had to go to the state court, huquq department, or village/neighborhood-based shura/jirga to resolve it, or not? Q-31. (If answer to Q-30 is yes.) What kind of a case or dispute was it? (Single response. If more than one case or dispute, ask for the most recent one.)*

There has been a decrease in the proportion of women who say they know of a place where women can go to have their problems resolved, with 19.0% of respondents saying they know of such a place, down from 23.2% in 2017 and a high of 23.8% in 2016. Slightly more men (19.5%) than women (18.4%) know of such a place, and slightly more rural respondents (19.4%) than urban (17.7%). Pashtuns (20.5%), Tajiks (19.2%), and Uzbeks (18.1%) are more likely to be aware of such an organization than Hazaras (14.6%). Provinces with the highest awareness are Panjshir (97.3%), Khost (52.2%), Samangan (50.3%), and Laghman (45.7%), while those with the lowest are Nuristan (1.5%), Wardak (3.2%), Bamiyan (3.5%), and Zabul (4.1%). Awareness of a place where women can resolve their problems has changed significantly in the past year in some provinces. Awareness has risen in Takhar (from 9.6% to 27.0%) and Jawzjan (from 18.0% to 27.8%), and in nine provinces awareness has decreased: Baghlan (from 44.9% to 9.9%), Faryab (from 45.8% to 13.2%), Nimroz (from 40.7% to 20.4%), Helmand (from 42.9% to 22.1%), Uruzgan (from 48.8% to 29.9%), Ghor (from 53.2% to 37.9%), Paktia (from 32.0% to 15.3%), Herat (from 36.1% to 21.9%), and Wardak (from 13.6% to 3.2%).

Of those respondents who say they are aware of an organization where women can resolve their problems, 43.8% identify the Directorate of Women Affairs (DoWA), the provincial-level administrative body of the Ministry of Women Affairs, down 11.8 percentage points from a high of 55.7% in 2017, while 10.3% name the district office, 8.7% mention the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, and 5.6% cite women's shuras. Rural respondents (12.8%) are more likely to name the district office than urban respondents (2.4%), while urban respondents (11.3%) are more likely to name the police than rural respondents (1.4%).

The greatest factor influencing awareness of DoWA, which despite a decrease in overall awareness in 2018 is still the most widely known organization, is region. The decrease in awareness of DoWA is linked to television viewing: a 16.3 percentage point decrease among non-watchers compared to a 10.8 percentage point decrease among those who do watch television. The overall decrease could be due to declining international support for DoWA publicity. More likely to be aware of DoWA are respondents from the South East (65.7%), the South West (52.0%), the North West (44.6%, the only region with an increase), the East (40.6%), the West (39.0%), and the North East (37.4%), while respondents in Central/Kabul (29.8%) and Central/Hazarajat (3.3%) are the least likely to be aware of DoWA.

## 8.2 CUSTOMS AND TRIBAL PRACTICES

### KEY QUESTIONS

*Q-69. Tell me, do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements? (a) The practice of baad is acceptable. (b) The practice of baddal is acceptable. (c) A daughter is entitled to part of her deceased father's inheritance (miras).*

Q-77. In your view, which one of these women is dressed most appropriately for public places?  
Just point to one picture.

Q-81. What do you think is the best age for a woman to get married?

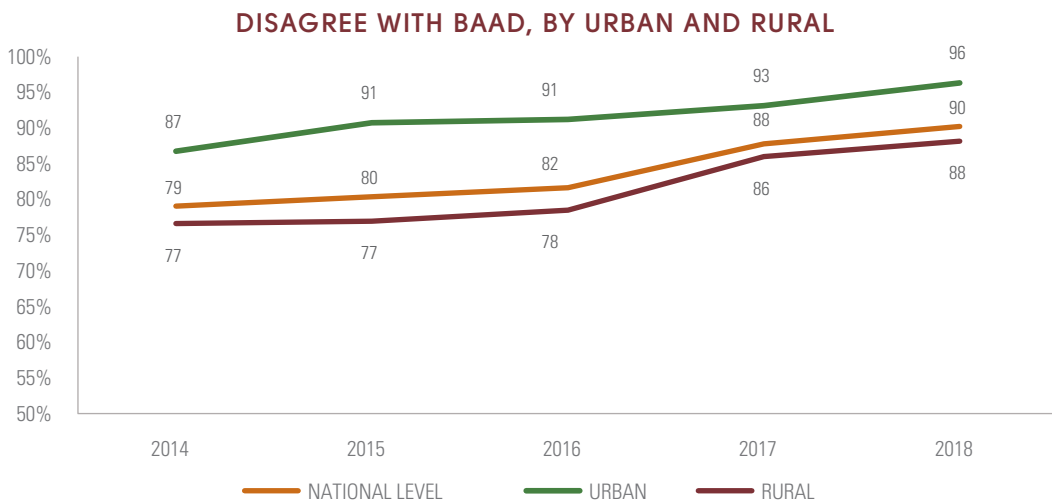
Q-82. What do you think is the best age for a man to get married?

## BAAD, BADDAL, AND MIRAS

As in previous years, this year's *Survey* asks respondents about their perceptions of three cultural practices related to women: *baad*, *baddal*, and *miras*. *Baad* is the traditional practice of giving away a daughter to another party as a penalty or payment to settle a debt or resolve a dispute, grievance, or conflict between families. *Baddal* is the exchange of daughters in marriage between families. This is often, but not always, a form of forced marriage, and may have economic implications (e.g., there is generally no bride price or dowry involved).<sup>12</sup>

Support for the practices of *baad* and *baddal* continues to decline, one of the few areas related to women's rights and treatment in Afghanistan to see continuing yearly improvement since the *Survey* began asking about it. This year, only 9.5% of respondents agree ("strongly" or "somewhat") that *baad* is acceptable, compared to 12.0% in 2017 and 18.0% in 2016. Disagreement with the practice has increased correspondingly, and respondents are more likely to "strongly" disagree (73.9%, up from 70.4% in 2017) than to "somewhat" disagree (16.3%, down from 17.4% in 2017).

While gender differences account for little variation in approval of these practices, levels of disapproval ("strongly" or "somewhat") remain higher in urban areas (96.3%) than rural areas (88.2%). Yet rural respondents are growing more likely to disagree strongly, and this increase is more rapid than among urban respondents (figure 8.2).



**FIG. 8.2: Q-69.** Tell me, do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements? (a) The practice of baad is acceptable. (Percent who disagree.)

Income remains a factor for agreeing with baad, with respondents reporting a household income of AFN 5,000 per month or less more likely to agree than those with a monthly income over AFN 5,000 (figure 8.3).

### BAAD IS ACCEPTABLE, BY HOUSEHOLD INCOME

"THE PRACTICE OF BAAD IS ACCEPTABLE," BY MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME	AGREE (STRONGLY OR SOMEWHAT)	DISAGREE (STRONGLY OR SOMEWHAT)
	%	%
LESS THAN AFN 2,000	13	87
AFN 2,001–3,000	18	82
AFN 3,001–5,000	15	85
AFN 5,001–10,000	9	91
AFN 10,001–15,000	6	93
AFN 15,001–20,000	4	95
AFN 20,001–25,000	5	95
AFN 25,001–40,000	8	92
MORE THAN AFN 40,000	7	92

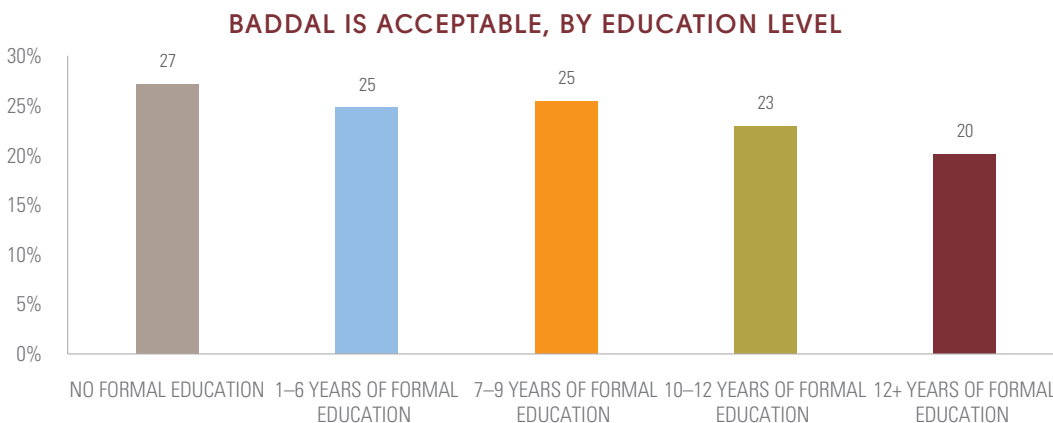
**FIG. 8.3: Q-69.** Tell me, do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly



disagree with the following statements? (a) The practice of baad is acceptable. **D-6.** For statistical purposes only, can you estimate your average monthly household income?

Ethnicity is not strongly correlated with opinions of baad, with Uzbeks (11.2%) only slightly more likely to strongly or somewhat agree with the practice than Tajiks (9.5%), Pashtuns (8.7%), and Hazaras (7.3%). Education remains a factor, and approval declines with greater educational attainment more steeply each year. Regional differences remain steady, with the West (23.8%) and the East (11.1%) reporting higher levels of agreement than the national average (9.5%), and Central/Kabul (3.1%) and Central/Hazarajat (4.3%) reporting the lowest.

This year, only 25.2% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that baddal is acceptable, continuing a steady decline in approval from 29.1% in 2017 and 31.8% in 2016. Gender is only a small factor, with men (25.9%) just slightly more likely than women (24.5%) to strongly or somewhat agree with the practice. Ethnicity is not a significant factor; but as in previous years, rural respondents are more likely than urban respondents to approve of the practice (28.2% vs. 16.1% in 2018; 32.3% vs. 19.7% in 2017). Respondents from some provinces are significantly more likely to report approval of baddal than others. Higher levels of education are also associated with lower levels of approval, with a 7-point gap separating those with no formal education (27.2%) from those with 12-plus years (20.1%) (figure 8.4).



**FIG. 8.4: Q-69.** Tell me, do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements? (b) The practice of baddal is acceptable. (Percent who “strongly” or “somewhat” agree.) **D-10.** What is the highest level (grade) of school you have completed, not including schooling in an Islamic madrasa?

While income is a factor affecting approval of baad, it makes little difference in opinions of baddal (figure 8.5). Economically, the practices have different implications for families, with baddal amounting to an equal exchange that relieves both families of paying a dowry. Baad, however, is used to resolve disputes in which one party could be required to pay a large sum of money or land to another party to resolve a criminal or civil matter, so the incentives are quite different.

### BADDAL IS ACCEPTABLE, BY HOUSEHOLD INCOME

"THE PRACTICE OF BADDAL IS ACCEPTABLE," BY MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME	AGREE (STRONGLY OR SOMEWHAT)	DISAGREE (STRONGLY OR SOMEWHAT)
	%	%
LESS THAN AFN 2,000	25	74
AFN 2,001–3,000	32	68
AFN 3,001–5,000	30	70
AFN 5,001–10,000	25	75
AFN 10,001–15,000	22	78
AFN 15,001–20,000	21	78
AFN 20,001–25,000	25	75
AFN 25,001–40,000	24	76
MORE THAN AFN 40,000	23	76

**FIG. 8.5: Q-69.** Tell me, do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements? (b) The practice of baddal is acceptable. **D-6.** For statistical purposes only, can you estimate your average monthly household income?

Attitudes towards *miras*, or the daughter's right to inheritance, show a continuing trend towards greater acceptance, and fully 90.2% of Afghans now agree strongly or somewhat that women are entitled to *miras*. While men and women express agreement at the same rate (90.2%), men are more likely to strongly agree than women (69.4% vs. 65.8%).

### PERCEPTIONS OF APPROPRIATE DRESS IN PUBLIC

Since 2014, the *Survey* has tracked perceptions of appropriate dress for women in public places. Respondents are shown six images of women wearing different garments and asked to select the woman they think is most appropriately dressed for a public space (figure 8.6).

Overall, an equal number of respondents, 30.9%, selected the images of a woman wearing a burqa (image 1) and a woman wearing a niqab (image 2); 15.3% selected the chador (image 3); 14.5% selected the tight, hair-covering hijab (image 4); 6.1% selected the loose hijab (image 5); and only 0.5% chose the image of a woman with no head covering (image 6). This reflects relatively consistent attitudes towards chadors, hijabs, and lack of head coverings, but a modest, steady shift since 2014 from a preference for the fully face-covering burqa to the niqab, which allows for vision unobstructed by cloth. While women are less likely than men to choose the burqa (women, 26.1%; men, 35.7%), they are slightly more likely than men to choose the niqab (31.5% vs. 30.2%). Women are more likely than men to choose both the chador (17.0% vs. 13.5%) and the tight hijab (17.5% vs. 11.6%). Preferences for the loose hijab or no head covering have shown little change among male or female respondents since 2014.

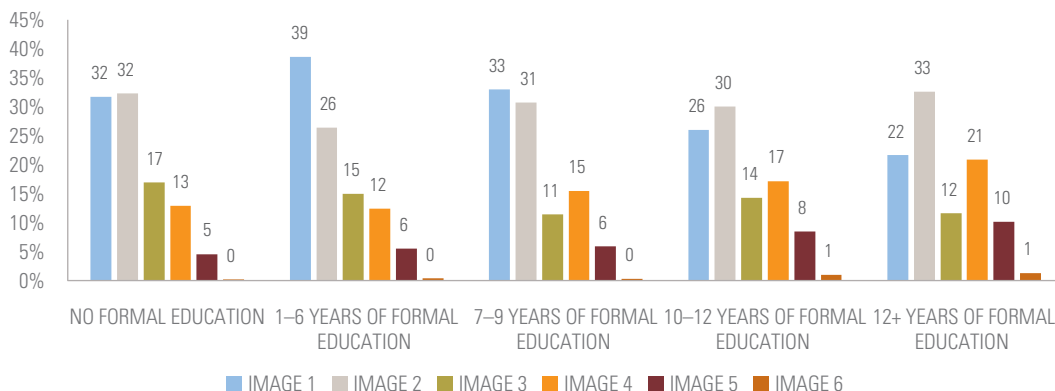
### APPROPRIATE DRESS FOR WOMEN IN PUBLIC



**FIG. 8.6: Q-77.** *In your view, which one of these women is dressed most appropriately for public places? Just point to one picture.*

As educational attainment increases, respondents are less likely to choose the burqa (31.7% of those with no formal education, 21.6% of those with 12-plus years). Respondents of every level of education are similarly likely to choose the niqab (32.3% of those with no formal education, 32.6% of those with 12-plus years), yet there are distinct differences among those who select the chador (no formal education, 17.0%; 12-plus years, 11.6%). For the tight and loose hijabs, higher levels of formal education are correlated with increased preference (figure 8.7).

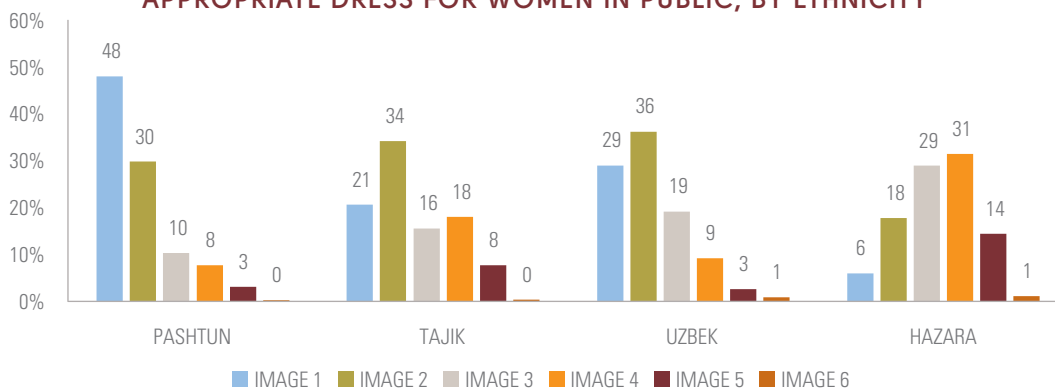
## APPROPRIATE DRESS FOR WOMEN IN PUBLIC, BY EDUCATION LEVEL



**FIG. 8.7: Q-77.** *In your view, which one of these women is dressed most appropriately for public places?*

Ethnicity also plays a part in perceptions of appropriate women’s dress (figure 8.8). Pashtuns are more likely to choose the image of the burqa (48.0%) than the niqab (29.8%) or the chador (10.4%), while Tajiks and Uzbeks are most likely to choose the niqab (34.2% and 36.2%, respectively). Hazaras are more likely to choose the tight hijab (31.4%) or the chador (28.9%) than the niqab (17.8%) or the burqa (6.0%). As in previous years, rural respondents (34.9%) are more likely to choose the burqa than urban respondents (18.8%); equal percentages choose the niqab (rural, 31.0%; urban, 30.3%) or the chador (rural, 15.6%; urban, 14.1%); but urban respondents are significantly more likely to choose the tight hijab (rural, 11.9%; urban, 22.5%) or the loose hijab (rural, 3.9%; urban, 12.5%).

## APPROPRIATE DRESS FOR WOMEN IN PUBLIC, BY ETHNICITY

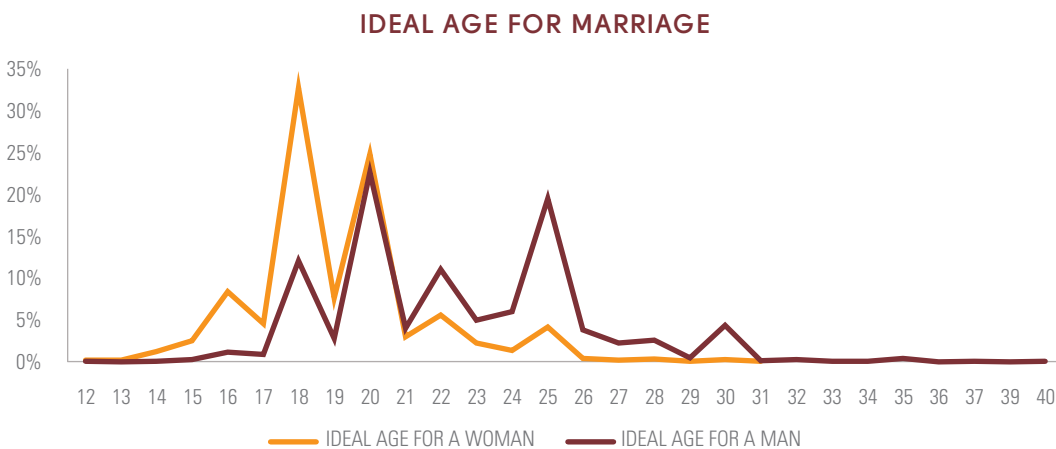


**FIG. 8.8: Q-77.** *In your view, which one of these women is dressed most appropriately for public places?*

## IDEAL AGE FOR A WOMAN TO MARRY

Pursuant to the Afghan Civil Code (1977), the legal age for marriage in Afghanistan is 16 years for females and 18 years for males, although adolescents can be married at age 15 with the permission of their guardian or the court. Despite the recent push to end child marriage, including a call in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals for an end to the practice globally by 2030, a significant number of Afghan girls are married before their 18th birthday.

Each year since 2014, Afghans have been asked what age they think is ideal for a woman or a man to get married (figure 8.9). Overall, respondents choose a younger ideal age for a woman than for a man, and respondents are more likely to offer ages under 18 as ideal for women than for men. The most commonly stated ideal age for a woman to marry, chosen by both male and female respondents, is 18 (male respondents, 36.4%; female respondents, 29.0%), followed by 20 (male, 22.5%; female, 27.1%). A small proportion of male and female respondents (0.3% of each) say 12 years or 13 years is the ideal age for a woman to marry; 1.2% say 14; 2.5% say 15; 8.4% say 16; and 4.5% say 17. The ideal age for men to marry is higher, with 22.6% of respondents saying 20 years and 19.5% saying 25 years. Only 2.4% of respondents give ages below 18 as ideal for men to marry, whereas 17.0% of respondents list ages below 18 as ideal for women to marry.



**FIG. 8.9: Q-81.** What do you think is the best age for a woman to get married? **Q-82.** What do you think is the best age for a man to get married?

## 8.3 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

### KEY QUESTIONS

- Q-75. Thinking about women in leadership positions, please tell me, do you agree or disagree that it is acceptable for women to have access to these leadership roles? Strongly or somewhat? (a) Member of a community development council. (b) Governor of a province. (c) CEO of a large company. (d) Minister or cabinet member. (e) Running for president of Afghanistan.*
- Q-76. Would you prefer to be represented by a man or a woman in the national parliament?*
- Q-78. Do you think that political leadership positions should be mostly for men or mostly for women, do you think that both men and women should have equal representation in the political leadership, or should leadership positions be open to anyone based on merit?*
- Q-79. Do you think women should be allowed to vote in elections?*
- Q-80. If women vote, do you think that women should decide for themselves who to vote for, that men should decide for women who they should vote for, or that women should decide for themselves but in consultation with men?*

The Afghan constitution forbids gender discrimination, and women have made significant gains in representation and participation in politics and leadership since 2001, but cultural traditions still impose significant barriers to the full realization of equal rights for men and women. The *Survey* explores Afghan attitudes by asking if respondents agree or disagree that women should have access to certain leadership roles, including seats on community development councils (CDCs), the office of governor, CEO of a large company, minister or cabinet member, or running for president (figure 8.10).

Overall, approval of women in leadership positions has fallen 2 to 3 percentage points since 2015, and approval remains highest for the less prestigious CDC leadership positions and lowest for women running for president. Views of women in leadership are most closely correlated with rural or urban residence, gender, and ethnicity. In all cases, urban respondents are more likely than rural respondents to support women in leadership positions, and women are more likely than men. Throughout, Hazara respondents are the most likely to support women in leadership.

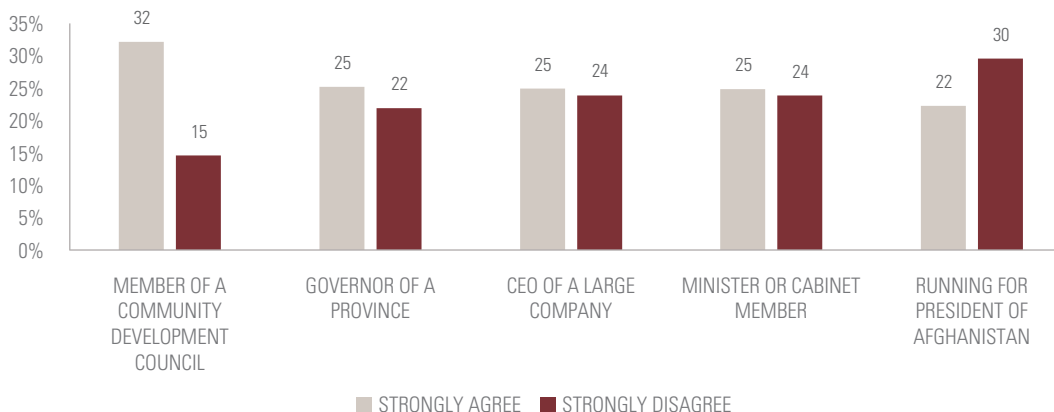
This year, respondents are less likely to strongly or somewhat agree that women should have access to CDC leadership (67.5%) than they were last year (69.7%). The proportion of respondents who strongly agree has risen one percentage point this year, to 32.1%, while those who somewhat agree has dropped 3.1 percentage points, to 35.4%. Female respondents are significantly more likely than male respondents to agree strongly that women should have access to CDC leadership positions (37.7% vs. 26.6%), but as in previous years, they are about equally likely to “somewhat” agree (female, 36.3%;

male, 34.5%). Ethnicity is a more significant factor, with Pashtuns (54.0%) far less likely than Uzbeks (69.8%), Tajiks (74.1%), or Hazaras (88.0%, the only ethnic group whose approval rose this year) to strongly or somewhat agree that women should have access to CDC leadership positions.

Support for women as provincial governors has dropped slightly, from 55.4% in 2017 to 53.1% this year. Urban respondents (33.6%) are more likely than rural respondents (22.5%) to strongly support women's access to this position. As with women's access to other leadership positions, there is wide variation among ethnic groups, with Pashtun respondents (17.6%) less likely to strongly agree than Uzbek (22.1%) or Tajik (27.6%) respondents, and Hazaras (50.7%) significantly more likely to agree. Consistent with previous years, regional disaggregation reflects cultural values, with the South West typically reporting the lowest support for women in any leadership position, including governorship (10.7% strongly agree), and the Central/Hazarajat region reporting the highest support (71.5%), with a 13.4 percentage point increase in strong agreement since 2017. While Daikundi, a province in the Central/Hazarajat region, did have an appointed female governor, she was removed in 2017, and all current governors are male.

Support has similarly decreased for women as CEO of a large company (52.0%, down from 54.6% in 2017) and minister or cabinet member (53.4%, down from 56.0% in 2017), with gender, urban and rural residence, and ethnicity providing the greatest sources of variation. Support for women running for president of Afghanistan has dropped to 46.1% from 48.2% last year, although respondents were more likely to strongly agree this year (22.3%) than in 2017 (20.7%). The proportion who strongly disagree has also increased, from 26.9% in 2017 to 29.6% this year. Women are significantly more likely to strongly or somewhat agree than men (52.9% vs. 39.3%), and Hazaras (67.9%) are more likely to strongly or somewhat agree than Tajiks (45.1%), Pashtuns (43.5%), or Uzbeks (36.2%). Respondents of all ethnicities have been increasingly less likely to support women running for president each year, with a relatively steady decline since the question was first asked in 2014.

## STRONG OPINIONS ON WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

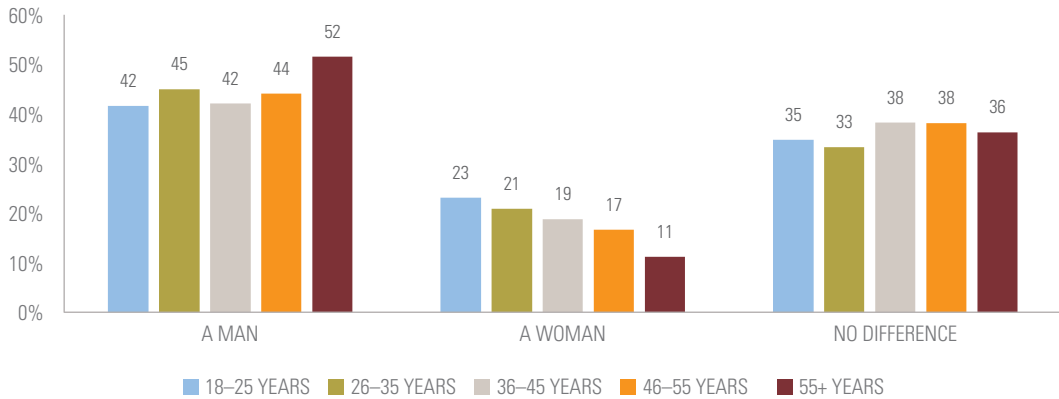


**FIG. 8.10: Q-75.** Do you agree or disagree that it is acceptable for women to have access to these leadership roles? Strongly or somewhat? (a) Member of a community development council. (b) Governor of a province. (c) CEO of a large company. (d) Minister or cabinet member. (e) Running for president of Afghanistan. (Percent who “strongly agree” or “strongly disagree.”)

When asked if they would prefer to be represented by a man or a woman in the national parliament, Afghans respond similarly to 2017. Respondents are more likely to state a preference for a man (43.7%, the same as 2017) than for a woman (19.9%, down from 20.6% in 2017). There has been a slight increase in those expressing no gender preference, from 34.1% in 2017 to 35.6% this year. Age is a significant factor in preferring male or female representation in parliament (figure 8.11), with 51.6% of respondents 55 or older, but just 41.6% of 18- to 25-year-olds, preferring male representation, while just 11.2% of those 55 and older prefer female representation, compared to 23.2% of 18- to 25-year-olds. The proportion of respondents with no gender preference varies little with age (34.8% to 36.3%, with no clear upward or downward trend based on age). Respondents in rural areas have stronger gender preferences (46.4% prefer a man, 20.8% prefer a woman) than respondents in urban areas (35.8% prefer a man, 17.3% prefer a woman), and correspondingly, respondents in urban areas (46.3%) are significantly more likely to have no gender preference than respondents in rural areas (32.0%). Although the proportion who have no gender preference has steadily increased since 2016, it is not as high as it was in 2007, when 58.4% of urban respondents and 43.3% of rural respondents expressed no preference. The subsequent drop may have been due to the increase in female candidates for government, which may have made the prospect of female parliamentarians more concrete. That is, the stated lack of gender preference could have been because many respondents found it inconceivable that a woman could be elected to parliament, so there was no need to have a preference.



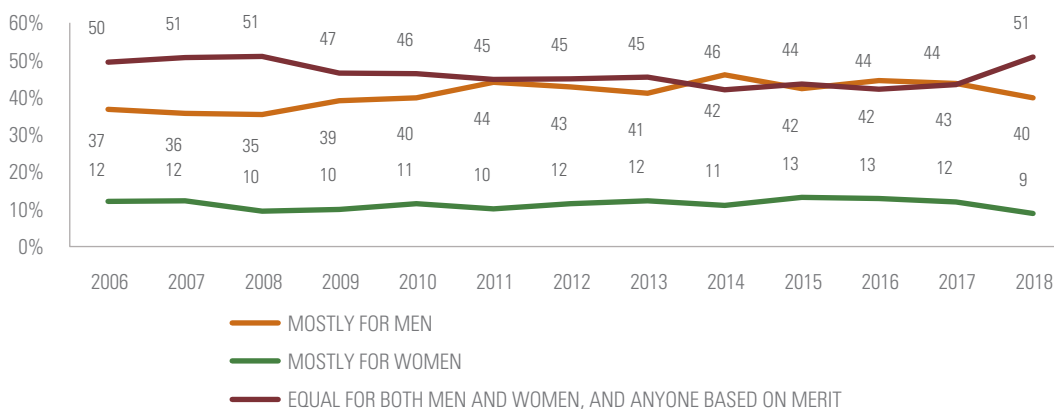
## PREFERRED GENDER FOR MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT



**FIG. 8.11: Q-76.** *Would you prefer to be represented by a man or a woman in the national parliament?*

As a corollary to attitudes toward representation, respondents were asked if they think that political leadership positions should be mostly for men or mostly for women, or that representation should be equally distributed. There has been a slight downward trend in respondents choosing “mostly for men” (39.9% in 2018, down from 43.8% in 2017) as well as “mostly for women” (8.9% in 2018, down from 12.0% in 2017) and a corresponding increase in those who answer “equally for both men and women.” This year another option was added, “anyone, based on merit” (19.5%), and 50.9% of respondents chose either this or “equally for both men and women,” up from 43.4% who last year chose “equal for both men and women” (figure 8.12).

## PERCEPTION OF POLITICAL LEADERSHIP POSITIONS



**FIG. 8.12: Q-78.** Do you think that political leadership positions should be mostly for men or mostly for women, that both men and women should have equal representation in the political leadership, or that leadership positions should be open to anyone, based on merit? (Percent who say each.) Note: Percent who say “men and women should have equal representation in the political leadership” and “leadership positions should be open to anyone, based on merit” are combined.

Men (53.6%) are significantly more likely than women (26.2%) to say “mostly for men,” and women (40.1%) are significantly more likely than men (22.7%) to say “equally for both men and women.” Urban respondents (33.2%) are less likely than rural respondents (42.2%) to say that political leadership positions should be mostly for men. This represents a one-year decline of more than 4.6 percentage points for rural respondents, compared to a 1.7 percentage point drop for urban respondents. Regional variation is significant and familiar, with respondents in the South West (55.8%) roughly five times more likely than respondents in Central/Hazarajat (11.8%) to say these positions are mostly for men. Respondents from the Central/Hazarajat region are also the least likely to say these positions are mostly for women (4.2%), overwhelmingly preferring instead either “equally for both men and women” or “anyone, based on merit” (38.2% and 45.8%, respectively). Education is not a clearly predictive factor, with similar responses from those with no formal education and those with 12-plus years of formal education.

Women’s participation in the political process has been, on its face, a great success story since the fall of the Taliban, when women had no rights of participation or representation. Yet the country remains divided, with Afghans in some areas still unsupportive of women’s political participation. Each year, the *Survey* asks respondents if they think women should have the right to vote in elections, and if they think women should make their own voting decisions or get advice from a man. An overwhelming number say yes, they

should make their own decisions. Conducted this year just months before parliamentary elections, and with tensions surrounding the 2019 presidential elections mounting, the *Survey* found a similar decline in support for women voting and making their own decisions about voting. Overall, 87.6% of respondents said that women should have the right to vote, down slightly from 89.0% in 2017 (see figure 8.13).

### SUPPORT FOR WOMEN VOTING, BY PROVINCE AND YEAR

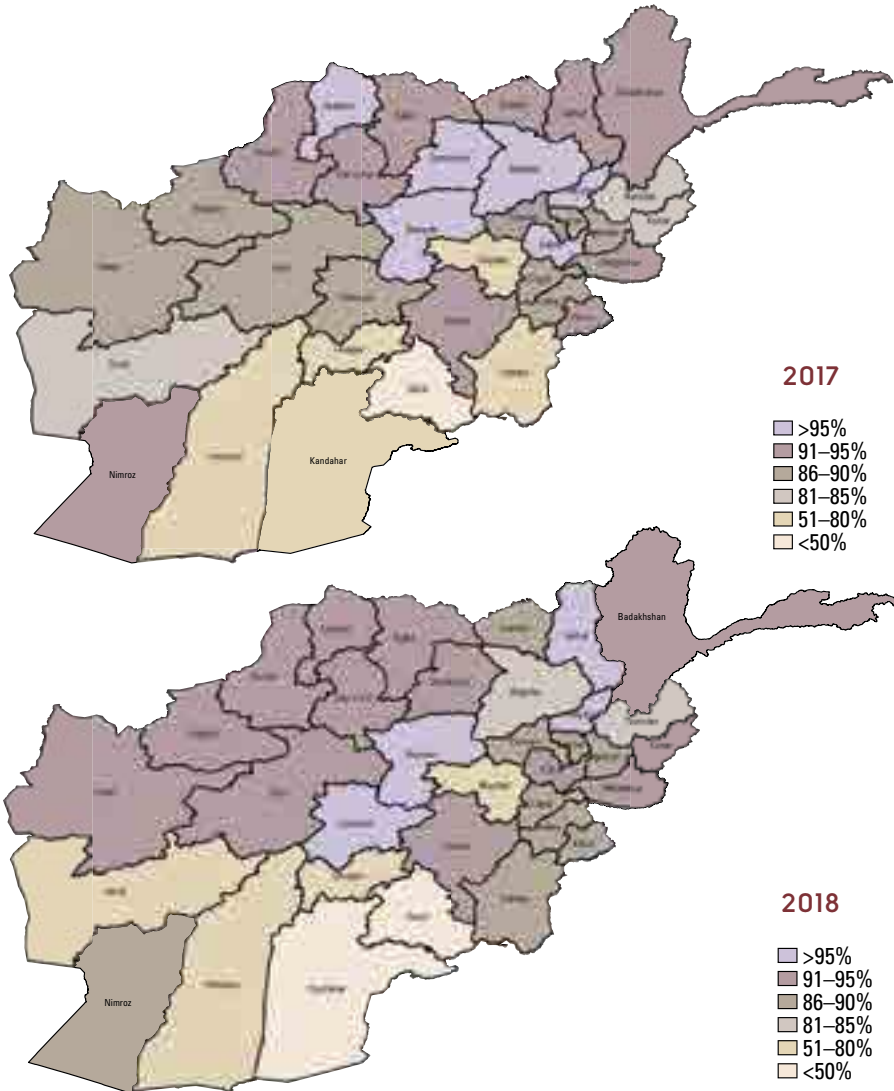
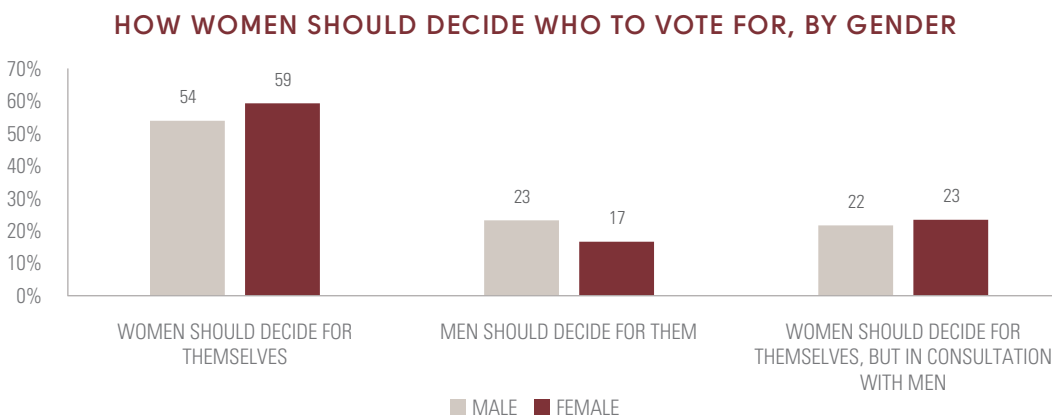


FIG. 8.13: Q-79. Do you think women should be allowed to vote in elections? (Percent who say yes.)

Support for women voting remains strong. Urban and rural respondents show similar numbers, but there is variation by ethnicity, gender, and region. Support for women voting has decreased slightly among female respondents (from 90.9% in 2017 to 88.3% in 2018), while among male respondents it remained comparable to last year (87.0% this year, 87.2% in 2017).

Support for women voting is comparable to last year among Uzbeks. It fell by similar amounts among Pashtuns (79.0%, down from 81.7% in 2017) and Tajiks (91.9%, down from 93.0% in 2017), but support has risen almost 3.9 percentage points among Hazaras, from 92.9% in 2017 to 96.8% this year. Accordingly, the Central/Hazarajat region has seen the largest increase in support, from 93.8% in 2017 to 99.1% this year. The South West region, on the other hand, has seen support drop from 66.9% in 2017 to 58.7% this year, more than 30.4 percentage points lower than the West, which, at 89.1%, is the region with the second-least support for women voting. Education continues to be a factor, with higher levels of education associated with greater support for women voting.

This year, Afghans are less likely to say that women should decide for themselves how to vote, and the same holds true for both male and female respondents (figure 8.14).



**FIG. 8.14: Q-80.** *If women vote, do you think that women should decide for themselves who to vote for, that men should decide for women who they should vote for, or that women should decide for themselves but in consultation with men?*

Across the board, there has been a slight decline in “women should decide for themselves,” from 59.7% in 2017 to 56.6% this year, and a slight increase in “men should decide for women,” from 16.9% in 2017 to 19.9% in 2018. This trend holds true across gender, urban or rural residence, and education level and among Pashtun, Tajik, and Uzbek respondents, but Hazara respondents were more likely this year (73.0%) than last year (66.0%) to say that women should decide for themselves who to vote for.

## 8.4 EDUCATION

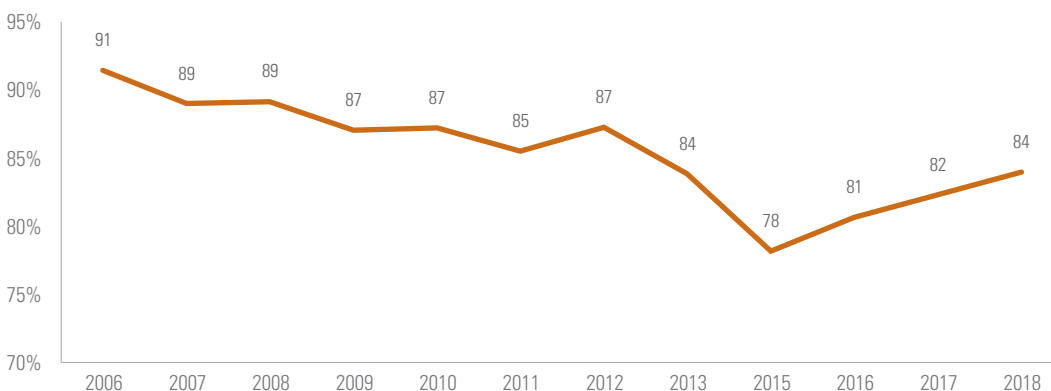
### KEY QUESTIONS

**Q-70.** *Some people say that women should have the same opportunities as men in education. Do you agree or disagree with this opinion? Strongly or somewhat?*

**Q-71.** *And for each of the following levels of education, do you agree or disagree with the opinion that men and women should have equal opportunities for education? Is that strongly or somewhat? (a) Islamic madrasa education. (b) Primary school. (c) High school. (d) University in your province. (e) Studying in another province. (f) Studying abroad on scholarship.*

The education system in Afghanistan remains a challenge for both girls and boys. The Ministry of Education is the largest employer of government workers in the country, with 262,000 employees. Recent studies have characterized corruption in the ministry and its effects on students as “devastating,” with endemic nepotism in teacher placement and poorly qualified teachers affecting all students.<sup>13</sup> Girls’ education in particular faces cultural and operational barriers, from the devaluing of education for girls to lack of teachers, classrooms, and sanitary facilities. Large-scale, donor-funded projects to improve girls’ education have had mixed results, and attitudes in some regions have proven intractable.<sup>14</sup>

### SUPPORT FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION

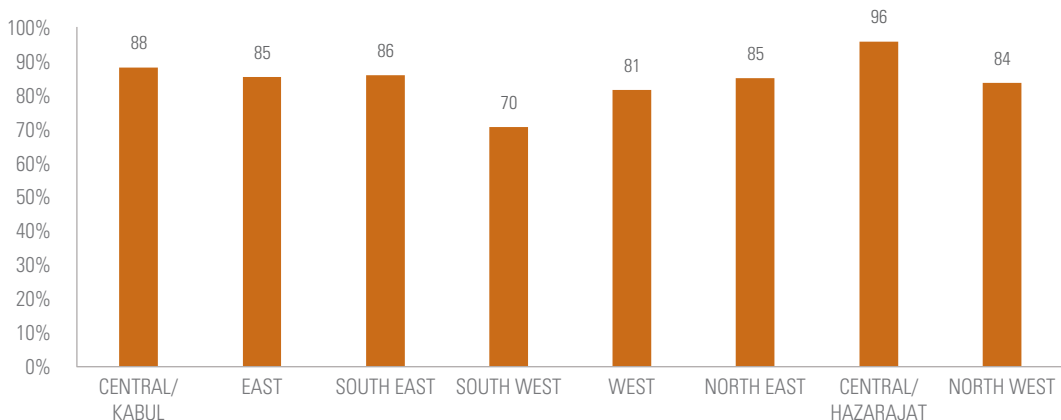


**FIG. 8.15: Q-70.** *Some people say that women should have the same opportunities as men in education. Do you agree or disagree with this opinion? Strongly or somewhat? (Percent who agree “strongly” or “somewhat.”)*

Overall, Afghans' support for girls' access to education has improved marginally, from 82.3% in 2017 to 84.0% this year (figure 8.15). Male respondents are significantly more likely to “strongly” agree with girls' access to education this year than last (40.2%, up from 33.6%), and fewer men “somewhat” agree this year than last (39.4%, down from 45.4% last year). Women who strongly or somewhat agree both increased this year, and women overall are more likely to support girls' access to education than men (79.6% of men strongly or somewhat agree, compared to 88.4% of women). The greatest variation is by region and province. Respondents in Central/Hazarajat (95.7%) and Central/Kabul (88.1%) are significantly more likely to support girls' access to education than respondents in the South West (70.5%) (figure 8.16). Respondents from the provinces of Bamyan (83.4%, up from 72.9% last year), Daikundi (77.4%, up from 48.4% last year), Kabul (71.4%, up from 64.9% last year), and Paktia (60.5%, up from 51.6% last year), express the highest levels of strong support, while the highest levels of strong disagreement with girls' access to education can be found in Zabul (51.5%, down from 52.8% last year) and Wardak (16.7%, up from 3.0% last year).

Some provinces have broad divides between male and female responses. In all provinces except Nuristan, Kandahar, Samangan, and Jawzjan, women are more likely than men to strongly or somewhat agree with girls' equal access to education. In eleven provinces, the divide between male and female opinion is over 15 percentage points: Badghis (75.0% men, 98.0% women), Logar (66.8% men, 88.6% women), Ghazni (79.9% men, 95.7% women), Paktia (70.6% men, 98.1% women), Kunduz (72.2% men, 90.2% women), Sar-e-Pul (73.7% men, 93.5% women), Herat (74.4% men, 89.4% women), Farah (63.3% men, 86.3% women), Uruzgan (52.2% men, 87.4% women), Ghor (70.8% men, 86.3% women), and Panjshir (73.6% men, 90.6% women).

### SUPPORT FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION, BY REGION

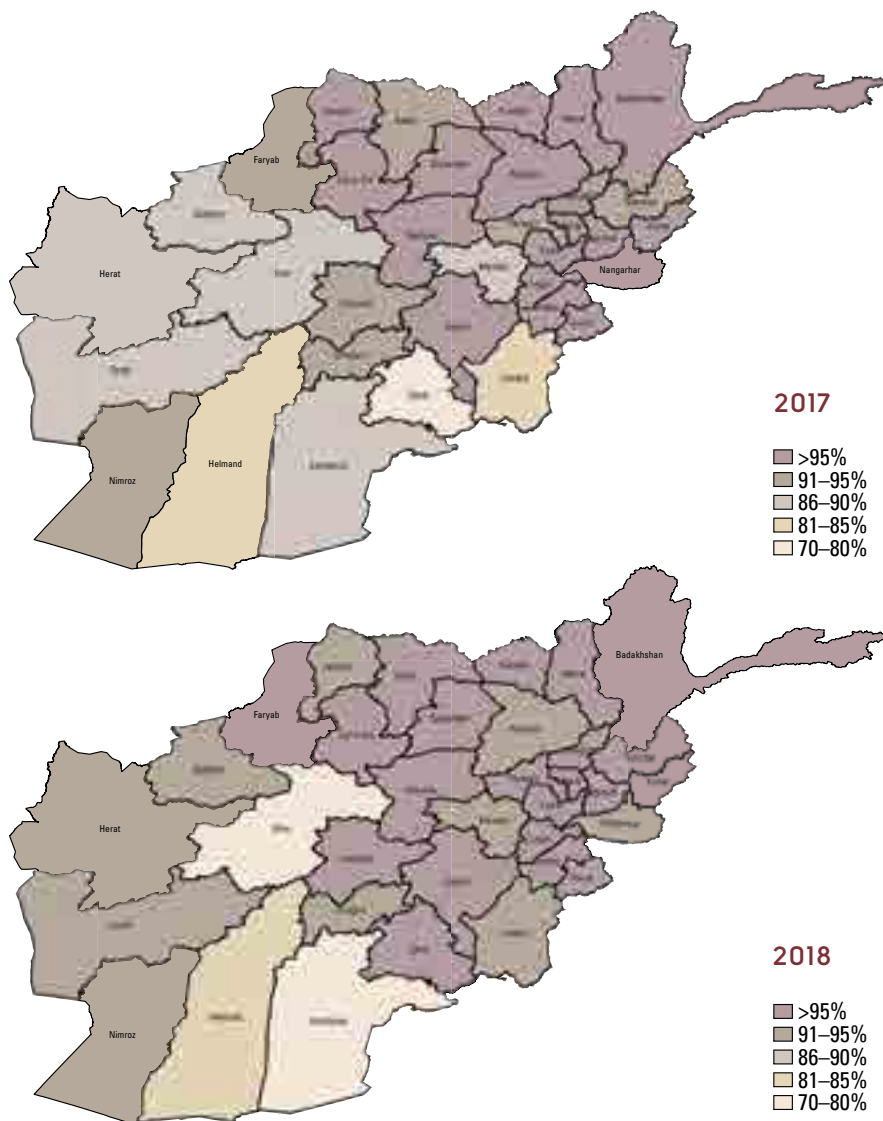


**FIG. 8.16: Q-70.** Some people say that women should have the same opportunities as men in education. Do you agree or disagree with this opinion? Strongly or somewhat? (Percent who agree “strongly” or “somewhat.”)

Respondents were asked further about their support for specific levels of education for girls, including Islamic madrasa education, primary school, high school, studying at a university in one's province, studying in another province, and studying abroad on scholarship. Overall, support has increased slightly for Islamic madrasa, primary school, and high school education for women, while support has declined for studying at a university in one's province, studying in another province, and studying abroad. Consistent with previous years, support is greater for lower levels of schooling, urban respondents are more likely to support each level of schooling than rural respondents, and women are more likely to support female education than men (except for Islamic madrasa and primary school education).

Support for equal access to Islamic madrasa education is the highest, with a slight overall increase to 94.9% this year, up from 94.3% in 2017. Men (95.4%) are slightly more likely than women (94.4%) to “strongly” or “somewhat” support madrasa schooling for both men and women, and urban respondents (96.6%) are more likely than rural (94.3%). Some specific provinces have seen significant shifts since last year. Respondents in Kandahar are less likely this year (48.4%) than last year (60.3%) to “strongly” support equal access to a madrasa education for men and women, but respondents in Paktia, Paktika, Nuristan, Helmand, Zabul, and Daikundi have registered 10- to 30-point increases in support (figure 8.17).

## SUPPORT FOR WOMEN'S ACCESS TO MADRASA EDUCATION, BY PROVINCE AND YEAR



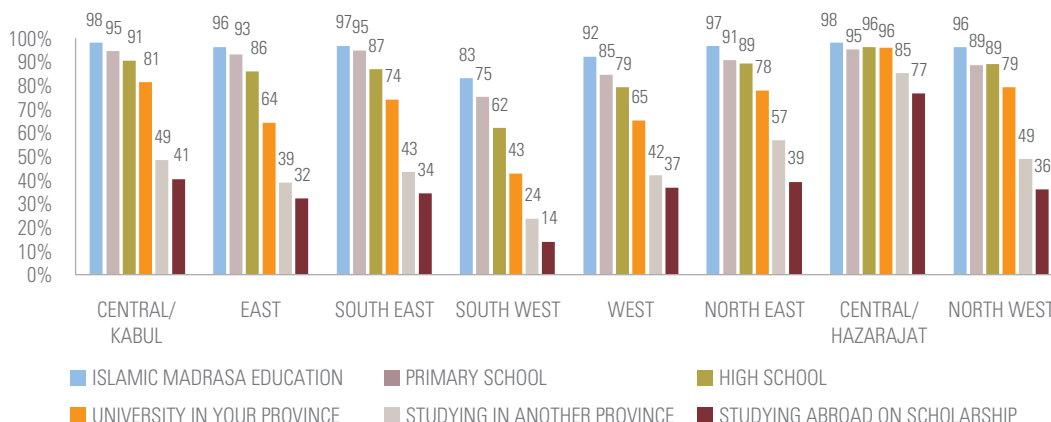
**FIG. 8.17: Q-71.** And for each of the following levels of education, do you agree or disagree with the opinion that men and women should have equal opportunities for education? Is that strongly or somewhat? (a) Islamic madrasa education. (Those who “strongly” or “somewhat “agree.”)



Respondents are more likely this year than last to agree that girls should have equal access to primary school (89.7%, up from 87.5% in 2017), with urban respondents more likely to say so than rural (93.6% vs. 88.4%). Male and female respondents give comparable support to equal primary education (89.4% of women, 89.9% of men), but men are more likely than women to strongly agree (67.8% of men, 63.3% of women).

As the level of education in question rises, the urban-rural divide grows wider, with urban respondents more likely to support equal access to higher levels than rural respondents. Support for girls' equal access to high school has grown marginally overall, from 84.5% in 2017 to 85.0% this year, with a 10.2-point gap between urban respondents (92.6%) and rural respondents (82.4%). Support for equal access to university education in one's own province dropped slightly overall, from 73.3% in 2017 to 72.4% in 2018, with significant differences by ethnicity. Hazaras (88.1%) and Tajiks (78.9%) are more likely than Uzbeks (76.5%) or Pashtuns (60.1%) to agree that girls should have access to university education in her province, and these differences correspond to regional differences as well, with respondents in the Central/Hazarajat region (96.0%) significantly more likely than respondents from the South West (42.7%) to agree that girls should have access to a university in their own province (see figure 8.18). Support for studying in another province has fallen slightly this year, with 46.0% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree, down from 47.2% last year, and again with high support from Hazara respondents (71.4% strongly or somewhat agree) and lower support from Pashtun respondents (34.1% strongly or somewhat agree). Respondents overall are least likely to agree with girls' equal access to study abroad on scholarship (36.1% strongly or somewhat agree, down from 36.5% in 2017), with Hazara respondents (64.4%) more likely than those of any other ethnicity to strongly or somewhat agree.

## SUPPORT FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION, BY REGION



**FIG. 8.18: Q-71.** And for each of the following levels of education, do you agree or disagree with the opinion that men and women should have equal opportunities for education? Is that strongly or somewhat? (a) Islamic madrasa education. (b) Primary school. (c) High school. (d) University in your province. (e) Studying in another province. (f) Studying abroad on scholarship. (Percent who agree “strongly” or “somewhat.”)

## 8.5 ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

### KEY QUESTIONS

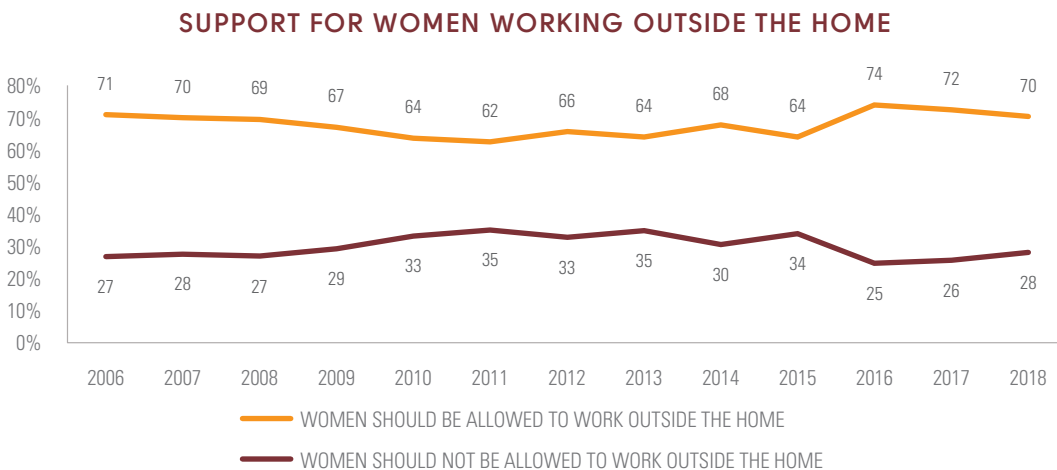
**Q-72.** Some people say that women should be allowed to work outside the home, while others say that women should not be allowed to work outside the home. What is your opinion on this?

**Q-73.** (Ask if answer to Q-72 is “women should not be allowed to work outside the home.”) Why do you say that women should not be allowed to work outside the home?

**Q-74.** For each of these places, do you agree or disagree that it is acceptable for women to work there? Strongly or somewhat? (a) Government offices. (b) Nongovernmental organizations. (c) Hospitals or clinics. (d) Female-only schools. (e) Coed schools. (f) Army/police. (g) A private company outside the home (factory, shop, business) with female employees only. (h) A private company outside the home (factory, shop, business) where male and female employees work in the same room.

**D-8.** Do female members of the family contribute to this household’s income, or not?

The international community’s focus on women’s economic empowerment has been wide-ranging, with mixed success and some contentious disagreements about implementation, policy, and efficacy of interventions.<sup>15</sup> Since its inception, the *Survey* has asked if women should be allowed to work outside the home. From a record high in 2016 of 74.0% of Afghans saying women should be allowed to work outside the home, there has again been a marginal decline in support, with 70.3% responding positively this year, down from 72.4% in 2017 (see figure 8.19). While the initial rise in support has been attributed to poor economic growth and high unemployment rates leading to reduced household income, the economy has not improved since 2016, pointing to additional factors influencing people’s opinions.



**FIG. 8.19: Q-72.** *Some people say that women should be allowed to work outside the home, while others say that women should not be allowed to work outside the home. What is your opinion on this?*

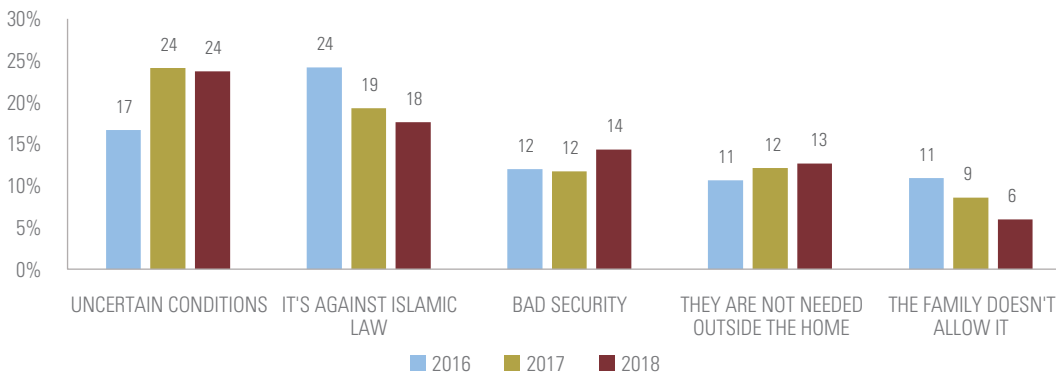
There is significant variation in opinions. As seen in previous years, women (79.8%, down from 80.9% in 2017) are significantly more likely than men (60.8%, down from 63.9% in 2017) to think women should be allowed to work outside the home. Urban respondents (80.5%) are much more likely than rural (66.9%) to agree. Educational attainment is less of a factor this year, although respondents with no formal education are still less likely to agree than those with 12-plus years of formal education (68.9% vs. 75.2%). Age is not a significant predictor, with respondents 18–25 years old only slightly more likely than those 55 or older to support women’s employment outside the home (72.5% vs. 68.6%).

Region and ethnic background provide the widest variation, with respondents in the Central/Hazarajat region (91.7%) more likely than respondents in the North West (78.7%), the North East (73.5%),

Central/Kabul (73.0%), the West (70.3%), the South East (68.6%), the East (67.3%), or the South West (46.7%) to say that women should be allowed to work outside the home. These trends are similar to those seen in previous years and are in line with other indicators of attitudes about women's rights and empowerment.

Those respondents who say they do not think women should be allowed to work outside the home were asked why (figure 8.20). The most common reasons this year are uncertain conditions (23.7%), belief that it is against Islamic law (17.6%), bad security (14.3%), the assertion that women are not needed outside the home (12.7%), lack of permission from family (6.0%), and worries about moral corruption (5.1%). Of these top answers, women (17.5%) are more likely than men (12.8%) to cite bad security, and men (21.1%) are significantly more likely than women (10.3%) to say it is against Islamic law. Those in urban and rural areas are comparable when citing bad security; urban respondents (26.1%) are more likely than rural respondents (23.2%) to cite uncertain conditions; rural respondents (18.5%) are more likely than urban (13.5%) to cite Islamic law. Respondents in Wardak (37.6%) and Farah (51.8%) are most likely to cite uncertain conditions, while those in Parwan (28.0%) and Daikundi (32.1%) are most likely to cite bad security.

### REASONS WHY WOMEN SHOULD NOT WORK OUTSIDE THE HOME

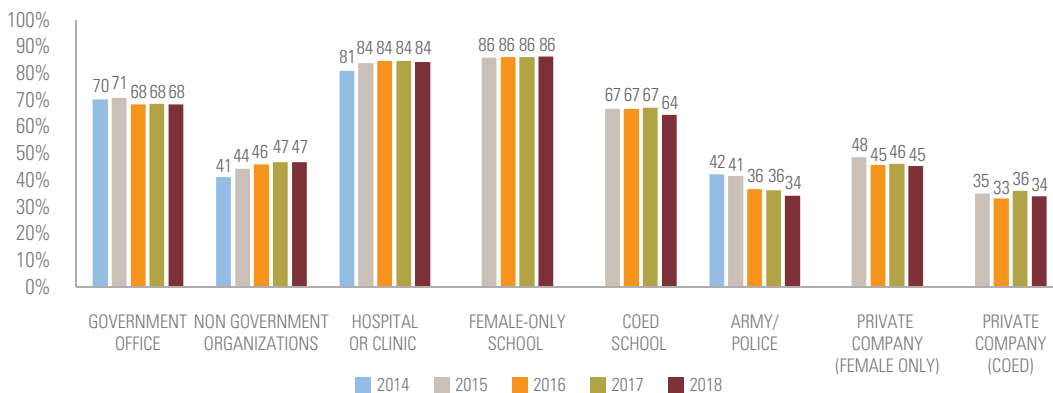


**FIG. 8.20: Q-73.** (Ask if answer to Q-72 is "women should not be allowed to work outside the home.") Why do you say that women should not be allowed to work outside the home?

Respondents were asked if they think it is acceptable for women to work in specific kinds of jobs, including female-only schools, hospitals or clinics, government offices, coed schools, private companies outside the home with female-only staff, coed private companies outside the home, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and the army/police (figure 8.21). Support remains highest for female-only

schools, with 86.1% of respondents strongly or somewhat agreeing that it is acceptable, and hospitals or clinics, with 84.1% agreeing. Respondents were more likely to agree with employment in government offices (68.1%) and coed schools (64.3%) than in nongovernmental organizations (46.5%), private female-only companies (45.1%), the army/police (34.1%), or coed private companies (33.7%).

### ACCEPTABLE PLACES OF EMPLOYMENT FOR WOMEN



**FIG. 8.21: Q-74.** For each of these places, do you agree or disagree that it is acceptable for women to work there? Strongly or somewhat? (a) Government offices. (b) Nongovernmental organizations. (c) Hospitals or clinics. (d) Female-only schools. (e) Coed schools. (f) Army/police. (g) A private company outside the home (factory, shop, business) with female employees only. (h) A private company outside the home (factory, shop, business) where male and female employees work in the same room. (Percent who “strongly” or “somewhat” agree.)

Ethnicity is a strong predictor of attitudes about certain types of employment. Hazaras (40.2%) are significantly more likely than Tajiks (20.5%), Pashtuns (15.3%), or Uzbeks (14.9%) to strongly agree with women working at a NGO, and Hazaras (51.4%) are also more likely to strongly or somewhat agree with women working in the army/police than Tajiks (36.5%), Uzbeks (34.4%), or Pashtuns (26.8%). Pashtun approval of working in coed schools has dropped from 54.7% in 2017 to 45.9% this year, while respondents of other ethnic backgrounds report levels of approval similar to or higher than last year.

Urban respondents and women are more likely than rural respondents and men to say that women should be allowed to work in any of the suggested occupations, and the disparity is usually greatest at the level of “strongly” agreeing or disagreeing, as opposed to “somewhat,” where divides are less significant. For example, women (45.4%) are significantly more likely than men (30.7%) to strongly agree with working in government offices. As in previous years, women are significantly more likely than men to

strongly agree with women working in Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs) (23.4% women vs. 15.9% men) and hospitals or clinics (64.5% women vs. 59.6% men). Other occupations do not show significant differences by gender. Urban or rural residence is one of the largest factors for approval of all jobs for women (figure 8.22).

### ACCEPTABLE PLACES OF EMPLOYMENT FOR WOMEN, BY URBAN AND RURAL

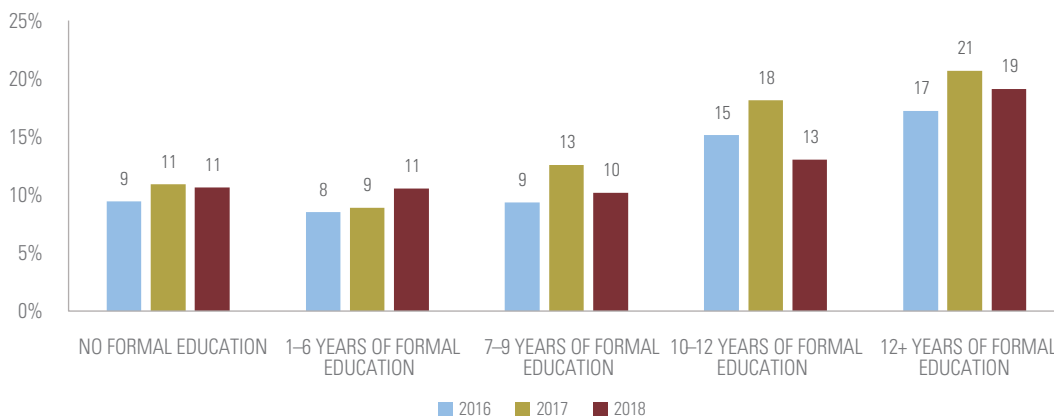
EMPLOYMENT TYPE	URBAN, STRONGLY AGREE	RURAL, STRONGLY AGREE
	%	%
GOVERNMENT OFFICE	50	34
NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION	26	18
HOSPITAL/CLINIC	74	58
FEMALE-ONLY SCHOOL	80	62
COED SCHOOL	51	32
ARMY/POLICE	17	11
FEMALE-ONLY PRIVATE COMPANY	30	18
COED PRIVATE COMPANY	16	10

**FIG. 8.22: Q-74.** For each of these places, do you agree or disagree that it is acceptable for women to work there? Strongly or somewhat? (a) Government offices. (b) Nongovernmental organizations. (c) Hospitals or clinics. (d) Female-only schools. (e) Coed schools. (f) Army/police. (g) A private company outside the home (factory, shop, business) with female employees only. (h) A private company outside the home (factory, shop, business) where male and female employees work in the same room. (Urban and rural respondents.)

Regional variation in views of acceptable employment for women is comparable to regional differences in other indicators, with the Central/Hazarajat and Central/Kabul regions usually significantly more likely to agree with women's employment than the South West region.

Interestingly, the slight drop in approval of women working in coed private companies is seen mostly in urban populations and in those with 7–9, 10–12, or 12-plus years of formal schooling (figure 8.23).

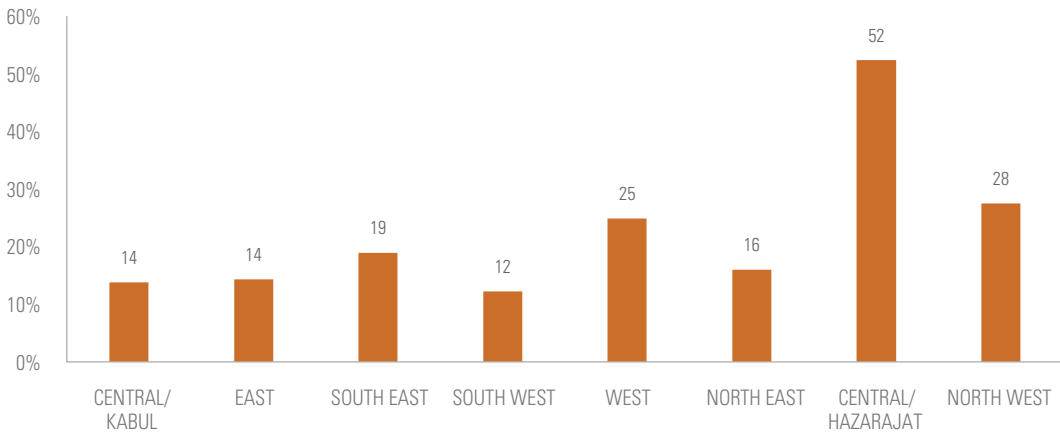
## WOMEN SHOULD WORK IN COED PRIVATE COMPANIES



**FIG. 8.23: Q-74.** For each of these places, do you agree or disagree that it is acceptable for women to work there? Strongly or somewhat? (h) A private company outside the home (factory, shop, business) where male and female employees work in the same room. (Percent who “strongly” agree.)

The *Survey* asks respondents if female members of the family contribute to the household income. Overall responses this year are similar to last, with 19.1% of respondents saying yes, down from 20.1% last year and a record high of 22.6% in 2015. A slight gender difference—20.2% of men, but only 18.0% of women, say women contribute to the household income—is similar to previous years, perhaps reflecting men’s more comprehensive knowledge of household finances. Respondents in Central/Hazarajat (52.4%) and the North West (27.5%) are significantly more likely to say yes than respondents in Central/Kabul (13.8%) or the South West (12.2%) (figure 8.24). Hazara respondents (35.9%) are more likely than Uzbeks (24.5%), Tajiks (17.7%), or Pashtuns (11.9%) to say yes, and higher levels of education are correlated with more positive responses. The factors determining whether women contribute to household income are complex, involving not just approval to work outside the house (much female income contribution can come from household businesses), but the availability of work or the demand for products a woman is able to produce at home, the financial state of the household (some higher-income households do not have women contributing because it isn’t necessary, while some lower-income households do), and perceptions of security. Because of this, these numbers do not correlate straightforwardly with attitudes towards women’s rights and empowerment more generally.

## WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTION TO HOUSEHOLD INCOME



**FIG. 8.24: D-8.** Do female members of the family contribute to this household's income, or not? (Percent who say yes.)

## 8.6 GENERAL FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH SUPPORT FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS

This chapter highlights factors that indicate support among Afghans for the rights of girls and women. Figure 8.25 shows the demographic factors most robustly associated with support for women's rights. These associations are strongly correlated, but not necessarily causal, so they cannot in themselves explain attitudes towards women's rights in Afghanistan.

Pashtuns and Tajiks have the most commonalities in correlated factors when supporting women's rights: being female, having greater levels of education, living in an urban area, having a low level of fear while participating in sociopolitical activities, watching TV, and having a higher level of confidence in the Afghan National Security Forces. For Pashtuns, being single and wanting to leave the country if given the opportunity are also strongly associated with support for women's rights. Uzbek respondents who support women's rights are also more likely to be female, have more education, watch TV, and have high levels of confidence in the ANSF. Urban or rural residence is, surprisingly, not an associated factor for Uzbeks, but having an activity that earns income is, which isn't seen in respondents of any other ethnicity. Hazara respondents show the greatest difference from the national average. Being female, having more education, and watching TV, factors with strong correlations among respondents from all other major tribes, are not predictive for Hazaras. Being urban, having low levels of fear during sociopolitical activities, being single, and wanting to leave the country if given the opportunity are strongly associated factors, however. The only common factor for all ethnicities is higher levels of confidence in the ANSF.



## FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH SUPPORT FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS

AFGHANS WHO SUPPORT WOMEN'S RIGHTS, ON AVERAGE, ARE:	AFGHANS WHO DO NOT SUPPORT WOMEN'S RIGHTS, ON AVERAGE, ARE:
MORE LIKELY TO BE WOMEN	MORE LIKELY TO BE MEN
MORE LIKELY TO BE EDUCATED	LESS LIKELY TO BE EDUCATED
MORE LIKELY TO LIVE IN URBAN AREAS	MORE LIKELY TO LIVE IN RURAL AREAS
MORE LIKELY TO FEEL SAFE PARTICIPATING IN SOCIOPOLITICAL ACTIVITIES	LESS LIKELY TO FEEL SAFE PARTICIPATING IN SOCIOPOLITICAL ACTIVITIES
MORE LIKELY TO USE TV AS A SOURCE OF INFORMATION	LESS LIKELY TO USE TV AS A SOURCE OF INFORMATION
MORE LIKELY TO WISH TO LEAVE AFGHANISTAN	LESS LIKELY TO WISH TO LEAVE AFGHANISTAN
MORE LIKELY TO BE SINGLE	MORE LIKELY TO BE MARRIED OR PREVIOUSLY MARRIED
MORE LIKELY TO HAVE A HIGHER LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE IN THE AFGHAN NATIONAL SECURITY FORCES	MORE LIKELY TO HAVE A LOWER LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE IN THE AFGHAN NATIONAL SECURITY FORCES

**FIG. 8.25:** *Factors associated with support for women's rights, using OLS regression analysis on an 11-item scale for women's rights.<sup>16</sup>*

As in previous years, significantly more women (17.7%) than men (8.7%) always experience fear for their personal safety, and more women report that they or a family member experienced violence or crime in the past year. Some 18.6% of Afghans report that they or a member of their family was a victim of violence or some criminal act in the past year, significantly more rural respondents (20.8%) than urban (12.0%). Women and men are equally likely to say they were the victim of a criminal act, and they list the types of incidents with similar frequency. Physical attacks or beatings are the most common (43.5% of men, 39.1% of women), followed by stolen livestock (20.8% of men, 21.8% of women), pickpocketing (19.3% of men, 15.6% of women), racketeering/extortion (19.2% of men, 18.0% of women), burglary (13.9% of men, 13.2% of women), and murder (10.4% of men, 12.5% of women).

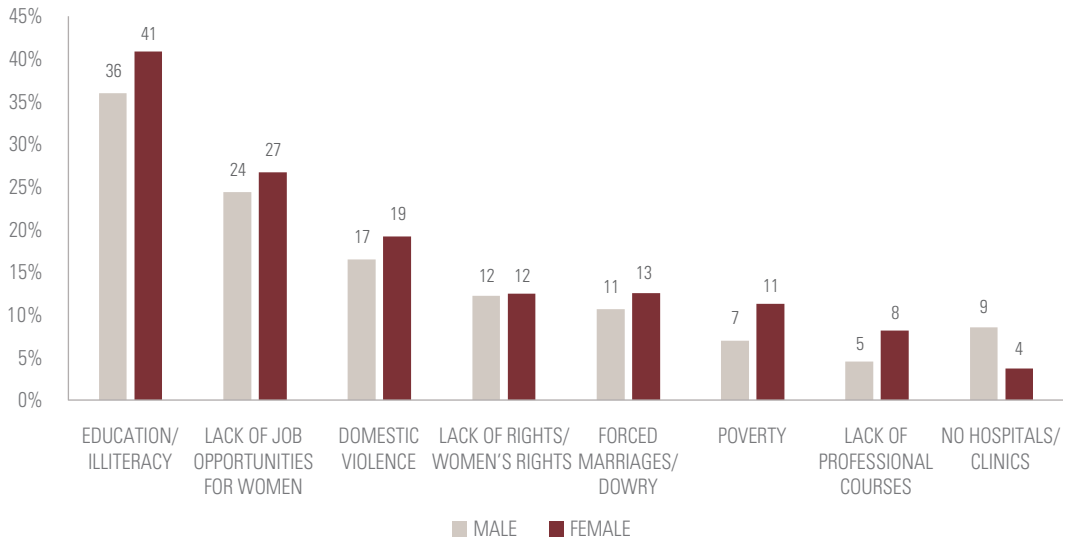
## EXPERIENCES OF VIOLENCE AND/OR CRIME

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
	%	%	%
PHYSICAL ATTACK OR BEATING	44	39	41
RACKETEERING/EXTORTION	19	18	19
BURGLARY/LOOTING	14	13	14
PICKPOCKETING	19	16	17
MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT / PROPERTY TAKEN FROM YOUR VEHICLE OR PARTS OF THE VEHICLE STOLEN	8	7	7
KIDNAPPING	11	11	11
LIVESTOCK STOLEN	21	22	21
MILITANTS / INSURGENT ACTIONS	5	5	5
POLICE ACTIONS	6	4	5
ARMY ACTIONS	1	2	1
FOREIGN FORCES ACTION (NIGHT RAIDS, DRONE ATTACKS, ETC.)	1	3	2
MURDER	10	13	11
SUICIDE ATTACKS	6	14	10
SEXUAL VIOLENCE	2	2	2
SMUGGLING	5	4	5
DON'T KNOW (VOL.)	0	1	1

**FIG. 8.26: Q-24.** *Have you or has anyone in your family suffered from violence or some criminal act in the past year? Q-25. (Ask if answer to Q-24 is yes.) If it is okay to ask, what kinds of violence or crimes did you or someone in your family experience in the past year?*

The *Survey* also asks Afghans to identify the two biggest problems facing women in their area (figure 8.27). According to women, their most significant challenges, in ranked order, are lack of education / illiteracy (40.9%), unemployment (26.7%), domestic violence (19.2%), lack of rights (12.5%), and forced marriage (12.5%). Women are slightly more likely than men to cite reasons related to education and the economy, while men are more likely than women to cite lack of hospitals (8.6% of men, 3.7% of women) and nothing (6.2% of men, 2.5% of women).

## BIGGEST PROBLEMS FACING WOMEN, BY GENDER



**FIG. 8.27: Q-7.** What, if anything, is the biggest problem facing women in this area today? What is the next-biggest problem?

## ENDNOTES

- 1 “Security Council Resolution 1325,” PeaceWomen website, accessed October 16, 2018, <https://www.peacewomen.org/SCR-1325>.
- 2 Nangyalai Tanai, “In the words of Nabila Musleh: ‘Women and men must benefit equally from government funding, instead of one benefitting at the cost of the other,’” *UN Women*, September 12, 2018, <http://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/news-and-events/stories/2018/09/in-the-words-of-nabila-musleh>.
- 3 “Afghanistan: Female labor force participation,” World Bank data from 1999 to 2017, GlobalEconomy.com website, accessed October 16, 2018, [https://www.theglobaleconomy.com/Afghanistan/Female\\_labor\\_force\\_participation/](https://www.theglobaleconomy.com/Afghanistan/Female_labor_force_participation/).
- 4 Mohammad Halim Karimi, “2nd Phase ‘Girls Education Challenge’ Programme launched,” *Pajhwok Afghan News*, July 17, 2018, <https://www.pajhwok.com/en/2018/07/17/2nd-phase-%E2%80%9Cgirls-education-challenge%E2%80%9D-programme-launched>.
- 5 USAID and Afghanistan Development Outreach and Communications Office, “Hundreds of Afghan Women Set to Join the Government Workforce,” press release, Reliefweb, April 18, 2018, <https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/hundreds-afghan-women-set-join-government-workforce-endarips>.
- 6 Camille Wilson, “Top 10 Facts about Girls’ Education in Afghanistan,” *Borgen Project blog*, July 3, 2018, <https://borgenproject.org/facts-about-girls-education-in-afghanistan/>.
- 7 Special Investigator General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *USAID’s Promoting Gender Equity in National Priority Programs*, SIGAR 18-69-AR (Washington, DC: SIGAR, September 2018), <https://www.sigarmil.com/pdfs/audits/SIGAR-18-69-AR.pdf>.
- 8 Devina Buckshee, “Re-Imagining Contemporary Afghan Culture Through Art,” *The Wire*, June 4, 2018, <https://thewire.in/the-arts/re-imagining-contemporary-afghani-culture-through-art>.
- 9 “Women’s Handicraft Expo Opens in Kabul,” *Tolo News*, December 2017, <https://www.tolonews.com/arts-culture/women’s-handicraft-expo-opens-kabul>.
- 10 Jelena Bjelica and Thomas Ruttig, “Widespread Violence yet Perpetrators go Unpunished: A new UN report on violence against Afghan women,” *Afghan Analysts Network*, May 29, 2018, <https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/widespread-violence-yet-perpetrators-go-unpunished-a-new-un-report-on-violence-against-afghan-women/>.
- 11 United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), *Justice and Impunity: Mediation of Criminal Offenses of Violence against Women*, (Kabul: UNAMA and OHCHR, May 2018), <https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/injustice-and-impunity-mediation-criminal-offences-violence-against-women>.
- 12 United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), *Harmful Traditional Practices and Implementation of the Law on Elimination of Violence Against Women in Afghanistan* (Kabul: UNAMA and OHCHR, December, 2010), 15–18, [https://unama.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/harmful\\_traditional\\_practices\\_english.pdf](https://unama.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/harmful_traditional_practices_english.pdf).
- 13 Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (MEC), *Ministry-wide Vulnerability to Corruption Assessment of the Ministry of Education* (Kabul: MEC, October 2017), [http://www.mec.af/files/2017\\_23\\_10\\_moe\\_english.pdf](http://www.mec.af/files/2017_23_10_moe_english.pdf).
- 14 Human Rights Watch (HRW), “*I Won’t Be a Doctor and One Day You’ll Be Sick: Girls’ Access to Education in Afghanistan*” (Kabul: HRW, October 17, 2017), <https://www.hrw.org/report/2017/10/17/i-wont-be-doctor-and-one-day-youll-be-sick/girls-access-education-afghanistan>.
- 15 SIGAR, *Promoting Gender Equity* (see note 7).
- 16 OLS regression is used to regress women’s rights (scale) to various demographic and attitudinal factors including gender, education, place of residence, marital status, having an activity to earn income, fear (scale), watching TV, intention to leave the country, and confidence in Afghan National Security Forces (scale). The whole model describes 20.1% of the variation in the independent variable (women’s rights).





1324

સાચાં સંસ્કૃતિ. મહાનગર. સર્વજ્ઞ.

## 9 MIGRATION

In 2011, the *Survey* first asked Afghans about their willingness to leave Afghanistan and live somewhere else if they were given the opportunity to do so. Since 2016, the *Survey* has been exploring this question in more depth. Each year, *Survey* findings reaffirm the multifaceted and complex nature of migration for Afghans.<sup>1</sup> Mobility is thought to function as a coping mechanism for Afghan households. It is considered a response to insecurity, uncertainty, and external shocks,<sup>2</sup> making Afghans' decisions to leave their country particularly vulnerable to shifts in prevailing push and pull factors.<sup>3</sup>

---

More than 58,000 registered Afghan refugees returned to Afghanistan in 2017, and it is estimated that 280,000 registered refugees and 420,000 undocumented Afghans will return in 2018.

---

One notable feature of Afghanistan's migration landscape today is the increasing numbers of refugees, asylum seekers, or migrants who are returning to the country on either a voluntary or forced basis.<sup>4</sup> The escalation of conflict in Syria and the "protection fatigue" that followed the significant influx of refugees into Europe in late 2015 and early 2016 appear to have placed Afghans at the center of "returns-focused" migration management policies.<sup>5</sup> More than 58,000 registered Afghan refugees returned to Afghanistan in 2017, and it is estimated that 280,000 registered refugees and 420,000 undocumented Afghans will return in 2018.<sup>6</sup> In just the six months from January 1 to June 30, 2018, over 364,000 undocumented Afghans returned from traditional host countries Pakistan and Iran.<sup>7</sup> In Iran, where Afghans have also historically migrated for work, recent sanctions have weakened the economy, sending many Afghan workers home and deterring other potential migrants.<sup>8</sup> Afghans who turned to countries in the European Union<sup>9</sup> and Turkey<sup>10</sup> are also at increasing risk of being returned. Between January and April 2018, in an effort to stem the flow of Afghan migrants, the Turkish government deported 7,100 Afghans back to Afghanistan, and another 2,000 reportedly remained detained.<sup>11</sup> The number of returns from Europe is difficult to ascertain with any certainty, but the available figures point to a dramatic rise in the number of Afghans being returned from Europe over the last two years.<sup>12</sup>

The proportion of Afghans who say they would leave Afghanistan and live somewhere else if given the opportunity is lower this year than last (36.8% vs. 38.8%). It is possible that this marginal drop in the desire to migrate, despite significant insecurity and instability in Afghanistan,<sup>13</sup> is a reaction to the widespread and enduring antimigration sentiment in Europe, the U.S. and elsewhere, also evident in the increasing numbers of Afghans returning to the country.

This chapter explores the reasons why some Afghans say they would leave their country if presented with the opportunity to do so, and why others, in the same circumstances, choose to stay. It also examines links between the experiences of returnees and respondents' willingness to migrate.

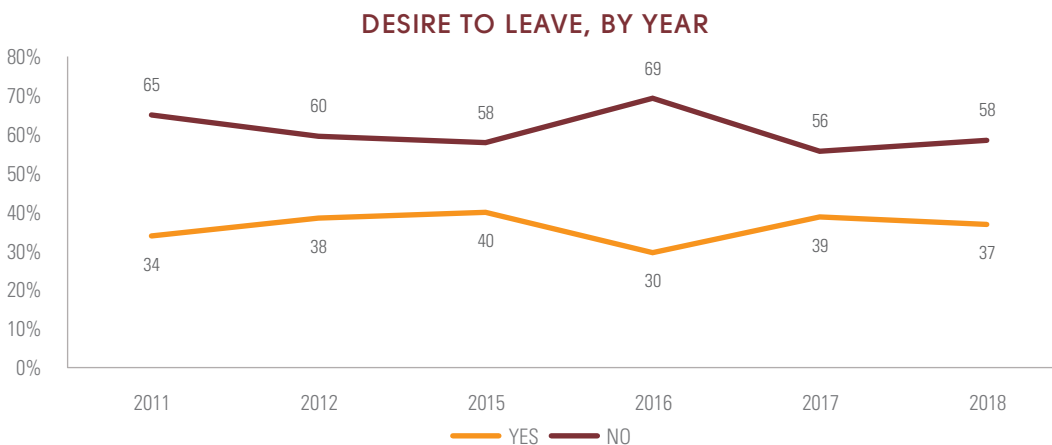
## 9.1 WILLINGNESS TO MIGRATE

### KEY QUESTIONS

**Q-83a.** *Tell me, if given the opportunity, would you leave Afghanistan and live somewhere else, or not?*

**Q-83d.** *(Ask if answer to Q-83a is yes.) Where would you want to live?*

From 2015 to 2016, the *Survey* found a significant decline in the proportion of Afghans willing to migrate, from 39.9% to 29.6%. In 2017, what seemed to be a correction occurred, when the proportion of Afghans willing to migrate rose again to 38.8%. This year, the desire to leave Afghanistan has abated slightly, with 36.8% of respondents saying they would leave Afghanistan and live somewhere else if given the opportunity (figure 9.1). When respondents with migration intentions are asked where they would like to live,<sup>14</sup> 38.3% prefer countries in Europe. The preference for Europe<sup>15</sup> has declined from 44.2% in 2016,<sup>16</sup> but interest in Turkey as a destination for migration has increased, from 26.7% in 2016 to 36.2% this year. Iran is cited by 35.8% of respondents, a small decrease from 37.9% in 2016. North America, countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), and Pakistan are less frequently cited (16.4%, 12.1%, and 7.9%, respectively), followed by Central Asia, Australia / New Zealand, and the rest of Asia (4.1%, 3.7%, and 6.5%, respectively).

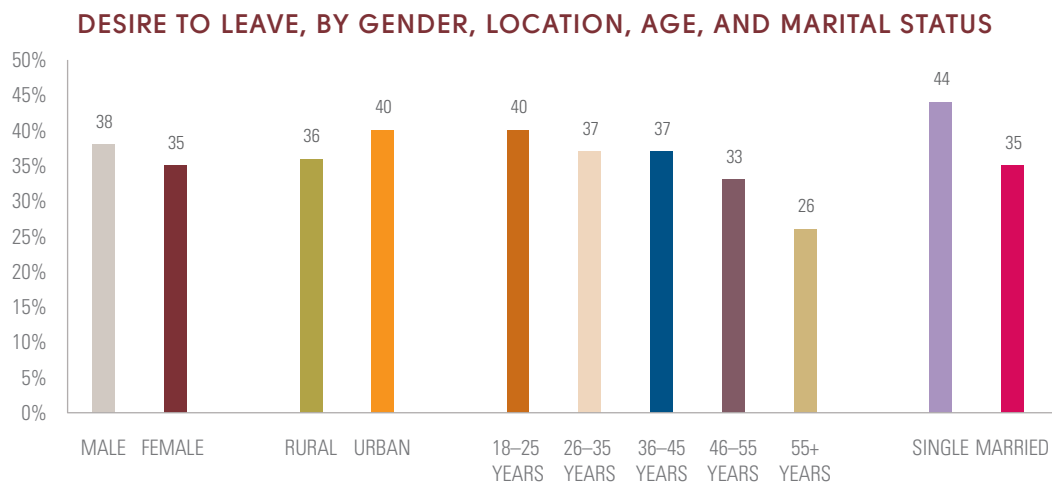


**FIG. 9.1: Q-83a.** *Tell me, if given the opportunity, would you leave Afghanistan and live somewhere else, or not?*



## DEMOGRAPHIC AND GEOGRAPHIC FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH MIGRATION

Men are more likely than women to say they would leave Afghanistan if given the opportunity (38.4% vs. 35.3%) (figure 9.2). Younger respondents are also more likely to say they would migrate if given the chance. Of respondents between the ages of 18 and 25, 40.1% say they would be willing to leave. Afghans age 26–35 and 36–45 are the next-most likely to say they would leave (37.2% and 37.3%, respectively). This compares to a third of Afghans between the ages of 46 and 55 (33.3%) and just over a quarter of those over 55 (26.1%).



**FIG. 9. 2: Q-83a.** *Tell me, if given the opportunity, would you leave Afghanistan and live somewhere else, or not? (Percent who say yes.) By demographic characteristics.*

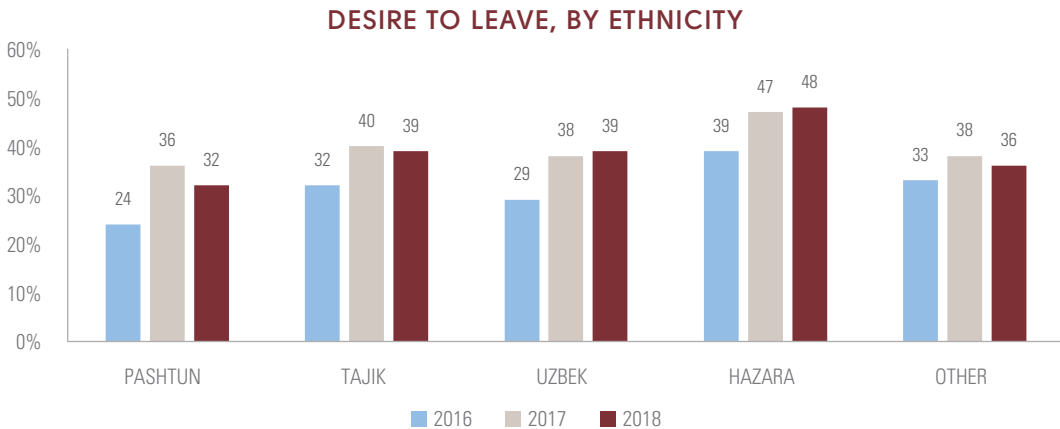
Single Afghans are more likely than those who are married or widowed to say they would leave (43.6%, 35.4%, and 33.9%, respectively). Single men are more likely to say they would leave Afghanistan (46.4%) than single women (39.9%), married men (36.3%), or married women (34.5%). The number of children that respondents have appears to feature more prominently in migration decisions this year. Specifically, respondents with one child are the most likely to say they would leave if given the opportunity (40.4%) compared to those with no children (34.7%), two children (36.4%), three children (33.7%), or more than three children (34.8%).

Consistent with the view that most of Afghanistan’s human capital lives in other countries,<sup>17</sup> the willingness to leave increases with educational attainment. Afghans with more than 12 years of formal education are significantly more likely to say they would leave (45.0%) than those with no formal schooling (32.5%). Respondents with 1–6 years of formal education, 7–9 years of formal education, or 10–12 years of formal education are also more likely to say they would leave than those with no formal schooling (35.1%, 39.4%, and 45.0% vs. 32.5%).

While there was a small difference last year in the migration intentions of Afghans who were able to generate an income and those who were not (41.3% vs. 36.7%), there is very little difference this year between these two groups (37.6% vs. 36.2%). Neither is there a straightforward relationship between average annual household income and a willingness to migrate, perhaps because income is confounded with other *Survey* variables. The biggest difference in migration intentions is between those who earn AFN 2,000–3,000 per month (33.6%) and those who earn AFN 3,000–5,000 per month (38.7%). Afghans in more highly skilled occupations, such as office workers, teachers, or the police, are again this year more likely to say they would leave Afghanistan if they had a chance (40.2%) than those in semi- or unskilled occupations, such as farmers or laborers (36.2%).

## ETHNICITY AND GEOGRAPHY

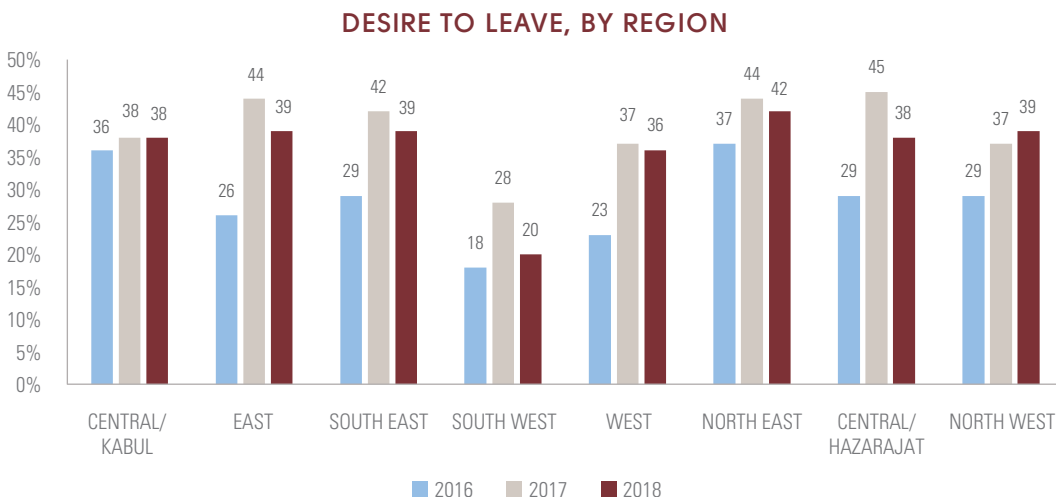
Hazaras, a predominantly Shi’a minority who continue to face disproportionate harassment and attacks by armed groups in Afghanistan,<sup>18</sup> consistently express greater willingness to leave the country than other ethnic groups (figure 9.3). Aside from a small decrease in the number of Pashtuns who say they would leave, from 35.9% last year to 31.7% this year, there has been very little change in the data by ethnicity. This year again, almost half of respondents who identify as Hazara (47.8%) say they would leave Afghanistan if given the opportunity, compared to 39.2% of Uzbeks, 38.7% of Tajiks, 31.7% of Pashtuns, and 35.9% of other minorities.



**FIG. 9.3: Q-83a.** *Tell me, if given the opportunity, would you leave Afghanistan and live somewhere else, or not? (Percent who say yes.)*

Since 2011, a higher percentage of urban than rural respondents have expressed a desire to migrate. This year is no different, with respective rates of 40.4% and 35.7%. This pattern holds across genders: both urban men and urban women are more likely to say they would leave Afghanistan if given the opportunity (40.7% and 39.9%, respectively) than rural men and rural women (37.4% and 34.0%, respectively).

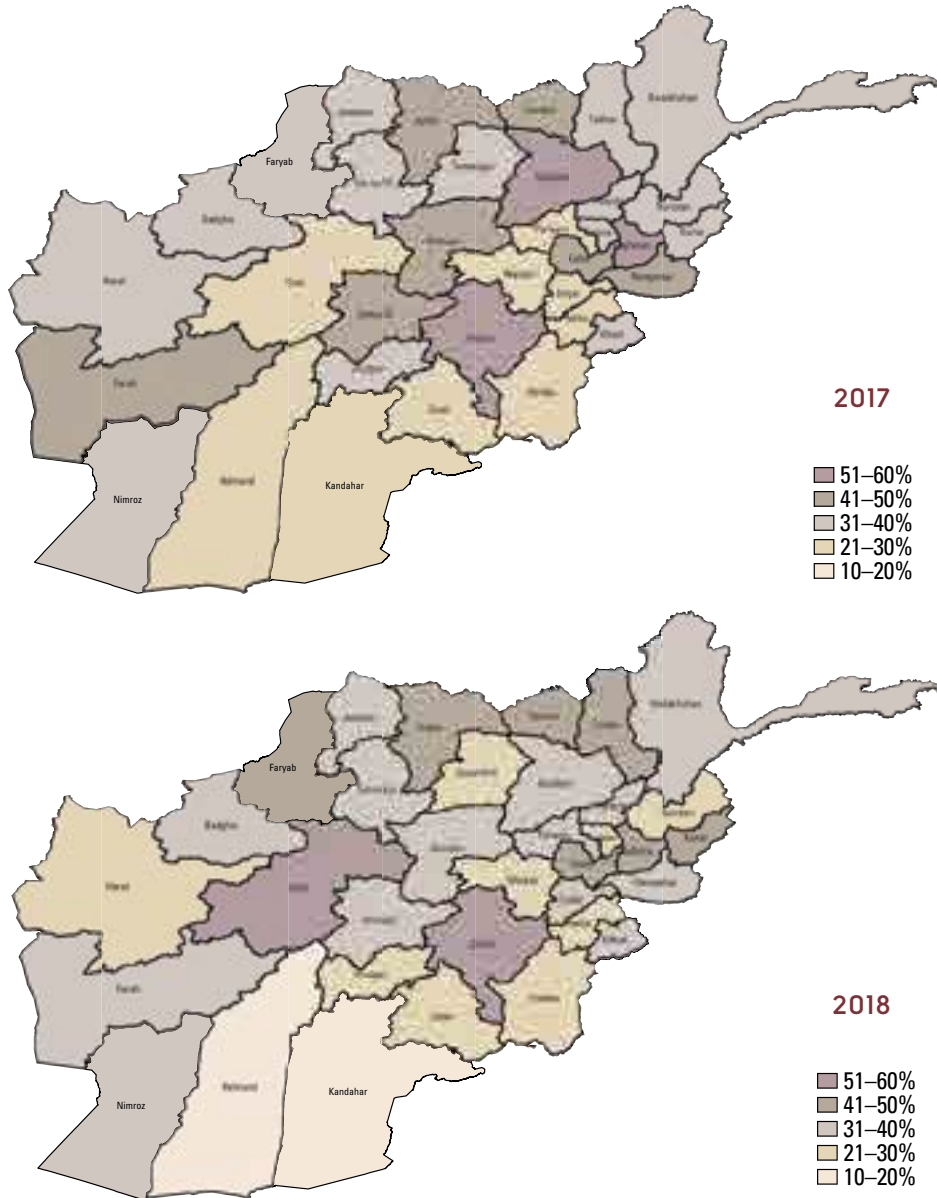
Willingness to migrate has decreased in all regions except Central/Kabul, which is virtually unchanged (2017, 38.0%; 2018, 38.4%), and the North West, which increased slightly from 37.0% last year to 39.0% this year (figure 9.4). Decreases since last year in migration intentions are most notable in the South West (20.3%, down from 28.2%) and Central/Hazarajat (38.0%, down from 45.4%). Respondents in the North East are the most likely to say they would leave Afghanistan, at 41.8%, just over twice the percentage of respondents in the South West, 20.3%, who are the least likely.



**FIG. 9.4: Q-83a.** Tell me, if given the opportunity, would you leave Afghanistan and live somewhere else, or not? (Percent who say yes.)

Measuring migration intentions illustrates Afghanistan’s provincial complexity. Some provinces where civilians were most affected by conflict in 2018, for example, saw decreases in migration intentions this year compared to last.<sup>19</sup> From this finding it seems insecurity alone does not necessarily lead to a greater desire to migrate, there are other factors at play. Respondents in Helmand (14.2%), Paktika (17.0%), and Zabul (20.1%) are least likely to say they would leave the country if given opportunity (figure 9.5). Similarly, while 53.8% of respondents in Ghazni—a province where the Taliban exert considerable influence<sup>20</sup>—still say they would leave Afghanistan if they had the chance, this reflects a decrease from 58.8% in 2017. Additionally, for the previous three years, over half of respondents in Baghlan have indicated they would leave the country if they were given the opportunity. This year, that percentage has dropped considerably, from 56.1% in 2017 to 39.9% in 2018. In Nuristan, the proportion of respondents saying they would leave has dropped from just over a third (35.6%) in 2017 to just under a quarter (24.4%) in 2018. In the predominantly Hazara provinces of Bamyán and Daikundi, respondents saying they would leave in 2018 have also decreased in number since last year, from 47.8% to 36.4% in Bamyán, and from 43.1% to 39.5% in Daikundi.

## DESIRE TO LEAVE, BY YEAR AND PROVINCE



**FIG. 9.5: Q-83a.** Tell me, if given the opportunity, would you leave Afghanistan and live somewhere else, or not? (Percent who say yes.)

Other provinces have experienced increases in the willingness to migrate. The most pronounced increase is in Ghor, a province where 90% of the population is engaged in agriculture and animal husbandry, and which has been particularly hard hit by drought this year.<sup>21</sup> In 2017, 23.0% of respondents in Ghor said they would leave Afghanistan if given an opportunity to do so. This year, that percentage has climbed to 59.7%, the highest of all provinces. Yet, in Herat and Badghis, provinces in the drought-stricken West,<sup>22</sup> migration intentions have declined. An increased willingness to migrate this year compared to last is evident in the North West provinces of Jawzjan (36.2% vs. 27.4%) and Sar-e-Pul (42.5% vs. 32.6%).

## 9.2 REASONS FOR LEAVING

### KEY QUESTIONS

Q-83c. *(Ask if answer to Q-83a is yes.) Why would you leave Afghanistan?*

Q-89. *Do you have a family member or close relative who lives abroad?*

Q-90a. *(Ask if answer to Q-89 is yes.) In what countries do they live? (List up to two countries.)*

Q-90b. *(Ask if answer to Q-89 is yes.) Have these relatives helped you financially, such as by sending money?*

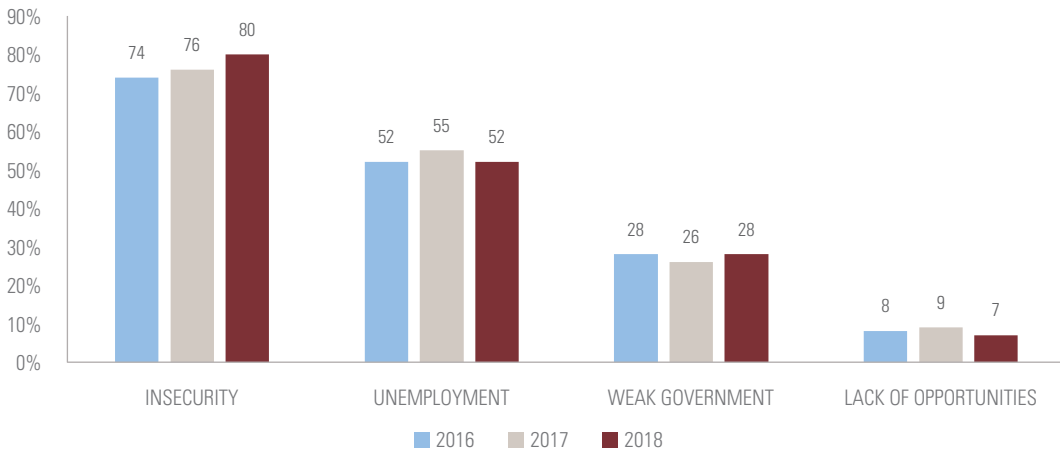
The *Survey* asks respondents willing to leave Afghanistan to say why they would do so. For ease of reporting and interpretation, their answers have been aggregated thematically. However, specific variables within those themes are referred to when appropriate.

### PUSH FACTORS

#### DOMESTIC INSECURITY

Reasons to migrate are complex. Among the 36.8% of respondents who say they would leave if given the opportunity, domestic insecurity is the predominant reason given by Afghans who say they are willing to leave their country. Of those who say they would leave, 80.5% cite reasons related to insecurity, up from 76.5% in 2017 and 73.7% in 2016 (figure 9.6). Consistent with this finding, as respondents' fears for their own or their families' personal safety rises, so does willingness to leave the country. Afghans who say they never fear for their safety are considerably less likely to say they would leave the country if given the opportunity (30.1%) than respondents who always fear for their safety (43.2%). Similarly, 40.1% of respondents who have suffered a personal experience with violence (to either themselves or a family member) express a willingness to leave Afghanistan if given the opportunity, compared to 36.1% of those who have not experienced violence in this way.

## MOST CITED REASONS FOR LEAVING, BY YEAR



**FIG. 9.6: Q-83c.** (Ask if answer to Q-83a is yes.) Why would you leave Afghanistan?

A belief that the security of the local area is under threat from an armed opposition group leads to only a slight increase in willingness to migrate compared to respondents who do not perceive this type of threat (37.9% vs. 36.5%). There is a considerable difference, however, between the migration intentions of respondents who say they have no sympathy for the Taliban (37.9%) and those who have a lot of sympathy for this group (28.4%).

Afghans who believe that reconciliation between the Taliban and the Afghan government is impossible are again this year marginally more likely to say they would be willing to leave than those who think reconciliation is possible (39.1% vs. 35.6%). Similarly, respondents who say they feel unsafe publicly criticizing their government are marginally more likely to say they would leave Afghanistan than those who feel safe doing so (38.9% vs. 35.4%).

A belief that government security forces are getting better at providing security is also linked to lower migration intentions. Around a third of respondents who believe the Afghan National Army (ANA), the Afghan National Police (ANP), and the Afghan Local Police (ALP) are getting better at providing security (35.4%, 33.5%, and 32.9%, respectively) say they would be willing to leave the country. When respondents believe the ANA, ANP, and ALP are getting worse at providing security, their willingness to leave increases (39.0%, 41.6%, and 40.0%, respectively).

## WEAK GOVERNMENT

The third-most frequently cited reason for leaving is related to weak governance—corruption, bad economy, high prices, etc. Last year, a quarter of respondents cited these types of reasons for leaving (25.6%). This year, the proportion of respondents citing weak government has risen slightly, to 28.0%. The majority of responses in this category are from the 18.1% of respondents who specifically cite “bad economy” as a reason for leaving. When asked whether the financial situation of their household has gotten better or worse over the previous 12 months, 40.0% of respondents who say their financial position has worsened say they would leave if they had the chance. This compares to 33.9% of respondents who say their financial position has improved.

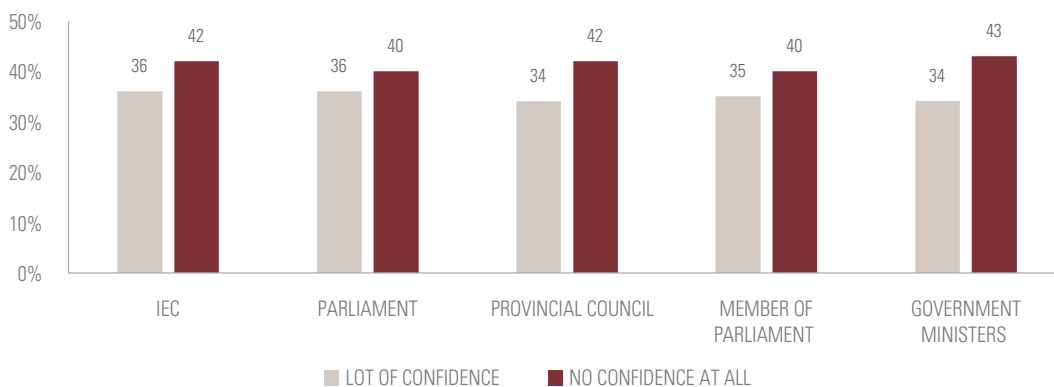
Afghans’ views on whether the current National Unity Government (NUG) is doing a good job provide a relatively good indicator of their willingness to migrate. Almost a third of respondents who say the NUG is doing a very good job (32.1%) say they would leave the country if they had an opportunity. This rises to 35.8% of those who say the NUG is doing a somewhat good job, 37.5% of respondents who say the NUG is doing a somewhat bad job, and 43.6% of those who say the NUG is doing a very bad job.

Similarly, when respondents believe the government has been improving the living conditions of people in their local area a lot, they are less likely to wish to leave Afghanistan than when they believe the government has done little to improve local living conditions, or done nothing at all (27.8%, 36.3%, and 41.4%, respectively).

Afghans who think that corruption is a major or a minor problem *in their daily lives* are more likely to say they would like to leave if given the opportunity than those who think corruption is not a problem at all (36.8%, 39.2%, and 30.7%, respectively). However, when asked about corruption in *Afghanistan as a whole*, there is less difference in the migration intentions of those who believe it is a major problem, a minor problem, or not a problem (37.1%, 35.6%, and 35.9%, respectively). Interestingly, when asked to provide reasons why they would leave Afghanistan if given the opportunity, again this year just a small number of respondents (4.6%) mention corruption specifically.

A lack of confidence in various institutions and organizations is again linked to higher levels of migration intentions (figure 9.7).

## DESIRE TO LEAVE, BY LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE IN GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS



**FIG. 9.7: Q-83a.** Tell me, if given the opportunity, would you leave Afghanistan and live somewhere else, or not? (Percent who say yes.) **Q-51.** I would like to ask you about some officials, institutions, and organizations. As I read out each, please tell me how much confidence you have in them to do their jobs. Do you have a lot, some, not much, or no confidence at all? If you don't know, it's ok, just say you have no opinion. (c) Independent Election Commission. (f) Government ministers. (j) Parliament as a whole. (k) Provincial councils. (m) Your member of parliament.

### ELECTIONS

At the time fieldwork was being conducted for the *Survey*, Afghanistan was gearing up for parliamentary and district elections. It might reasonably have been expected that these elections, which have been beset by challenges to their legitimacy,<sup>23</sup> would have an impact on migration intentions. However, measures such as satisfaction with the way democracy works in Afghanistan appear to have little bearing on the willingness to leave the country and live somewhere else if given the opportunity. Similar proportions of Afghans who are satisfied and dissatisfied with the way democracy works in Afghanistan say that they would be willing to leave if given a chance (36.5% and 37.7%, respectively). There was also little difference in the migration intentions of Afghans who had registered to vote, had not registered to vote, or planned to register to vote (37.6%, 38.9%, and 39.2%, respectively). Likewise, almost equal proportions of Afghans who planned to vote and those who did not plan to vote said they would leave Afghanistan if given the opportunity (38.0% and 38.5%, respectively).

That said, Afghans who believed the next election in Afghanistan was unlikely to be “free and fair” (i.e., that all people would have a chance to vote if they wished) were slightly more likely to indicate a desire to migrate than those who believed the next election would indeed be free and fair (40.4% and



36.4%, respectively). Additionally, when respondents with migration intentions are asked what issues their member of parliament cares about most, they are most likely to say “personal interests” (29.6%), followed by provincial issues (21.3%), ethnic issues (20.3%), national issues (18.9%), and district/municipality issues (8.1%).

### *INFRASTRUCTURE*

Very few respondents (1.8%) refer to concerns with infrastructure (e.g., clinics/hospitals, electricity, shelter, roads, etc.) as reasons why they would leave Afghanistan if they had the opportunity to do so. Likewise, when asked what the government could do to make them stay, only 4.8% of respondents who express a desire to migrate say that the government could improve infrastructure. Respondents who have seen six or fewer infrastructure projects in their local area are more likely to say they would leave the country (36.9%) than respondents who have seen more than six local projects (33.6%).

### *NATIONAL MOOD*

The difference between the migration intentions of Afghans who are optimistic and those who are pessimistic about the direction the country is taking has grown again this year (figure 9.8). This year, 32.5% of Afghans who believe the country is going in the right direction say they would leave, compared to 40.2% of those who say the country is moving in the wrong direction. This growing gap suggests that perceptions about the direction of the country are having a growing effect on migration decisions.

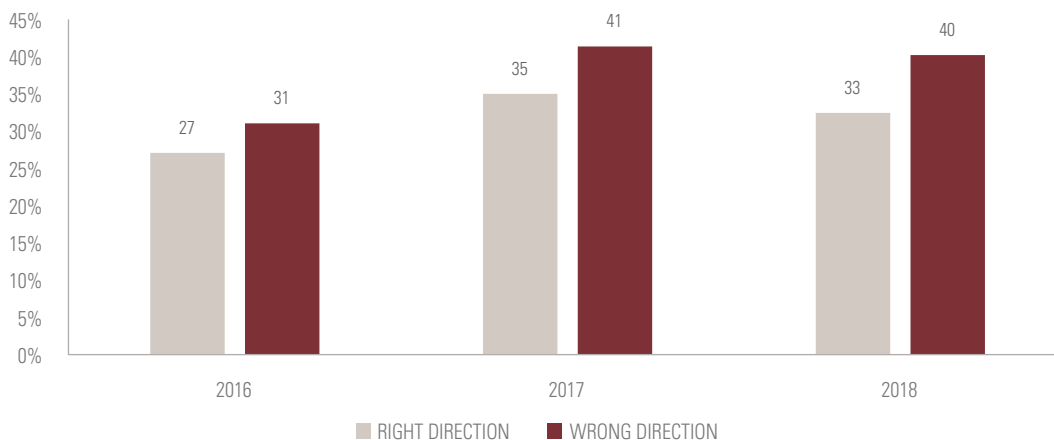
### *OTHER REASONS*

Over half of respondents who say they would leave Afghanistan if given the opportunity cite unemployment as a reason for leaving (51.5%). This is down slightly from 54.5% in 2017. Consistent with this finding, again in 2018, Afghans who believe employment opportunities for members of their household have gotten worse in the past year are more likely say they would leave the country (39.0%) than those who say employment opportunities have gotten better (31.1%).

Only 1.2% of respondents mention international relations (i.e., interference from neighboring countries) as a reason to leave the country, and 1.8% cite personal reasons.

Lack of opportunities (e.g., for education, for children, but not including employment) is mentioned as a reason for wishing to leave Afghanistan by 7.4% of respondents.

## DESIRE TO LEAVE, BY OPTIMISM



**FIG. 9.8: Q-83a.** Tell me, if given the opportunity, would you leave Afghanistan and live somewhere else, or not? (Percent who say yes.) **Q-1.** Overall, based on your own experience, do you think things in Afghanistan today are going in the right direction, or do you think they are going in the wrong direction?

With regard to self-reported happiness, Afghans who report that they are generally unhappy are more likely to say they would leave the country if they had a chance (40.2%) than Afghans who say they are generally happy (36.0%).

### EQUAL RIGHTS FOR WOMEN

Afghans who support women's rights on a range of issues are more likely to say they would leave Afghanistan than respondents who do not support those rights. Specifically, respondents who say that women should be allowed to vote in elections are significantly more likely to express a desire to leave Afghanistan than those who say women should not be allowed to vote (38.2% vs. 27.2%). Of respondents who say women should be allowed to work outside the home, 38.8% say they would leave the country if given the opportunity, compared to 33.0% of those who say women should not be allowed to work outside the home. Respondents who strongly agree that women should have educational opportunities equal to men are also more likely to say they would leave Afghanistan if given the chance (39.0%) than respondents who strongly disagree with that position (33.8%).

### PULL FACTORS

#### RELATIVES ABROAD

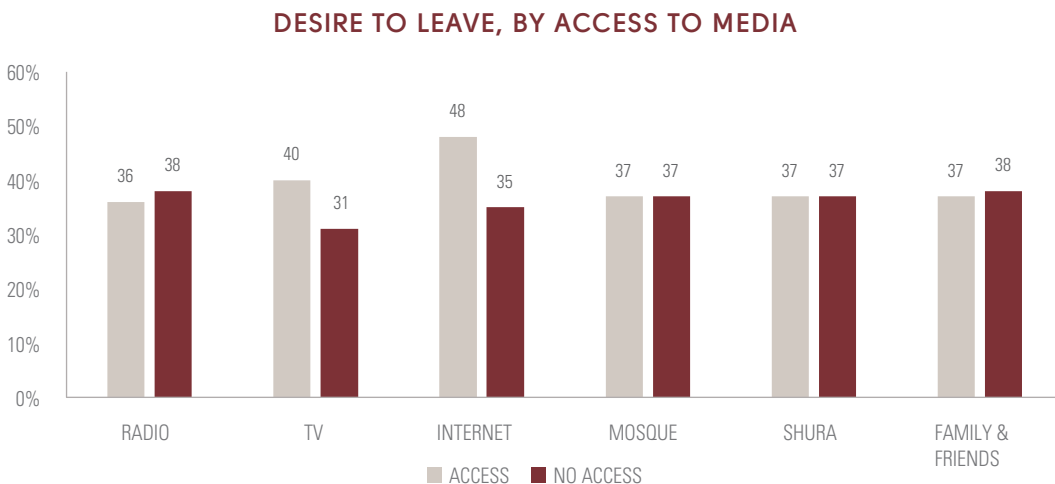
A large proportion of respondents (42.0%) report that they have family or close relatives living in other countries. These relatives live predominantly in Iran (44.2%), European countries<sup>24</sup> (40.7%), Turkey

(24.4%), North America (14.3%), GCC countries (9.9%), and Pakistan (9.4%). Just over a third of respondents with family abroad (34.4%) report that these relatives provide financial support to them.

Again this year, a link is evident between having a family member or other close relative abroad and a willingness to leave Afghanistan if given the opportunity. Respondents who have a relative abroad more often express a willingness to migrate than respondents who do not (44.6% vs. 31.2%). Having a relative abroad who provides financial assistance is also correlated with a willingness to leave Afghanistan. Almost half of respondents who have a financially supportive relative abroad are willing to migrate (48.8%) compared to 42.3% of respondents who do not.

### ACCESS TO MEDIA

It is clear from *Survey* findings in previous years that the modern media play a significant role in migration decisions. An ability to access the media can be related to both push factors (e.g., providing information about what is happening domestically) and pull factors (e.g., depicting attractive opportunities that may exist elsewhere or providing information about changes in the global migration context). Figure 9.9 shows that, again in 2018, Afghans who use the Internet and television to get news and information are more likely to express willingness to migrate than those who rely on radio, mosques, shuras, or family and friends as sources of information.



**FIG. 9.9: Q-83a.** Tell me, if given the opportunity, would you leave Afghanistan and live somewhere else, or not? (Percent who say yes.) **Q-66.** Do you use any of the following to obtain news and information? (a) Radio. (b) Television. (d) The Internet. (e) Mosque. (f) Community shuras. (g) Friends and family.

Among respondents who live in areas with Internet access (i.e., via cable, wireless/wifi, or cellular data), 41.4% say they would migrate if given the opportunity, compared to 34.1% of respondents who live in areas with no access. Likewise, respondents with personal Internet access are more likely to say they would be willing to leave Afghanistan than respondents who do not have personal Internet access (48.1% vs. 37.1%). This substantial gap is new since last year's *Survey*, when a desire to migrate was essentially the same for respondents who had, or did not have, personal access to the Internet (42.7% vs. 43.5%).

## 9.3 PROMOTING DECISIONS TO STAY

### KEY QUESTIONS

Q-83b. (*Ask if answer to Q-83a is no.*) Why would you stay in Afghanistan?

Q-84. (*Ask if answer to Q-83a is yes.*) What, if anything, could the government do to make you want to stay in Afghanistan?

The *Survey* asks respondents who say they would not choose to leave Afghanistan to say why. The *Survey* also asks those who express a willingness to leave what the government could do, if anything, to make them stay.

Some 83.7% of respondents who say they would not want to leave the country give reasons that reflect a sense of connection to Afghanistan, such as “It is my country,” “I love my country,” and “I feel comfortable here.” This is a slight increase over last year (82.9%). The second-most frequent reason for staying, (17.6% in 2018, up from 13.9% in 2017), is related to perceived restrictions on leaving. Around half of these respondents refer to an (unspecified) “inability to leave,” with the balance explicitly saying their family won’t allow it. Respondents in the North West are the most likely to refer to these types of restrictions as a reason for staying (31.0%), and respondents in Central/Hazarajat are the least likely (8.5%) (figure 9.10). More women than men say they are restricted from leaving (women, 19.7%; men, 15.5%), and both say so more than last year (women, 16.5%; men, 11.2%).

## REASONS FOR STAYING, BY REGION

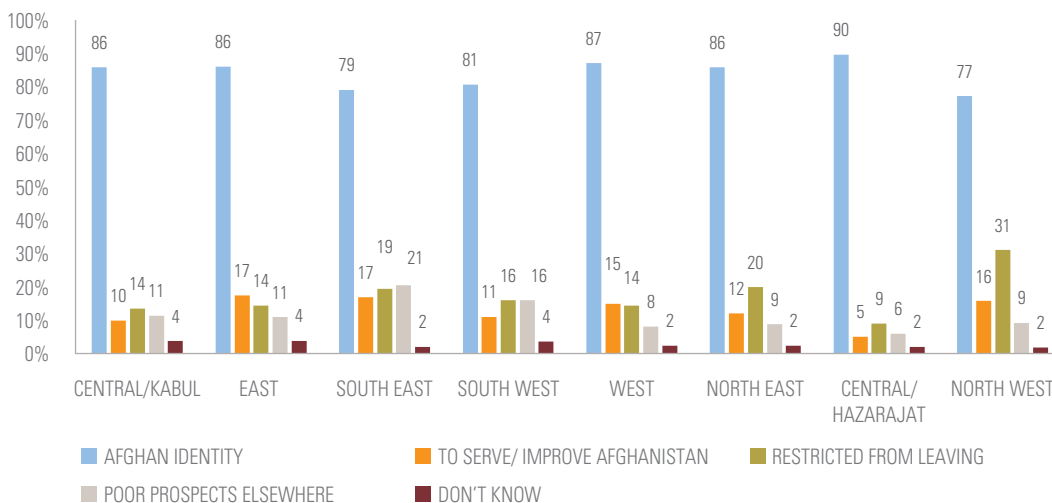


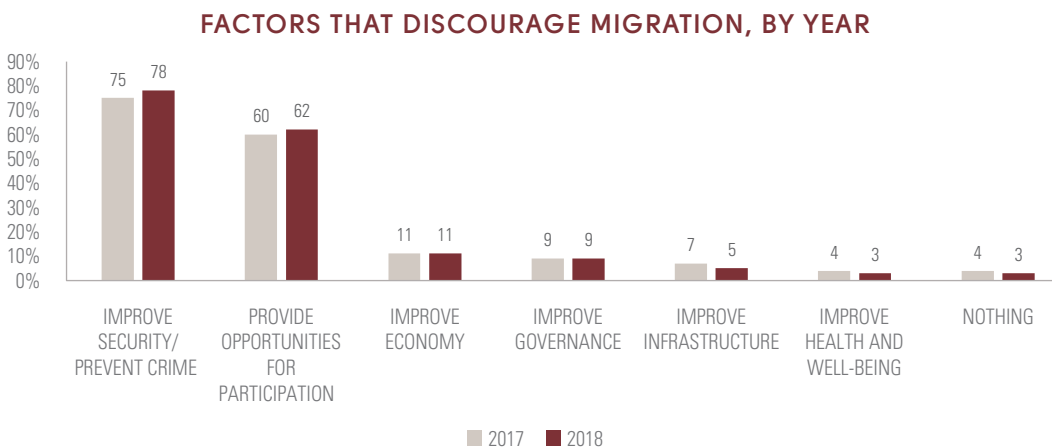
FIG. 9.10: Q-83b. (Ask if answer to Q-83a is no.) Why would you stay in Afghanistan?

A number of respondents (13.0%) say they would stay to serve or improve Afghanistan (e.g., for reconstruction, to serve people, to remove ISIS and the Taliban), and 11.7% refer to poor prospects elsewhere (e.g., no employment opportunities, other countries do not accept refugees).

When respondents who say they would be willing to leave Afghanistan if given the opportunity are asked what the government could do to make them want to stay in the country, the pattern of responses is similar to last year. The most frequently cited action the government could take to discourage respondents from leaving is improving domestic security. This includes addressing crime more effectively (78.4%). Improving security is particularly salient in the provinces of Badghis, Farah, Uruzgan, and Ghor, where over 90% of respondents refer to this as a reason why they would stay in Afghanistan rather than migrate to another country.

The next-most frequently cited reasons include: greater opportunities for full participation, including employment opportunities and, to a lesser degree, access to education and women's rights (62.4%); improvements in the economy (11.3%); improved governance, including addressing corruption and holding transparent elections (8.7%); improving infrastructure/services (4.8%); and improving the health and well-being of Afghans (3.1%). Less than 1% of these respondents say implementing Islamic law or improving international relations as actions the government could take to encourage them to stay. A small number of respondents (2.8%) say there is nothing the government could do to make them want to stay in Afghanistan if they were given an opportunity to leave.

This pattern of findings is largely consistent with last year's *Survey* (figure 9.11), with only marginal differences evident, most notably related to infrastructure.



**FIG. 9.11: Q-84.** (Ask if answer to Q-83a is yes.) What, if anything, could the government do to make you want to stay in Afghanistan?

## 9.4 PERCEPTIONS OF RETURNEE EXPERIENCES

### KEY QUESTIONS

**Q-85.** Do you know any person who has left Afghanistan in the past three years and then subsequently returned to Afghanistan?

**Q-86.** (Ask if answer to Q-85 is yes.) Why did this person return to Afghanistan?

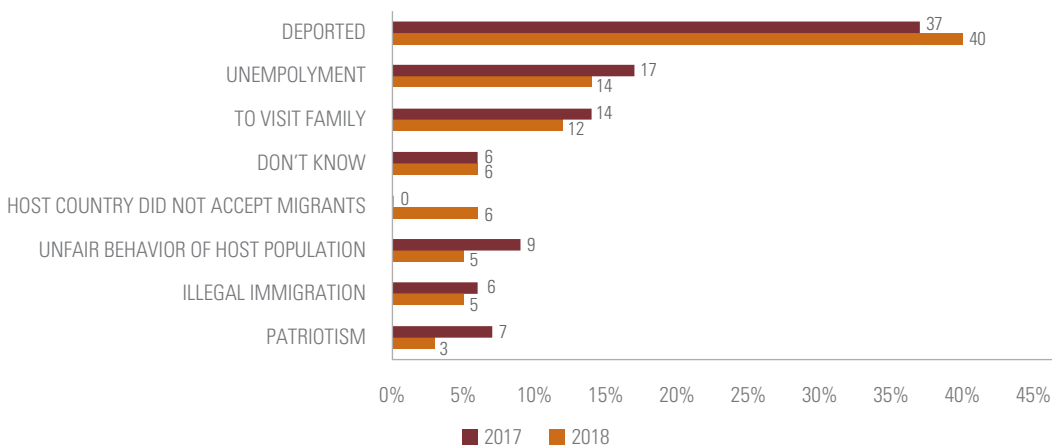
**Q-87.** (Ask if answer to Q-85 is yes.) Which country did this person return from?

**Q-88.** (Ask if answer to Q-85 is yes.) What level of difficulty, if any, do you think that this person faced after they returned to Afghanistan?

As outlined above, the number of refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants returning to Afghanistan is rising. In 2017, more than 58,000 registered Afghan refugees returned to the country, and by the end of 2018 it is expected that 280,000 registered refugees and 420,000 undocumented Afghans<sup>25</sup> will have returned to a country that continues to face significant social, political, and economic challenges.<sup>26</sup>

Last year, for the first time, the *Survey* asked respondents if they know of any person who left Afghanistan in the past three years and subsequently returned. Almost identical numbers of respondents this year and last (24.8% and 24.0%, respectively) report that they know of a returnee. The majority of these returnees came back to Afghanistan from Iran (39.6%), Europe<sup>27</sup> (23.6%), Turkey (17.6%), and Pakistan (7.5%). The predominant reason given for their return was deportation (40.4%, up slightly from 36.8% in 2017). A small percentage, 5.9% of respondents, specifically say that the returnee they know came back because the host country did not accept migrants, a 5.8 percentage point increase over last year (figure 9.12). Less common this year than last year were responses citing unemployment (16.6% in 2017, 14.1% in 2018), unfair behavior of the host population (8.8% in 2017, 4.8% in 2018), patriotism (7.1% in 2017, 3.2% in 2018), and a specific reference to illegal immigration (6.0% in 2017, 4.7% in 2018). Respondents were also asked about the level of difficulty the returnee faced when they returned to Afghanistan. Some 33.5% of respondents who know a returnee say the returnee faced a lot of difficulty on return, 41.7% say some difficulty, and 22.6% say no difficulty.

### MOST COMMON REASONS FOR RETURN, BY YEAR



**FIG. 9.12: Q-86.** (Ask if answer to Q-85 is yes.) Why did this person return to Afghanistan?

Willingness to migrate from Afghanistan is higher among respondents who know a returnee (41.9%) than among those who do not know a returnee (35.2%), although these proportions have decreased slightly since 2017 (44.5% and 37.2%, respectively). The level of difficulty Afghans face upon return to their country of origin does not seem to dampen the desire to migrate. In fact, when Afghans know a returnee who has experienced a lot of difficulty on return, rather than one who experienced no difficulty, this is linked to a significant greater willingness to migrate (48.8% vs. 36.2%). Though apparently a paradox,

this finding may be an artifact of the pervasive push factors, such as insecurity and unemployment, that continue to afflict Afghanistan. Someone who has experienced a lot of difficulty on returning to Afghanistan may remind those who are willing to migrate why they wanted to leave in the first place.

In summary, domestic push factors, such as the deteriorating security situation, continued high unemployment, and the extreme poverty of many Afghans, are not abating. Moreover, large parts of Afghanistan are now gripped by severe drought, and the existing humanitarian crisis has been exacerbated by the influx of large numbers of Afghans who are either voluntarily or forcibly being returned to Afghanistan. And as long as these push factors remain strong, it is likely that large numbers of Afghans will remain willing to leave the country if given the opportunity. Indeed, this year, well over a third of respondents still say they would migrate if they had an opportunity. However, it is also clear that Afghans who leave their country as a way of coping with insecurity and uncertainty seem to face diminishing prospects. As the factors that pull Afghans toward other countries are arguably becoming less appealing, and the broader global migration context less welcoming, it is not surprising that a willingness to leave the country has diminished somewhat since last year.



## ENDNOTES

- 1 “Afghanistan 2018 Humanitarian Compendium,” International Organization for Migration website, accessed October 26, 2018, <https://humanitariancompendium.iom.int/appeals/afghanistan-2018>.
- 2 Nassim Majidi, *From Forced Migration to Forced Returns in Afghanistan: Policy and Program Implications* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2017), <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/forced-migration-forced-returns-afghanistan>.
- 3 Push factors are those that drive people to leave their country, such as economic, social, or political problems. Pull factors attract people to a particular destination. See “Key Migration Terms,” United Nations International Organization for Migration website, accessed October 27, 2018, <https://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms#Push-pull-factors>.
- 4 Majidi, *Forced Migration* (see note 2).
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 “Returning home, Afghans continue to face challenges in rebuilding their lives—UN Agencies,” *UN News*, April 12, 2018, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2018/04/1007131>.
- 7 “Return of undocumented Afghans,” Weekly situation Report, 24–30 June 2018, United Nations International Organization for Migration website, [https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/situation\\_reports/file/afghanistan\\_sr\\_20180624-30.pdf](https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/situation_reports/file/afghanistan_sr_20180624-30.pdf).
- 8 Frud Bezhan and Musrat Parsa, “Things Are So Bad In Iran That Afghan Migrants Are Going Home,” *Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty*, August 1, 2018, <https://www.rferl.org/a/iran-s-economic-crisis-fuels-mass-exodus-of-afghan-migrants/29405068.html>.
- 9 Admir Skodo, *The impact of forced migration on Afghanistan’s domestic politics and foreign relations*, UI Brief No. 3 (Swedish Institute of International Affairs, 2018), <https://www.ui.se/globalassets/ui.se-eng/publications/ui-publications/2018/ui-brief-no3.-2018.pdf>.
- 10 Majidi, *Forced Migration* (see note 2).
- 11 “Turkey: Over 2,000 Afghans at Risk of Deportation,” Amnesty International website, April 24, 2018, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur44/8258/2018/en/>.
- 12 “Afghanistan: Forced Back to Danger—Asylum-Seekers Returned from Europe to Afghanistan,” Amnesty International website, October 5, 2017, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa11/6866/2017/en/>.
- 13 Majidi, *Forced Migration* (see note 2).
- 14 Respondents are able to provide up to two mentions of countries they would like to migrate to.
- 15 *Europe* comprises Germany, Austria, France, any European country, Russia, Sweden, UK, Italy, Norway, Denmark, Spain, Greece, Switzerland, Belgium, Finland, Holland, Ukraine, Portugal, and Romania.
- 16 This question was included in the *Survey of Afghan People 2016* but excluded from the *Survey* in 2017.
- 17 M. Ashraf Haidari, “Securing the Future of Afghanistan: The Diaspora’s Debt of Service,” *Diplomat*, February, 13, 2018, <https://thediplomat.com/2018/02/securing-the-future-of-afghanistan-the-diasporas-debt-of-service/>.
- 18 Amnesty International, “Afghanistan 2017/18,” in *Amnesty International Report 2017/18: The State of the World’s Human Rights* (London: Amnesty International, 2018), 66–69, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/asia-and-the-pacific/afghanistan/report-afghanistan/>.
- 19 United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), *Midyear Update on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict: 1 January to 30 June 2018* (UNAMA, July 15, 2018), [https://unama.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/unama\\_poc\\_midyear\\_update\\_2018\\_15\\_july\\_english.pdf](https://unama.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/unama_poc_midyear_update_2018_15_july_english.pdf).
- 20 Ehsan Qaane, “The Insecure Spring of Ghazni: Results of Third-Grade Treatment by the Centre?” *Afghanistan Analysts Network*, July 25, 2018, <https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/the-insecure-spring-of-ghazni-results-of-third-grade-treatment-by-the-centre/>.
- 21 Afghanaid, *Dry Spell Assessment in Ghor Province—Afghanistan*, April 2018 (Afghanaid, April 1, 2018), <https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/dry-spell-assessment-ghor-province-afghanistan-april-2018>.
- 22 Stefanie Glinski, “Afghanistan is besieged by decades of conflict, but more people this year have been displaced by drought than war,” *IRIN*, October 4, 2018, <https://www.irinnews.org/photo-feature/2018/10/04/if-water-finishes-we-will-leave-drought-forcing-hundreds-thousands-afghans>.

- 23 Ali Yawar Adili, “Thematic Dossier (XX): Electoral reform and the preparations for the 2018 elections,” *Afghanistan Analysts Network*, August 10, 2018, <https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/publication/aan-thematic-dossier/thematic-dossier-xx-electoral-reform-and-the-preparations-for-the-2018-elections/>.
- 24 *European countries* comprises Germany, Austria, Holland, UK, Denmark, Sweden, European countries, Ireland, Russia, France, Norway, Greece, Belgium, Switzerland, Italy, Ukraine, Finland, Bulgaria, Portugal, Spain, Poland, Czech Republic.
- 25 “Returning home, Afghans continue to face challenges in rebuilding their lives – UN Agencies,” *UN News*, April 12, 2018, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2018/04/1007131>.
- 26 Majidi, *Forced Migration* (see note 2).
- 27 Europe comprises Sweden, Italy, Greece, Germany, Switzerland, Norway, Austria, Europe, Holland, Belgium, Denmark, UK, France, Russia, Hungary, Ukraine.





# APPENDIX 1: METHODOLOGY

## 1 SUMMARY

The Asia Foundation's *Survey of the Afghan People* is Afghanistan's longest-running nationwide survey of the attitudes and opinions of Afghan adults. Since 2004, over 112,000 Afghan men and women have been surveyed, representing more than 400 districts, city nahias, and towns in all 34 provinces. All data is public and free for immediate download at <http://asiafoundation.org/afghansurvey>.

A total of 15,012 face-to-face interviews were conducted from July 6 to 27, 2018, across all provinces by a team of 1,139 enumerators (562 female, 577 male). All enumerators were gender matched with respondents (i.e., men interviewed men, women interviewed women). All enumerators are residents of the provinces where they conducted the interviews. As in 2016 and 2017, mobile devices were used to collect a portion of the interviews. Results from previous years suggest using a mobile device does not bias results.

As in previous years, the Afghan Center for Socio-Economic and Opinion Research (ACSOR) conducted the fieldwork for this project. Sayara Research led the third-party verification of the fieldwork. Additional quality-control measures were implemented at every step of the process by The Asia Foundation and its partners to ensure methodological consistency for longitudinal comparisons. In total, 36% of interviews were subject to some form of back-check or quality control.

The 2018 *Survey* differs from previous years. In addition to the Main Sample of 9,600 respondents, two oversamples were fielded as well to boost our district level analysis in areas of strategic interests to stakeholders, and are included in this year's data. Similar to the 2016 *Survey*, the 2018 *Survey* included an oversample in selected districts in the provinces of Badakhshan, Takhar, Kunduz, Balkh, Baghlan, and Samangan, referred to as the Northern Oversample.

Another oversample, referred to as the Citizen's Charter Oversample, was fielded in selected districts in the provinces of Ghazni, Logar, Nangarhar, Jawjzan, Faryab, Nimroz, Balkh, Helmand, and Daikundi, where the Citizen's Charter (CC) program was being implemented in various phases. In total, the Northern Oversample consisted of 3,272 interviews, while the CC Oversample consisted of 2,040 interviews. Both oversamples included an additional module. Because of concerns about questionnaire length and logistics, no areas were included in both oversamples. All respondents in all three samples received the main substantive portion of the questionnaire.

Important to note, responses from these samples are weighted down to their proportional population estimates by district, so as not to bias national or provincial statistics.

In total, a national sample of 15,012 Afghan citizens was surveyed face-to-face across all 34 provinces. Of these respondents, 13,943 (93%) were randomly selected, while 1,069 were intercept interviews (7%). The Foundation used the latest available population estimates (2016–2017) from the National Statistics and Information Authority (NSIA) (formerly the Afghan Central Statistics Organization [CSO]), which provided the most reliable estimates for urban and rural populations at the district level of Afghanistan. Respondents were 18 years of age and older, 50.3% male, and 49.7% female. The final sample consisted of 19.4% urban households and 80.6% rural households in the unweighted sample. Interviews ranged from 18 to 99 minutes, with the average interview taking 39 minutes.

The sample design, field implementation, quality control, questionnaire design, and overall field experience are summarized below:

1. *The Survey of the Afghan People* 2018 includes a sample of 15,012 men and women 18 years of age and older residing in all 34 provinces of Afghanistan. Of these, 729 men and women in Balkh, Bamyan, Kabul, Herat, Kandahar, and Nangarhar Provinces were interviewed using mobile devices loaded with Research Control Solutions (RCS) survey software, while the remaining 14,283 respondents were interviewed using paper questionnaires.
2. The main sample was stratified by province and urban/rural status using population data released by the Central Statistics Organization (2016–2017 estimates). If a selected district was not accessible for interviewing, intercept interviews were conducted with male residents of that district in nearby districts or provincial centers. Sampling points that were planned for interviews with women but could not be covered by female interviewers were replaced with female interviews from within the same strata (same province and urban/rural designation). This has been a standard practice in the *Survey* since 2014.
3. Considering the survey design of disproportionate stratification and two stages of clustering—district and sampling point—the complex design and weighting should be taken into account when determining the margin of error (MOE). For the binomial question “Overall, based on your own experience, do you think things in Afghanistan today are going in the right direction, or do you think they are going in the wrong direction?” the estimated design effect is 2.998.<sup>1</sup> Using this estimate of a design effect, the complex margin of error at the 95% CI with  $p=.5$  is  $\pm 1.4\%$  for the probability sample.<sup>2</sup>
4. Disposition outcomes for all interviews were tracked using the American Association for Public Opinion Research’s (AAPOR) standard codes, which have been adapted to the Afghan context. For this sample, the response rate 3 is 80.75%, the cooperation rate 3 is 94.21%, the refusal rate 2 is 4.03%, and the contact rate 2 is 86.54%.

## 2 QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

Each year, The Asia Foundation reviews the questionnaire based on input from the Afghan government and other stakeholders. Questions that yield low analytical value are removed, while trend-line questions are preserved for longitudinal comparison.

Proposed new questions are reviewed to be sure they meet international standards, which includes ensuring that questions are not double-barreled or overly complex, do not contain double negatives, and are not threatening or leading, and that response scales match question wording. In total, the questionnaire went through nine iterations before being approved for translation.

The 2018 questionnaire addresses infrastructure and development, rule of law, development and service provision, governance, security, corruption, elections, reconciliation, women’s issues, and social issues. These were covered by 32 management questions, 21 demographics questions, and 127 substantive questions. Of the substantive questions, 27 were new, and five were modified from previous waves.

The Northern Oversample included 49 questions, while the CC Oversample included 27 questions. A split sample experiment was conducted with the Northern Oversample, so no respondent was asked all questions in that module.

The average interview length was 39 minutes, with a range of 18 to 99 minutes.

## 3 SAMPLE DESIGN

The sample was allocated disproportionately by strata and was drawn using a multistage, systematic sampling approach consistent with previous years for meaningful longitudinal comparisons.<sup>3</sup>

TARGET POPULATION:	AFGHAN ADULTS IN 34 PROVINCES
TARGET SAMPLE:	14,800 TOTAL AFGHAN ADULTS IN 34 PROVINCES MAIN SAMPLE: 9,600 AFGHAN ADULTS IN 34 PROVINCES NORTHERN OVERSAMPLE: 3,200 AFGHAN ADULTS IN TARGET DISTRICTS OF SIX PROVINCES CC OVERSAMPLE: 2,000 AFGHAN ADULTS IN 10 TARGET DISTRICTS
ACHIEVED SAMPLE:	15,012 AFGHAN ADULTS IN 34 PROVINCES <sup>4</sup> (MAIN SAMPLE) MAIN SAMPLE: 9,700 AFGHAN ADULTS IN 34 PROVINCES NORTHERN OVERSAMPLE: 3,272 AFGHAN ADULTS IN TARGET DISTRICTS OF SIX PROVINCES CC OVERSAMPLE: 2,040 AFGHAN ADULTS IN 10 TARGET DISTRICTS

## DETERMINING THE SAMPLE FOLLOWED SIX STEPS:

**STEP 1:** For the Main Sample, a base sample was first stratified disproportionately by province based on client specifications, desired margin of error, and power estimates. A minimum of 200 interviews were carried out in each province. Within each province, the sample was then stratified by urban and rural population figures from the 2016–2017 CSO estimates.

Each one of the 66 strata was allocated at least one primary sampling unit (PSU) to ensure that the entire target population had a probability of selection. After the urban and rural strata of each province received a cluster, the remainder of the province's sample was allocated proportionally.

For the two oversamples, the base sample was stratified disproportionately by district with each district as its own stratum.

**STEP 2: Districts** were selected via probability proportional to size (PPS) *systematic sampling*. Districts served as the primary sampling unit (PSU). Each PSU contained at least two sampling points, one of male respondents and one of female respondents. This was done to allow for gender-matched interviewing, which is a cultural requirement of working in Afghanistan. Each PSU was chosen via PPS sampling within its stratum.

- a. Inaccessible districts: In order to obtain some information on the perceptions of those living in insecure areas that were not accessible to the enumerators conducting random walk, *intercept interviews* were held with people coming out of these areas to towns, bazaars, bus depots, or hospitals in more secure areas. For the 2018 *Survey*, approximately 7% of the interviews (n=1,069) were intercept interviews. Intercept interviews were done in 85 districts across 29 provinces. These intercept interviews are identified by the variable Method1 in the data set. All intercept interviews were in the main sample: the oversamples did not require any intercepts to complete.

**STEP 3:** The **settlements** within districts were selected by simple random sampling. These served as the secondary sampling unit (SSU). Within urban strata, we used neighborhoods (called nahias from cities and metros) and towns, while in rural strata we used villages. As population data for settlement sizes does not exist, a simple random selection among all known settlements was used to select locations. In this survey, six interviews were done per sampling point.

- a. The instability and frequent fighting in some provinces could cause a sampling point to be adjusted or replaced to keep interviewers out of areas with active violence.
  - i. For the Main Sample and Northern Oversample, a total of two replicate draws were provided to the field team prior to the launch of fieldwork. If the replicates were exhausted, settlement/nahia-level replacements were done by supervisors in the field, where neighboring accessible settlements were chosen as replacements whenever possible. For the CC Oversample, only a single round of replacements was



provided, due to a limited number of neighborhoods/villages in some of the target districts. For these districts, supervisors were instructed to go down the list of available replacements rather than replacing an inaccessible village with a specified replacement village.

- b. In accordance with Afghan culture, the interviews were gender-specific, with female interviewers interviewing only females and male interviewers interviewing only males.
- c. Some districts with significant insurgent activity, military operations, or lack of transportation had male-only samples, depending on conditions. If a sampling point designated for female interviews was only accessible to male interviewing, it was replaced with a female sampling point from within the same strata (same province and same urban/rural status). One district in the Northern Oversample was not accessible to female interviews, and was conducted with a male-only sample. All other strata had an even gender split.

**STEP 4:** Field managers then used maps generated from several sources to select starting points within each SSU.

- a. In rural areas, we used a system that requires interviewers to start in one of five randomly selected locations (northern, southern, eastern, or western edges of the rural settlement, or the center).
- b. In urban areas, because it is more difficult to differentiate neighborhood borders, a random location (northern, southern, eastern, western, or center) was provided to the interviewers, and they were to start from an identifiable landmark in the vicinity (e.g., school, mosque, etc.).

**STEP 5:** To bolster the randomization process, each sampling point was also randomly assigned a different first-contacted house, either the first, second, or third house the interviewer arrived at following the start of the random walk. After approaching the first-contacted house, the interviewer then followed a set interval to select all other households for inclusion in the sample—for example, selecting every third house on the right in rural areas and every fifth house on the right in urban areas.

**STEP 6:** After selecting a household, interviewers were instructed to utilize a **Kish grid** for randomizing the target respondent within the household.<sup>5</sup> Members of the household were listed by name in order of descending age, and then the respondent was selected according the rules of the Kish grid.

## Weighting

Six weights were created for the *Survey*, each calibrated to strata and gender targets. For each of these weights, an adjustment for response rates was performed according to AAPOR's Response Rate 3 (RR3).

The base weight, also referred to as the probability-of-selection weight or design weight, was computed simply as the inverse of the probability of selection for each respondent. However, a few assumptions

were made in the sampling design that resulted in treating the sample as approximately EPSEM (equal probability of selection method):

1. All settlements are of equal size. Since population estimates at the settlement level are unavailable or unreliable, the sample design draws settlements using a simple random sample (SRS). With the assumption that the settlements are of equal size, the SRS condition of equal probability of selection holds true.
2. The random route procedure is equivalent to a SRS of households and respondents. Household enumeration is too time-consuming, cost-prohibitive, and dangerous to be performed in Afghanistan. Random route and Kish grid procedures are used instead for respondent selection. We assume that these procedures are equivalent to performing a SRS of households and respondents at the settlement level.

A post-stratification adjustment was performed on the resulting adjusted base weight to match the target population's geographic distribution in Afghanistan. The only targets used for the raking were province by urban/rural status,<sup>6</sup> and gender.

#### 4 PROVINCIAL POPULATION

Below are the population percentages for each province as supplied by the CSO, the unweighted sample, and the weighted sample. Urban population centers are not disaggregated here, meaning that Kabul Province includes Kabul City, Nangarhar includes Jalalabad City, and so on.

	PERCENTAGE IN POPULATION	PERCENTAGE IN UNWEIGHTED SAMPLE (INCLUDES INTERCEPT INTERVIEWS AND OVERSAMPLE DISTRICTS)	PERCENTAGE IN WEIGHTED SAMPLE WITHOUT INTERCEPTS (MERGEWGT10) <sup>7</sup>
BADAKHSHAN	3.5%	3.7%	3.5%
BADGHIS	1.8%	1.4%	1.8%
BAGHLAN	3.3%	5.9%	3.3%
BALKH	4.9%	9.7%	4.9%
BAMYAN	1.5%	2.1%	1.5%
DAIKUNDI	1.7%	2.7%	1.7%
FARAH	1.9%	1.2%	1.9%
FARYAB	3.7%	3.0%	3.7%
GHAZNI	4.5%	3.3%	4.5%
GHOR	2.5%	1.4%	2.5%
HELMAND	3.4%	4.0%	3.4%

	PERCENTAGE IN POPULATION	PERCENTAGE IN UNWEIGHTED SAMPLE (INCLUDES INTERCEPT INTERVIEWS AND OVERSAMPLE DISTRICTS)	PERCENTAGE IN WEIGHTED SAMPLE WITHOUT INTERCEPTS (MERGEWGT10) <sup>7</sup>
HERAT	6.9%	3.5%	6.9%
JAWZJAN	2.0%	2.8%	2.0%
KABUL	16.1%	7.0%	16.3%
KANDAHAR	4.5%	2.9%	4.5%
KAPISA	1.6%	1.4%	1.6%
KHOST	2.1%	1.4%	2.1%
KUNAR	1.7%	1.4%	1.6%
KUNDUZ	4.3%	5.9%	4.3%
LAGHMAN	1.6%	1.4%	1.6%
LOGAR	1.4%	2.4%	1.4%
NANGARHAR	5.6%	5.3%	5.6%
NIMROZ	0.6%	2.8%	0.6%
NURISTAN	0.5%	1.4%	0.5%
PAKTIA	2.0%	1.4%	2.0%
PAKTIKA	1.6%	1.3%	1.6%
PANJSHIR	0.6%	1.3%	0.6%
PARWAN	2.4%	1.4%	2.4%
SAMANGAN	1.4%	3.7%	1.4%
SAR-E-PUL	2.1%	1.4%	2.0%
TAKHAR	3.6%	5.9%	3.6%
URUZGAN	1.3%	1.1%	1.3%
WARDAK	2.2%	2.8%	2.2%
ZABUL	1.1%	1.4%	1.1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

## 5 MARGIN OF ERROR

Focusing on the portion of the sample that is probability based (excluding intercept interviews), the added variance from a multistage stratified cluster design can be estimated via a design-effect estimate for the *Survey*'s variables, and in turn used to estimate the complex margin of sampling error. Design-effect estimates provided in this section account for both the complex sample design and the weights.

- The sample was stratified by urban/rural status and province, with two stages of clustering: district and settlement. For purposes of design-effect estimation, only one stage of clustering is specified. Most of the additional variance is accounted for in the initial stage of clustering, resulting in a negligible increase in design effect when two stages are defined.
- The design effect, for reporting purposes, was estimated for a key question of interest: “In your opinion, are things in our country generally going in the right direction or the wrong direction?” In the following table, we provide design-effect estimates for each response category of this key variable through the survey module of the R statistical software package.
- In an effort to provide a survey-wide design effect, a “weighted mean” design effect was calculated as the average across each response category of the variable when weighted by frequency of response.

### DESIGN-EFFECT ESTIMATION USING Q1

	PROPORTION	COMPLEX SE	DESIGN EFFECT	SRS BOOTSTRAPPED SE
RIGHT DIRECTION	31.96%	0.6444%	2.8663	0.3776%
WRONG DIRECTION	62.02%	0.6955%	3.0827	0.4007%
REFUSED VOL.	0.48%	0.0774%	1.8868	0.0571%
DON'T KNOW VOL.	5.54%	0.3178%	2.8993	0.1996%
<b>WEIGHTED MEAN</b>			<b>2.9977</b>	

Assuming a simple random sample with  $n=15,012$ ,  $p=.5$ , at the 95% CI level, the margin of error for the *Survey* is 1.0%. However, when accounting for the complex design through the design-effect estimate of 2.9977,  $p=.5$  at the 95% CI level, and the complex margin of error (MOE) is 1.4%.

In addition to this conservative estimate of MOE,<sup>7</sup> statistic-specific standard errors were provided using bootstrapping. Bootstrapping is a resampling method that does not rely on assumptions about the distribution of the variable of interest. These estimates are calculated with the weighted data, and can be multiplied by the square root of the design effect in order to achieve a standard error that takes the design into consideration. These estimates take the actual responses into consideration during calculation (as

opposed to the conservative setting of  $p=.5$ ). These estimates are provided at the request of The Asia Foundation in an effort to provide comparable estimates to what a prior statistician provided in previous waves of this study.

## 6 INTERVIEWERS

The number of supervisors and male and female interviewers by province appears in the table below.

	NUMBER OF SUPERVISORS	NUMBER OF FEMALE INTERVIEWERS	NUMBER OF MALE INTERVIEWERS	TOTAL NUMBER OF INTERVIEWERS
BADAKHSHANN	1	15	16	31
BADGHIS	1	13	12	25
BAGHLAN	1	17	20	37
BALKH	1	27	24	51
BAMYAN	1	10	10	20
DAIKUNDI	1	14	18	32
FARAH	1	9	10	19
FARYAB	1	15	17	32
GHAZNI	1	23	28	51
GHOR	1	14	15	29
HELMAND	1	16	26	42
HERAT	1	15	13	28
JAWZJAN	1	19	16	35
KABUL	1	41	36	77
KANDAHAR	1	11	12	23
KAPISA	1	18	12	30
KHOST	1	9	9	18
KUNAR	1	9	12	21
KUNDUZ	1	36	28	64
LAGHMAN	1	18	17	35
LOGAR	1	22	19	41
NANGARHAR	1	26	23	49
NIMROZ	1	18	17	35
NURISTAN	2	9	11	20
PAKTIA	1	8	11	19

	NUMBER OF SUPERVISORS	NUMBER OF FEMALE INTERVIEWERS	NUMBER OF MALE INTERVIEWERS	TOTAL NUMBER OF INTERVIEWERS
PAKTIKA	1	7	16	23
PANJSHIR	1	9	9	18
PARWAN	1	10	11	21
SAMANGAN	1	15	20	35
SAR-E-PUL	1	10	12	22
TAKHAR	1	33	34	67
URUZGAN	1	14	8	22
WARDAK	1	20	19	39
ZABUL	1	12	16	28
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>562</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>1139</b>

## 7 SAMPLING REPLACEMENTS

In studies prior to 2014, if a sampling point was inaccessible, the replacement of this sampling point was left to the discretion of field supervisors and managers. Realizing the need to limit any systematic bias of field supervisors selecting replacement sampling points, the Foundation in 2013 updated the system for assigning replacements to inaccessible sampling points to a system in which a total of two replicate sample draws are provided to the field team prior to the launch of fieldwork.

For this wave of the *Survey of the Afghan People*, the fieldwork partner, ACSOR, continued to use this replacement protocol. The first draw serves as the initial list of sampling points where fieldwork is to be conducted. If the sampling point is inaccessible, the field supervisors inform the central office of the reason for inaccessibility. The field supervisor then uses the first preassigned replicate, which is always a different village within the same district. If this village is also inaccessible, the process is repeated, and a second preassigned replicate is attempted. If the second replicate is also inaccessible, the next selected village is left to the discretion of the field managers and supervisors. In cases where settlement/nahia-level replacements are exhausted in the field by supervisors, neighboring accessible settlements are chosen as replacements whenever possible.

As of June 2018, when the sample was drawn for fieldwork in July, 69% of the population lived in districts accessible for fieldwork, 10% lived in districts accessible only to male interviewers, and 21% lived in totally inaccessible districts. This means that in total, 31% of women and 21% of men were inaccessible to random walk interviewing. Of 2,614 sampling points selected, a total of 950 villages from the main draw had to be replaced, for a variety of reasons. This represents a total replacement rate of 36.3% of original sampling points.

### REPLACEMENT RATE BY YEAR

YEAR	NUMBER OF SAMPLING POINTS (TOTAL)	NUMBER OF REPLACED SAMPLING POINTS	REPLACEMENT RATE
2008	762	52	6.8%
2009	961	208	21.6%
2010	825	214	25.9%
2011	825	166	20.1%
2012	1,436	341	23.7%
2013	1,568	267	17.0%
2014	1,628	460	28.3%
2015	1,684	482	28.6%
2016	2,262	800	35.4%
2017	1,728	668	38.7%
2018	2,614	950	36.3%

Of the 950 villages replaced in the first draw, 855 were in the Main Sample or Northern Oversample, which had two full replicate draws. Although the first-round sample draw for the CC Oversample was created in the same manner as the Main Sample and the Northern Oversample, the Foundation was unable to create two full replicate draws for the CC Oversample, because of a limited number of settlements (neighborhoods or villages) in some target districts. Thus, while replacement figures for the first round of the CC Oversample are comparable to the other two samples, replacement figures for subsequent rounds are not.

Of the 855 sampling points replaced in the first draw of the Main Sample and Northern Oversample, 233 (27%) were replaced in the second draw, 202 (24%) were replaced in the third draw, and 420 (49%) were replaced by the supervisor. The primary reason for replacement was the presence of armed opposition groups (AOGs) in the village, or other security issues.

Reasons for all replacements are summarized below:

### VILLAGE REPLACEMENTS

REASON	INITIAL DRAW		SECOND DRAW <sup>a</sup>		THIRD DRAW <sup>b</sup>	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
SECURITY ISSUES / AOGS	611	64.3%	398	64.0%	287	68.3%
ACCESSIBILITY/WEATHER	176	18.5%	141	22.7%	82	13.2%
VILLAGE ABANDONED / COULD NOT BE FOUND	122	12.8%	54	8.7%	36	5.8%
VILLAGE-LEVEL REFUSAL	24	2.5%	18	2.9%	12	1.9%
VILLAGE IN WRONG DISTRICT	4	0.4%	1	0.2%	1	0.2%
OTHER	13	1.4%	10	1.6%	2	0.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>622</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>100%</b>

Female sampling points had a slightly higher rate of replacement: 34.3% of male sampling points (453 out of 1,322) were replaced, compared with 38.5% of female sampling points (497 out of 1,292). Below are the reasons for replacement of male and female sampling points in the first sample draw.

### REPLACED SAMPLING POINTS, BY GENDER

REASON	REPLACED MALE SAMPLING POINTS: FIRST SAMPLE DRAW		REPLACED FEMALE SAMPLING POINTS: FIRST SAMPLE DRAW	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
SECURITY ISSUES / AOGS	287	63.4%	324	65.2%
ACCESSIBILITY/WEATHER	87	19.2%	89	17.9%
VILLAGE ABANDONED / COULD NOT BE FOUND	54	11.9%	68	13.7%
VILLAGE-LEVEL REFUSAL	14	3.1%	10	2.0%
VILLAGE IN WRONG DISTRICT	2	0.4%	2	0.4%
OTHER	9	2.0%	4	0.8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>453</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>497</b>	<b>100%</b>

Reasons for replacements have been consistent across the years of the *Survey*, with security being the primary reason for replacements since 2009. Below are the reasons for replacement since 2008, the first year that reasons for replacement were recorded.



## REASONS FOR VILLAGE REPLACEMENTS, BY YEAR

REASON	2008		2009		2010		2011	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
SECURITY ISSUES / AOGS	17	32.7%	104	50.0%	140	65.4%	99	59.6%
ACCESSIBILITY/WEATHER	10	19.2%	45	21.6%	40	18.7%	29	17.5%
VILLAGE ABANDONED / COULD NOT BE FOUND	23	44.2%	53	25.5%	34	15.9%	31	18.7%
VILLAGE-LEVEL REFUSAL	0	0.0%	5	2.4%	0	0.0%	7	4.2%
VILLAGE IN WRONG DISTRICT	2	3.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
NOT SPECIFIED / OTHER	0	0.0%	1	0.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>100%</b>

REASON	2012		2013		2014		2015	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
SECURITY ISSUES / AOGS	191	56.0%	144	53.9%	298	64.8%	332	68.9%
ACCESSIBILITY/WEATHER	96	28.2%	61	22.8%	113	24.6%	110	22.8%
VILLAGE ABANDONED / COULD NOT BE FOUND	39	11.4%	45	16.9%	46	10.0%	35	7.3%
VILLAGE-LEVEL REFUSAL	9	2.6%	13	4.9%	3	0.7%	2	0.4%
VILLAGE IN WRONG DISTRICT	6	1.8%	4	1.5%	0	0.0%	3	0.6%
NOT SPECIFIED / OTHER	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>482</b>	<b>100%</b>

REASON	2016		2017		2018			
	#	%	#	%	#	%		
SECURITY ISSUES / AOGS	561	70.1%	491	73.5%	611	64.3%		
ACCESSIBILITY/WEATHER	178	22.3%	105	15.7%	176	18.5%		
VILLAGE ABANDONED / COULD NOT BE FOUND	42	5.3%	60	9.0%	122	12.8%		
VILLAGE-LEVEL REFUSAL	11	1.4%	9	1.3%	24	2.5%		
VILLAGE IN WRONG DISTRICT	4	0.5%	3	0.4%	4	0.4%		
NOT SPECIFIED / OTHER	4	0.5%	0	0.0%	13	1.4%		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>668</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>100%</b>		

## Contact Procedures

- After selecting a household, interviewers were instructed to utilize a Kish grid for randomizing the target respondent within the household. Members of the household were listed by name in order of descending age. The Kish grid provides a random selection criterion based on which visit the household represents in the enumerator's random walk and the number of inhabitants living in the household. Column numbers in the Kish grid that accompanies the questionnaire are precoded to help prevent fraud or convenience selection based on available people.
- Under no circumstances were interviewers allowed to substitute an alternate member of a household for the selected respondent. If the respondent refused to participate or was not available after three callbacks, the interviewer then moved on to the next household according to the random walk.
- Typically, interviewers were required to make two callbacks before replacing the household. These callbacks were made at different times of the same day or on different days of the field period, in order to provide a broader time frame in which to engage the respondent. Due to security-related concerns, the field force had difficulty meeting the requirement of two callbacks prior to substitution in many rural areas.
- In this survey, while interviewers were able to complete some callbacks, the majority of the interviews were completed on the first attempt:
  - First contact 98.6%
  - Second contact 1.0%
  - Third contact 0.4%
- Due to the high rate of unemployment and the choice of appropriate times of day for interviewing, completion on the first attempt is common in Afghanistan.

## 8 FIELD QUALITY CONTROLS

Thirty-five supervisors observed interviewers' work in the field. Approximately 36% of the interviews were subject to some form of back-check.

The back-checks consisted of:

- Direct observation during the interview by fieldwork supervisor (663 interviews, 4.4%);
- A return visit by the fieldwork supervisor to the residence where an interview took place (3,236 interviews, 22%);

- Back-check from central office of fieldwork partner ACSOR (27 interviews, 0.2%); or
- Quality control by the third-party monitoring partner Sayara Research (1,405 interviews, 9.4%).

As with previous studies since 2014, the 2018 *Survey of the Afghan People* included third-party monitoring and validation. ACSOR supervisors provided the training and fieldwork schedule to Sayara Research, which carried out monitoring. The validators from Sayara and Asia Foundation staff met with ACSOR enumerators during the field period and observed fieldwork to verify the correct administration of the *Survey*, including the starting point, the random walk, and the use of the Kish grid to select respondents at 241 sampling points. They also conducted back-checks of selected interviews. In total, 12 interviews were rejected due to field-level quality control. Foundation personnel also participated in validation of sampling points.

## 9 GPS COORDINATES

In order to improve accuracy and verify fieldwork, enumerators collected GPS data using phones in 2,376 of 2,614 sampling points (91%). In addition, interviewers collected GPS coordinates for 687 of 729 respondents for the RCS sample. Security concerns were the main reason GPS coordinates were not collected at all sampling points. As an extra level of verification, GPS coordinates were then compared with village GPS coordinates provided by the CSO. For this study, the median distance from the selected villages was 1.11 km.

## 10 CODING, DATA ENTRY, AND DATA QUALITY CONTROLS

When the questionnaires were returned to the ACSOR central office in Kabul, they were sorted, and open-ended questions were coded by a team of coders familiar with international standards for creating typologies for codes. During data entry, five cases were removed because of missing or misprinted pages.

The questionnaires were then sent for data entry. During this process, the keypunching team utilized logic checks and verified any errors inadvertently committed by interviewers. Following the data cleaning process and logic checks of the dataset, ACSOR used a program called Hunter to search for additional patterns and duplicates that might indicate that an interview was not properly conducted by an interviewer.

The Hunter program includes three tests:

Equality test—compares interviews for similarities, grouped by interviewer, within sampling point,

province, or any other variable. Typically, interviews with an interviewer average of 90% or higher are flagged for further investigation.

Nonresponse test—determines the percentage of don't knows and refusals for each interviewer's cases. Typically, interviews with 40% or higher DK responses are flagged for further investigation.

Duplicates test—compares cases across all interviewers and respondents to check for similarity rates. This test will flag any two interviews that are similar to each other. Typically, any cases that have a similarity of 95% or higher are flagged for further investigation.

Any interview that did not pass Hunter was pulled out for additional screening. If the interview did not pass screening, it was removed from the final database.

During the data entry process, as entry of questionnaires was completed, 20% of all paper questionnaires (2,988 out of 14,933) were randomly selected for reentry. Data results from this independent entry were then compared to the primary data set. Discrepancies and errors were identified by data coders. Key-punchers with high error rates were corrected and provided with additional training. For all errors, questionnaires were then reviewed, and the correct data included in the final data set. The error rate for data entry for the *Survey of the Afghan People 2018* was 0.18%, which is considered low and acceptable.

As the last layer of quality control, the Foundation used a multifaceted set of logic tests that would flag inconsistencies in the data and responses. Based on the results of these tests, 452 additional cases (2.9%) were removed from the data set for failing more than two logic tests and for enumerator data that had high logic failure rates (80% or 90%, depending on the facet of the logic tests).

In total, 4.3% of all successful interviews (those in the initial data file prior to quality control) were removed at some stage of the quality-control process.

## SUMMARY OF REMOVED CASES

	N-SIZE AT EACH STAGE OF QC	TOTAL REMOVED	PERCENTAGE REMOVED AT EACH STAGE
TOTAL SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEWS	15,666	--	NA
N-SIZE AFTER ACSOR QC	15,464	223	1.4%
N-SIZE AFTER ASIA FOUNDATION QC	15,012	452	2.9%

## ENDNOTES

- 1 The design-effect estimate is a weighted average across individual response option design effects for this key question of interest.
- 2 The probability sample excludes intercept interviews from variance estimation.
- 3 The Foundation used the 2016–2017 updated figures provided by the Central Statistics Organization (CSO) of the Afghan government.
- 4 The target n-size for this survey was 14,800. The initial data set after data processing but before quality-control removals had an n-size of 15,666 (not counting those rejected during data entry due to missing or misprinted pages or due to field-level quality control). A total of 654 interviews were removed as a result of quality control by Foundation logic checks, which reduced the total n-size in the final data set to 15,012.
- 5 Interviewers were not allowed to substitute an alternate member of a household for the respondent selected by the Kish grid. If the respondent refused to participate or was not available after callbacks, the interviewer had to move on to the next household according to the random route.
- 6 The urban centers of some of the more rural provinces were included as their own strata and represent very small segments of the target population. As a result, cases from these strata have very small weights. The sample within these strata was allocated to ensure that everyone who was part of the target population had a probability of being selected. Trimming was not done with these small weights, in order to maintain a proportional-to-population-estimates-by-strata weighted sample.
- 7 “MergeWgt10” variable in the data set. Post-stratified weight by strata without Intercepts. Distribution of the weighted sample by province is approximately the same for both weights. When accessing SAP data, use variable MergeWgt10 to weight the data and replicate results.
- 8 The margin of error for a binary response is maximized when the proportions are set equal to each other ( $p=.5$ )
- 9 Figures are only for Main Sample and Northern Oversample
- 10 Figures are only for Main Sample and Northern Oversample



Handwritten text on the left side of the form, including a list of items and their corresponding values.

Handwritten text on the right side of the form, including a list of items and their corresponding values.

Handwritten text on a separate piece of paper at the bottom left, including a list of items and their corresponding values.

Item	Quantity	Unit Price	Total
1	1	100	100
2	2	200	400
3	3	300	900
4	4	400	1600

## APPENDIX 2: SAMPLE DEMOGRAPHICS

### M-4 REGION

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS	13,943
CENTRAL/KABUL	25%
EAST	9%
SOUTH EAST	10%
SOUTH WEST	11%
WEST	13%
NORTH EAST	15%
CENTRAL/HAZARAJAT	3%
NORTH WEST	14%

### M-6A. GEOGRAPHIC CODE

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS	13,943
VILLAGES	75%
TOWNS	5%
CITY	6%
METRO (KABUL)	14%

### M-7. PROVINCE

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS	13,943
KABUL	16%
KAPISA	2%
PARWAN	2%
WARDAK	2%
LOGAR	1%
GHAZNI	5%
PAKTIA	2%
PAKTIKA	2%
KHOST	2%
NANGARHAR	6%
LAGHMAN	2%
KUNAR	2%
NURISTAN	1%
BADAKHSHAN	3%
TAKHAR	4%

BAGHLAN	3%
KUNDUZ	4%
BALKH	5%
SAMANGAN	1%
JAWZJAN	2%
SAR-E-PUL	2%
FARYAB	4%
BADGHIS	2%
HERAT	7%
FARAH	2%
NIMROZ	1%
HELMAND	3%
KANDAHAR	4%
ZABUL	1%
URUZGAN	1%
GHOR	3%
BAMYAN	2%
PANJSHIR	1%
DAIKUNDI	2%

#### D-1. GENDER

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS	13,943
MALE	50%
FEMALE	50%

#### D-2. HOW OLD ARE YOU?

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS	13,943
18–31 YEARS OLD	50%
32–44 YEARS OLD	28%
45–57 YEARS OLD	15%
58–70 YEARS OLD	6%
71–83 YEARS OLD	1%



#### D-14. WHICH ETHNIC GROUP DO YOU BELONG TO?

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS	13,943
PASHTUN	37%
TAJIK	37%
HAZARA	10%
UZBEK	9%
TURKMENI	2%
SADAT	1%
AIMAK	1%
ARAB	1%
DON'T KNOW	1%
BALOCH	1%
NURISTANI	1%
PASHAYE	<0.5%
QEZELBASH	<0.5%
AFGHAN	<0.5%
REFUSED	<0.5%
NOTHING	<0.5%
GUJAR	<0.5%
WAKHI	<0.5%



## APPENDIX 3: INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

### MAIN SURVEY QUESTIONS

**Q-1.** Overall, based on your own experience, do you think things in Afghanistan today are going in the right direction, or do you think they are going in the wrong direction?

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
RIGHT DIRECTION	33%
WRONG DIRECTION	61%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	6%

**Q-2.** (Ask if answer to Q-1 is code 1, "right direction.") What are two reasons you think that Afghanistan is going in the right direction?

**Q-2a.** First mention \_\_\_\_\_

**Q-2b.** Second mention \_\_\_\_\_

<b>BASE: RIGHT DIRECTION</b>	<b>4,520</b>
RECONSTRUCTION/REBUILDING	31%
GOOD SECURITY	25%
PEACE / END OF THE WAR	16%
IMPROVEMENT IN EDUCATION SYSTEM	8%
REDUCTION IN LEVEL OF ADMINISTRATIVE CORRUPTION	8%
ECONOMIC REVIVAL	8%
SCHOOLS FOR GIRLS HAVE OPENED	8%
ROAD RECONSTRUCTION	6%
GOOD GOVERNMENT	6%
DEMOCRACY/ELECTIONS	5%
HAVING ACTIVE ANA AND ANP	4%
REMOVING TALIBAN	4%
MORE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY THAN BEFORE	4%
INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE	3%
WOMEN CAN NOW WORK	3%
HAVING LEGAL CONSTITUTION	3%
MORE JOB OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE	3%
DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE	2%
PREVENTION/ELIMINATION OF CRIMES	2%
PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS	2%
NATIONAL UNITY	2%

IMPROVED JUSTICE	2%
DISARMAMENT	2%
CLINICS HAVE BEEN BUILT	2%
DON'T KNOW	1%
REDUCTION IN POPPY CULTIVATION	1%
FREEDOM / FREE SPEECH	1%
CLEAN DRINKING WATER	1%
ESTABLISHING HIGH PEACE JIRGA/SHURA	1%
HAVING A LEGITIMATE PRESIDENT	1%
HAVING PARLIAMENT	1%
WOMEN HAVE MORE FREEDOM	1%
GOOD COMMUNICATION SYSTEM	1%
DECREASE IN CRIMES	1%
REMOVING TERRORISM	1%
REFUGEES RETURN	1%
PREVENTION/ELIMINATION OF SUICIDE ATTACKS	1%
MORE ATTENTION TO HUMAN RIGHTS	1%
FREE MOVEMENT / TRAVEL POSSIBLE	1%
DEVELOPMENT IN HEALTH-CARE SYSTEM IN GENERAL	1%
FOREIGN FORCES LEAVING AFGHANISTAN	1%

**Q-3.** (Ask if answer to Q-1 is code 2, “wrong direction.”) What are two reasons you think that Afghanistan is going in the wrong direction?

**Q-3a.** First mention \_\_\_\_\_

**Q-3b.** Second mention \_\_\_\_\_

BASE: WRONG DIRECTION	8,518
INSECURITY	49%
UNEMPLOYMENT	24%
CORRUPTION	14%
BAD ECONOMY	12%
SUICIDE ATTACKS	9%
BAD GOVERNMENT	7%
INNOCENT PEOPLE BEING KILLED	6%
ETHNIC PROBLEMS	5%
POOR LEADERSHIP	5%
PRESENCE OF TALIBAN	5%
ADMINISTRATIVE CORRUPTION	5%
NO RECONSTRUCTION HAS HAPPENED	4%

INJUSTICE IN THE COUNTRY	4%
HIGH PRICES	3%
POOR EDUCATION SYSTEM	3%
LACK OF AID / NO DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE	2%
TOO MANY FOREIGNERS ARE GETTING INVOLVED	2%
INCREASE IN CRIMES	2%
LACK OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LAW	2%
NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES CAUSE PROBLEMS	2%
WATER & POWER SUPPLY PROBLEMS	2%
PRESENCE OF ISIS	2%
INCREASE IN DRUG TRADE	1%
LACK OF UNITY	1%
PRESENCE OF WARLORDS	1%
KIDNAPPING OF CHILDREN	1%
PEOPLE DISILLUSIONED WITH THE GOVERNMENT	1%
THERE IS NO PROGRESS	1%
PAKISTAN'S ROCKET ATTACKS ON AFGHANISTAN	1%
MIGRATION	1%
FOREIGN AID CAUSES PROBLEMS	1%
DON'T KNOW	1%

**Q-4.** (Ask all.) In your view, what is going well in your local area? (Write down answers; allow up to two mentions.)

**Q-4a.** First mention \_\_\_\_\_

**Q-4b.** Second mention \_\_\_\_\_

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
DEVELOPMENT IN AGRICULTURE/IRRIGATION/LIVESTOCK	20%
NOTHING	18%
DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION	18%
BUILDING ROADS AND BRIDGES	14%
GOOD SECURITY	13%
DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRY	9%
BUILDING CLINICS	7%
AVAILABILITY OF DRINKING WATER	6%
BUILDING DAMNS	6%
UNITY AMONG PEOPLE	5%
DON'T KNOW	5%
AVAILABILITY OF JOBS	4%

BUILDING MOSQUES	2%
TRADE AND BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT	2%
AVAILABILITY OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING	2%
BETTER ECONOMY	1%
IMPLEMENTATION OF LAW AND ORDER	1%
PEOPLE'S SUPPORT FOR ANP	1%
ESTABLISHMENT OF PEOPLE'S COUNCIL	1%
PUBLIC SERVICES	1%
FIGHTING CORRUPTION	1%
CLEANER ENVIRONMENT	1%
FIGHT AGAINST NARCOTICS	1%
FIGHT AGAINST CRIMINALS	1%
REFUSED	1%
GRANTING OF WOMEN'S/HUMAN RIGHTS	1%
ELECTIONS	1%
RELIGION	1%

**Q-5.** (Ask all.) In your view, what are the biggest problems in your local area? (Write down answers; allow up to two mentions.)

**Q-5a.** First mention \_\_\_\_\_

**Q-5b.** Second mention \_\_\_\_\_

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
UNEMPLOYMENT	31%
SECURITY ISSUES / ATTACKS / VIOLENCE	23%
DRINKING WATER	22%
ELECTRICITY	20%
ROADS	15%
EDUCATION/SCHOOLS/LITERACY	9%
HEALTH CARE / CLINICS / HOSPITALS	8%
POOR ECONOMY	7%
POVERTY	6%
HIGH PRICES	5%
CRIME	4%
CORRUPTION	4%
RECONSTRUCTION/REBUILDING	3%
TALIBAN	3%
POLLUTION	2%
DRUGS SMUGGLING	2%

ETHNIC PROBLEMS	2%
WATER FOR AGRICULTURAL IRRIGATION	2%
PRESENCE OF WARLORDS	2%
INJUSTICE	1%
LACK OF AGRICULTURAL TOOLS/EQUIPMENT	1%
GOVERNMENT / WEAK GOVERNMENT / CENTRAL AUTHORITY	1%
ADDICTION TO DRUGS	1%
NO PROBLEMS AT ALL	1%
TRANSPORTATION PROBLEMS	1%
INNOCENT PEOPLE BEING KILLED	1%
LACK OF (PROPER) SHELTER	1%
THEFT	1%
DON'T KNOW	1%

**Q-6.** (Ask all.) In your view, what are the two biggest problems facing youth in your area? By youth, I mean people between the ages of 15 and 24. What is the next-biggest problem?

**Q-6a.** First mention \_\_\_\_\_

**Q-6b.** Second mention \_\_\_\_\_

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
UNEMPLOYMENT	73%
ILLITERACY	31%
DRUG ADDICTION	16%
POOR ECONOMY	14%
INSECURITY	8%
NO OPPORTUNITIES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION	6%
LACK OF SCHOOLS	4%
COSTLY MARRIAGES	3%
TAKING REFUGE IN IRAN	2%
LACK OF SPORTS FIELDS	2%
ABANDONING THE COUNTRY	2%
INVOLVEMENT IN CRIME	2%
LACK OF YOUTH RIGHTS	1%
LACK OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING	1%
HIGH COST OF LIVING	1%
INJUSTICE	1%
CORRUPTION	1%

TRIBAL PROBLEMS	1%
MORAL CORRUPTION	1%
FAMILY PROBLEMS	1%
FORCED MARRIAGES	1%
LACK OF PROFESSIONAL TEACHERS	1%
BEING KILLED	1%
TALIBAN RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGNS	1%
DON'T KNOW	1%

**Q-7.** (Ask all.) What, if anything, is the biggest problem facing women in this area today?  
What is the next-biggest problem?

**Q-7a.** First mention: \_\_\_\_\_

**Q-7b.** Second mention: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
EDUCATION/ILLITERACY	38%
LACK OF JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN	26%
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	18%
LACK OF RIGHTS / WOMEN'S RIGHTS	12%
FORCED MARRIAGES / DOWRY	12%
POVERTY	9%
LACK OF PROFESSIONAL COURSES	7%
NO HOSPITALS/CLINICS	6%
NOTHING	4%
SECURITY	4%
DON'T KNOW	4%
GENERAL HEALTH CARE	2%
BAAD	2%
CAN'T LEAVE HOMES	2%
PREGNANCY-RELATED HEALTH CARE	2%
LACK OF SCHOOLS FOR GIRLS	2%
UNDER CONTROL OF MEN / MEN HAVE POWER	2%
LACK OF PROFESSIONAL DOCTORS	2%
RECEIVING NO SHARE OF INHERITANCE	1%
MISBEHAVING WITH / MISTREATING WOMEN	1%
BADDAL	1%
GOVERNMENT IGNORES WOMEN	1%
WOMEN DENIED HIGHER EDUCATION	1%
INJUSTICE	1%



LACK OF MARKETS FOR CRAFTS	1%
LACK OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN	1%
LACK OF FREEDOM	1%
SELLING WOMEN/GIRLS FOR MONEY	1%
LACK OF PARKS FOR WOMEN	1%
REFUSED	<0.5%

## SERVICES AND HEALTH

**Q-8.** *Compared to one year ago, would you say that the situation for your household has gotten better, remained the same, or gotten worse with respect to the following?*

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS (13,943)	BETTER	THE SAME	WORSE	REFUSED	DON'T KNOW
A) FINANCIAL SITUATION OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD	19%	47%	34%	<0.5%	<0.5%
B) EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES	8%	34%	57%	<0.5%	<0.5%
C) AVAILABILITY OF PRODUCTS IN THE MARKET	12%	54%	33%	<0.5%	<0.5%
D) QUALITY OF FOOD IN YOUR DIET	17%	53%	30%	<0.5%	<0.5%
E) PHYSICAL CONDITION OF YOUR HOUSE/DWELLING	17%	54%	28%	<0.5%	1%
F) HEALTH/WELL-BEING OF YOUR FAMILY MEMBERS	21%	53%	25%	<0.5%	<0.5%
G) ELECTRICITY SUPPLY	16%	43%	39%	<0.5%	1%
H) QUALITY OF SCHOOL SERVICES	22%	51%	26%	<0.5%	1%
I) ACCESS TO ROADS	23%	44%	32%	<0.5%	<0.5%
J) ACCESS TO CLEAN DRINKING WATER	19%	44%	37%	<0.5%	<0.5%
K) ACCESS TO IRRIGATION FACILITIES	9%	51%	37%	<0.5%	2%

**Q-9a.** *What is the main source of electricity in this household?*

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS	13,943
POWER FROM THE GRID / CITY POWER	41%
GENERATOR OWNED OR RENTED BY THIS HOUSE	2%
COMMUNITY GENERATOR	2%
SOLAR PANELS	44%
BATTERY	5%
THERE IS NO ELECTRICITY IN THIS HOUSEHOLD	6%
DON'T KNOW	<0.5%

**Q-9b.** (Ask if response given to Q-9a.) On a typical day, how many hours do you have access to electricity in this household?

<b>BASE: HAVE ELECTRICITY IN HOUSEHOLD</b>	<b>13,130</b>
24	13%
12	10%
10	7%
4	7%
5	7%
6	7%
8	6%
3	6%
20	5%
7	4%
2	4%
18	4%
15	3%
9	3%
22	2%
DON'T KNOW	2%
14	2%
16	2%
1	1%
11	1%
13	1%
23	1%
21	1%
19	1%
17	1%
REFUSED	<0.5%

**Q-9c.** (Ask if response given to Q-9a.) What are the main uses of electricity?

**Q-9c\_a.** First mention: \_\_\_\_\_

**Q-9c\_b.** Second mention: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>BASE: HAVE ELECTRICITY</b>	<b>13,131</b>
LIGHTING	71%
TELEVISION	32%
FAN OR AIR CONDITIONER	22%
CHARGING MOBILE	17%

REFRIGERATOR	10%
WATER PUMP	8%
HEATING WATER	5%
IRONING CLOTHES	4%
WASHING MACHINE	4%
POWERING OTHER ELECTRICAL DEVICES	3%
LISTENING TO THE RADIO	1%
COOKING	1%
VACUUM CLEANER	1%
DON'T KNOW	1%
REFUSED	<0.5%

**Q-10.** *I am going to read a list of projects that may or may not have been implemented in your area. Please tell me if there has been this type of project in your area in the last 12 months.*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS (13,943)</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>REFUSED</b>	<b>DON'T KNOW</b>
A) RECONSTRUCTION/BUILDING OF ROADS OR BRIDGES	33%	66%	<0.5%	<0.5%
B) NEW GOVERNMENT SCHOOL	14%	85%	<0.5%	<0.5%
C) NEW PRIVATE SCHOOL	17%	82%	<0.5%	1%
D) NEW PRIVATE UNIVERSITY	7%	92%	<0.5%	1%
E) DRINKING-WATER PROJECT	24%	75%	<0.5%	1%
F) IRRIGATION PROJECT	16%	83%	<0.5%	1%
G) GOVERNMENT-SUPPLIED ELECTRICITY	20%	79%	<0.5%	1%
H) HEALTH CARE	26%	73%	<0.5%	1%
I) RECONCILIATION WITH ANTIGOVERNMENT ELEMENTS	12%	87%	<0.5%	1%
J) AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS	21%	78%	<0.5%	1%
K) NEW FACTORY	5%	94%	<0.5%	1%
L) NEW MOSQUE	26%	73%	<0.5%	1%

**Q-11.** *In the past 12 months, have you or anyone in your household visited a public hospital or clinic for any health-related reasons or medical treatment?*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
YES	59%
NO	41%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	<0.5%

**Q-12a.** (Ask if answer to Q-11 is code 1, yes.) What type of services did you receive at the public hospital or clinic?

**Q-12a\_1.** First mention: \_\_\_\_\_

**Q-12a\_2.** Second mention: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>BASE: VISITED PUBLIC HOSPITAL OR CLINIC (8,452)</b>	<b>PERCENT OF CASES</b>
GOOD QUALITY MEDICINE	44%
BETTER EXAMINATION	31%
HEALTH SERVICES	21%
VACCINATION	19%
BETTER ATTENTION FROM DOCTORS	7%
EXTENSIVE CARE	4%
BLOOD PRESSURE CHECK AND TREATMENT	4%
LABORATORY TESTS	4%
MIDWIFE ADVISORY	4%
ULTRASOUND	3%
PEDIATRICS	3%
GENERAL SURGERY	2%
FEMALE HEALTH SERVICES	2%
X-RAY	2%
GETTING A PRESCRIPTION	2%
NONE	2%
GASTRIC TREATMENT	2%
GENERAL EXAMINATION	1%
TREATMENT OF PNEUMONIA	1%
DENTIST SERVICES	1%
TREATMENT OF MALARIA	1%
TREATMENT OF DIARRHEA	1%
TREATMENT OF EYE DISEASE	1%
TREATMENT OF EAR, NOSE, AND THROAT	1%
TREATMENT OF DIABETES	1%
TREATMENT OF HEART DISEASE	1%
FREE TREATMENT	1%
AMBULANCE SERVICE	1%
ORTHOPEDICS	1%
KIDNEY TREATMENT	1%
TREATMENT OF MENTAL PROBLEMS	1%
TREATMENT OF ANEMIA	1%

IN-PATIENT CARE FACILITIES	1%
DON'T KNOW	1%

**Q-12b.** (Ask if answer to Q-11 is code 1, yes.) How satisfied were you with the services you received at the public hospital or clinic?

<b>BASE: VISITED PUBLIC HOSPITAL OR CLINIC</b>	<b>8,452</b>
VERY SATISFIED	30%
SOMEWHAT SATISFIED	46%
SOMEWHAT DISSATISFIED	15%
VERY DISSATISFIED	9%
DON'T KNOW	1%

**Q-12c.** (Ask if answer to Q-11 is code 1, yes.) How many minutes did it take you to reach the public hospital or clinic from your home?

<b>BASE: VISITED PUBLIC HOSPITAL OR CLINIC</b>	<b>8,452</b>
1-20 MINUTES	29%
21-40 MINUTES	42%
41-60 MINUTES	17%
61-80 MINUTES	3%
81-100 MINUTES	1%
OVER 100 MINUTES	6%
DON'T KNOW	2%

**Q-13.** In the past 12 months, have you or anyone in your household visited a private hospital or clinic for any health-related reasons or medical treatment?

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
YES	39%
NO	60%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	<0.5%

**Q-14a.** (Ask if answer to Q-13 is code 1, yes.) What type of services did you receive at the private hospital or clinic?

**Q14a\_1.** First mention: \_\_\_\_\_

**Q14a\_2.** Second mention: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>BASE: VISITED PRIVATE HOSPITAL</b>	<b>5,178</b>
GOOD QUALITY MEDICINE	42%

BETTER EXAMINATION	35%
HEALTH SERVICES	20%
LABORATORY TESTS	7%
BETTER ATTENTION FROM DOCTORS	7%
VACCINATION	7%
ULTRASOUND	6%
X-RAY	4%
EXTENSIVE CARE	4%
GENERAL SURGERY	4%
BLOOD PRESSURE CHECK AND TREATMENT	3%
MIDWIFE ADVISORY	3%
PEDIATRICS	2%
GASTRIC TREATMENT	2%
GENERAL EXAMINATION	2%
FEMALE HEALTH SERVICES	2%
TREATMENT OF PNEUMONIA	2%
DENTIST SERVICES	1%
TREATMENT OF HEART DISEASE	1%
TREATMENT OF DIABETES	1%
ORTHOPEDICS	1%
TREATMENT OF MALARIA	1%
KIDNEY TREATMENT	1%
TREATMENT OF EAR, NOSE, AND THROAT	1%
AMBULANCE SERVICES	1%
TREATMENT OF EYE DISEASE	1%
GETTING A PRESCRIPTION	1%
NONE	1%
TREATMENT OF DIARRHEA	1%
TREATMENT OF MENTAL PROBLEMS	1%
BACK TREATMENT	1%
TREATMENT OF HEPATITIS C	1%
IN-PATIENT CARE FACILITIES	1%
TREATMENT OF ANEMIA	1%
TREATMENT OF SKIN DISEASE	1%
DON'T KNOW	1%
REFUSED	<0.5%

**Q-14b.** (Ask if answer to Q-13 is code 1, yes.) How satisfied were you with the services you received at the private hospital or clinic?

<b>BASE: VISITED PRIVATE HOSPITALS OR CLINIC</b>	<b>5,178</b>
VERY SATISFIED	36%
SOMEWHAT SATISFIED	44%
SOMEWHAT DISSATISFIED	13%
VERY DISSATISFIED	6%
DON'T KNOW	1%

**Q-14c.** (Ask if answer to Q-13 is code 1, yes.) How many minutes did it take you to reach the private hospital or clinic from your home?

<b>BASE: VISITED PRIVATE HOSPITALS OR CLINIC</b>	<b>5,178</b>
1–20 MINUTES	31%
21–40 MINUTES	36%
41–60 MINUTES	17%
61–80 MINUTES	3%
81–99 MINUTES	2%
OVER 100 MINUTES	10%
DON'T KNOW	2%

## SECURITY

**Q-15.** Which group would you say is most responsible for providing security in this village/ gozar? And the second-most?

**Q-15a.** First mention: \_\_\_\_\_

**Q-15b.** Second mention: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
NATIONAL POLICE	69%
NATIONAL ARMY	46%
LOCAL POLICE	30%
LOCAL COMMANDERS	12%
ARBAKAI	9%
PEOPLE THEMSELVES	6%
TALIBAN	2%
ELDERS	2%

MALIK	1%
NO ONE	1%
DON'T KNOW	1%
REFUSED	<0.5%

**Q-16.** *Compared with last year, do you think the [insert item] are getting better at providing security, getting worse, or is there no difference?*

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS (13,943)	GETTING BETTER	GETTING WORSE	NO DIFFERENCE	REFUSED	DON'T KNOW
A) AFGHAN NATIONAL ARMY	57%	18%	24%	<0.5%	1%
B) AFGHAN NATIONAL POLICE	46%	25%	28%	<0.5%	1%
C) AFGHAN LOCAL POLICE	29%	27%	35%	<0.5%	8%

**Q-17.** *Now please tell me if you think that the following need foreign support to do their job properly at the moment? Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree?*

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS (13,943)	STRONGLY AGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	REFUSED	DON'T KNOW
A) AFGHAN NATIONAL ARMY	50%	36%	9%	5%	<0.5%	1%
B) AFGHAN NATIONAL POLICE	44%	38%	11%	6%	<0.5%	1%
C) AFGHAN LOCAL POLICE	34%	33%	16%	11%	<0.5%	6%

**Q-18.** *I'm going to read some statements to you about the Afghan National Army (ANA). Please tell me if you agree or disagree with each statement. (Read out statement, wait for response, and then ask) would you say strongly or somewhat?*

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS (13,943)	STRONGLY AGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	REFUSED	DON'T KNOW
A) THE ANA IS HONEST AND FAIR WITH THE AFGHAN PEOPLE	58%	33%	6%	2%	<0.5%	1%
B) THE ANA HELPS IMPROVE SECURITY IN AFGHANISTAN	58%	33%	6%	2%	<0.5%	1%
C) THE ANA PROTECTS CIVILIANS	52%	34%	10%	3%	<0.5%	1%

**Q-19.** *I'm going to read some statements to you about the Afghan National Police (ANP). ANP officers are the ones who wear solid blue-grey colored uniforms. Please tell me if you agree or disagree with each statement. (Read out statement, wait for response, and then ask) would you say strongly or somewhat?*

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS (13,943)	STRONGLY AGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	REFUSED	DON'T KNOW
A) ANP IS HONEST AND FAIR WITH THE AFGHAN PEOPLE	42%	42%	12%	4%	<0.5%	<0.5%



B) ANP HELPS IMPROVE SECURITY IN AFGHANISTAN	39%	44%	13%	4%	<0.5%	<0.5%
C) ANP IS EFFICIENT AT ARRESTING THOSE WHO HAVE COMMITTED CRIMES	35%	40%	18%	6%	<0.5%	1%

**Q-20a.** *Would you agree or disagree with a family member's decision to join the Afghan National Police?*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
AGREE	70%
DISAGREE	28%
REFUSED	1%
DON'T KNOW	1%

**Q-20b.** *(Ask if answer to Q-20a is code 2, no, or 99.) Why would you disagree with their decision?*

**Q-20b\_a.** *First mention:* \_\_\_\_\_

**Q-20b\_b.** *Second mention:* \_\_\_\_\_

<b>RESPONDENTS WHO DISAGREE</b>	<b>3,847</b>
THE DEATH TOLL IS HIGH	32%
INSECURITY	22%
THEY LACK GOOD LEADERSHIP	20%
LOW SALARY	18%
THEY ARE CORRUPT	14%
FEAR OF TALIBAN/AL-QAEDA	12%
NOT INTERESTED	6%
DON'T KNOW	6%
THE FAMILY DOESN'T ALLOW IT	5%
CONDITIONS ARE NOT GOOD	4%
IT'S A HARD JOB	3%
LACK OF EQUIPMENT FOR WOMEN	3%
LACK OF RESPECT TOWARDS PEOPLE	3%
LACK OF RULE OF LAW	3%
THEY ALREADY HAVE A JOB	2%
SUICIDE ATTACKS	2%
FEAR OF REPRISAL FROM THOSE WHO ARE AGAINST ANP	2%
THEY ARE ADDICTS	1%
LACK OF TRAINING	1%
LACK OF COORDINATION AMONG ANDSF	1%

**Q-21.** *How often do you fear for your own personal safety or security or for that of your family these days? Would you say you always, often, sometimes, rarely, or never fear for you and your family's safety?*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
ALWAYS	13%
OFTEN	25%
SOMETIMES	33%
RARELY	16%
NEVER	13%
DON'T KNOW	<0.5%

**Q-22.** *In your view, does any group currently pose a threat to the security of this local area?*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
YES	36%
NO	63%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	1%

**Q-23.** *(Ask if answer to Q-22 is yes.) Who do you think poses a threat to the security of this local area? (Ask open-ended, record up to two mentions.)*

**Q-23a.** *First mention:* \_\_\_\_\_

**Q-23b.** *Second mention:* \_\_\_\_\_

<b>BASE: THOSE WHO SEE A THREAT TO SECURITY</b>	<b>9,378</b>
TALIBAN	68%
CRIMINALS/THIEVES	25%
DAESH/ISIS	16%
ANTIGOVERNMENT ELEMENTS	12%
IRRESPONSIBLE ARMED MEN	9%
HAQQANI NETWORK/GROUP	7%
WARLORDS	7%
SMUGGLERS	6%
UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE	6%
POLICE	2%
AL-QAEDA	2%
LOCAL MILITIA	2%
PEOPLE THEMSELVES	2%
PAKISTAN	1%

COMMANDERS	1%
AMERICA	1%
GOVERNMENT	1%
KIDNAPPERS	1%
NATIONAL ARMY	1%
IRAN	1%
HEZB-E ISLAMI	1%
DON'T KNOW	1%
REFUSED	<0.5%

**Q-24.** *Have you or has anyone in your family suffered from violence or some criminal act in the past year?*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
YES	19%
NO	81%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	<0.5%

**Q-25.** *(Ask if answer to Q-24 is code 1, yes.) If it is ok to ask, what kinds of violence or crimes did you or someone in your family experience in the past year?*

**Q-25a.** *First mention:* \_\_\_\_\_

**Q-25b.** *Second mention:* \_\_\_\_\_

<b>BASE: EXPERIENCED CRIME OR VIOLENCE</b>	<b>2,535</b>
PHYSICAL ATTACK OR BEATING	41%
LIVESTOCK STOLEN	21%
RACKETEERING/EXTORTION	19%
PICKPOCKETING	17%
BURGLARY/LOOTING	14%
MURDER	11%
KIDNAPPING	11%
SUICIDE ATTACKS	10%
MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT / PROPERTY TAKEN FROM VEHICLE OR PARTS OF THE VEHICLE STOLEN	7%
MILITANT/INSURGENT ACTIONS	5%
POLICE ACTIONS	5%
SMUGGLING	5%
FOREIGN FORCES ACTIONS (NIGHT RAIDS, DRONE ATTACKS, ETC.)	2%
SEXUAL VIOLENCE	2%

ARMY ACTIONS	2%
FIGHTING BETWEEN TALIBAN AND GOVERNMENT FORCES	1%
DON'T KNOW	1%

**Q-26.** (Ask if answer to Q-24 is code 1, yes.) Were the crimes or violent acts reported to anybody outside your family or not?

<b>BASE: EXPERIENCED CRIME OR VIOLENCE</b>	<b>2,535</b>
YES	64%
NO	34%
DON'TKNOW	2%

**Q-27.** (Ask if answer to Q-26 is code 1, yes.) Who did you report the crime to? Anyone else?

**Q-27a.** First Mention: \_\_\_\_\_

**Q-27b.** Second Mention: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>BASE: RESPONDENTS WHO REPORTED THE CRIME OUTSIDE THE FAMILY</b>	<b>1,596</b>
AFGHAN NATIONAL POLICE	46%
SHURA/ELDERS	41%
TRIBAL LEADER / MALIK	25%
AFGHAN NATIONAL ARMY	17%
DISTRICT GOVERNOR / WOLESWAL	15%
MULLAH SAHEB	15%
PROVINCIAL AUTHORITY	7%
JUST MY FAMILY	4%
PUBLIC PROSECUTOR	3%
COURTS	3%
CENTRAL GOVERNMENT	3%
LOCAL MILITIA (ARBAKAI)	2%
TALIBAN	1%
LOCAL COMMANDER OR WARLORD	1%
DON'T KNOW	0%

**Q-28.** (Ask all.) If you were a victim of violence or any criminal act, how much confidence would you have that the government law-enforcement organizations and judicial systems would punish the guilty party?

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
A GREAT DEAL OF CONFIDENCE	10%
A FAIR AMOUNT	41%
NOT VERY MUCH	31%

NO CONFIDENCE AT ALL	17%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	1%

## JUSTICE

**Q-29.** *(Ask all.) How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the available dispute-resolution services in your area? Are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
VERY SATISFIED	16%
SOMEWHAT SATISFIED	51%
SOMEWHAT DISSATISFIED	23%
VERY DISSATISFIED	9%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	2%

**Q-30.** *In the past two years have you had a dispute or a formal case that you couldn't settle with the other party and had to go to the the state court, huquq department, or village/neighborhood-based shura/jirga to resolve it, or not?*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
YES	23%
NO	77%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	<0.5%

**Q-31.** *(Ask if answer to Q-30 is code 1, yes.) What kind of a case or dispute was it? (Single Response. If more than one case or dispute, ask for the most recent one.)*

<b>BASE: HAD DISPUTE OR FORMAL CASE (3,150)</b>	<b>PERCENT OF CASES</b>
DISPUTE OVER LAND	47%
PROPERTY DISPUTE OTHER THAN LAND	12%
COMMERCIAL DISPUTE	9%
DIVORCE	3%
FAMILY PROBLEMS	19%
TRAFFIC ACCIDENT	8%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	1%

**Q-32.** (Ask if answer to Q-30 is code 1, yes.) Were you fully satisfied, somewhat satisfied, or not satisfied with the outcome of the proceedings?

<b>BASE: HAD DISPUTE OR FORMAL CASE</b>	<b>3,150</b>
FULLY	23%
SOMEWHAT	47%
NOT SATISFIED	21%
NOT FINISHED YET / STILL IN PROCEEDINGS	7%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	2%

**Q-33.** (Ask if answer to Q-30 is code 1, yes.) Where have you taken this case or dispute? (Allow more than one mention, select all used)

<b>BASE: HAD DISPUTE OR FORMAL CASE</b>	<b>3,150</b>
HUQUQ DEPARTMENT	27%
STATE COURT	42%
VILLAGE/NEIGHBORHOOD-BASED SHURA/JIRGA	45%
OTHER	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	2%

**Q-34.** (Ask if answer to Q-33 is code 1, "huquq department.") Now let's turn to the local huquq department. Tell me, do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements about the huquq department?

<b>BASE: TOOK CASE TO HUQUQ DEPARTMENT (823)</b>	<b>STRONGLY AGREE</b>	<b>SOMEWHAT AGREE</b>	<b>SOMEWHAT DISAGREE</b>	<b>STRONGLY DISAGREE</b>	<b>REFUSED</b>	<b>DON'T KNOW</b>
A) LOCAL HUQUQS ARE FAIR AND TRUSTED	33%	42%	16%	7%	<0.5%	2%
B) LOCAL HUQUQS FOLLOW THE LOCAL NORMS AND VALUES OF OUR PEOPLE	24%	42%	24%	9%	<0.5%	2%
C) LOCAL HUQUQS ARE EFFECTIVE AT DELIVERING JUSTICE	25%	40%	22%	12%	<0.5%	2%
D) LOCAL HUQUQS RESOLVE CASES QUICKLY AND EFFICIENTLY	20%	39%	24%	16%	<0.5%	2%

**Q-35.** (Ask if answer to Q-33 is code 2, "state court.") Tell me, do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements about state courts?

<b>BASE: TOOK A CASE TO STATE COURT (1,296)</b>	<b>STRONGLY AGREE</b>	<b>SOMEWHAT AGREE</b>	<b>SOMEWHAT DISAGREE</b>	<b>STRONGLY DISAGREE</b>	<b>REFUSED</b>	<b>DON'T KNOW</b>
A) STATE COURTS ARE FAIR AND TRUSTED	22%	43%	20%	12%	<0.5%	4%

B) STATE COURTS FOLLOW THE LOCAL NORMS AND VALUES OF OUR PEOPLE	22%	37%	26%	11%	<0.5%	4%
C) STATE COURTS ARE EFFECTIVE AT DELIVERING JUSTICE	21%	37%	26%	14%	<0.5%	3%
D) STATE COURTS RESOLVE CASES QUICKLY AND EFFICIENTLY	15%	30%	31%	20%	<0.5%	3%
E) STATE COURTS TREAT MEN AND WOMEN EQUALLY	18%	37%	27%	14%	<0.5%	4%

**Q-36.** (Ask if answer to Q-33 is code 3, “shura/jirga.”) Now let’s turn to village/neighborhood-based shuras/jirgas. Tell me, do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements about village/neighborhood-based shuras/jirgas?

BASE: TOOK A CASE TO SHURA/JURGA (1,497)	STRONGLY AGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	REFUSED	DON'T KNOW
A) LOCAL SHURAS/JURGAS ARE FAIR AND TRUSTED	33%	48%	11%	3%	<0.5%	5%
B) LOCAL SHURAS/JURGAS FOLLOW THE LOCAL NORMS AND VALUES OF OUR PEOPLE	30%	44%	15%	5%	<0.5%	6%
C) LOCAL SHURAS/JURGAS ARE EFFECTIVE AT DELIVERING JUSTICE	30%	41%	18%	5%	<0.5%	6%
D) LOCAL SHURAS/JURGAS RESOLVE CASES QUICKLY AND EFFICIENTLY	28%	38%	21%	6%	<0.5%	6%
E) THERE SHOULD BE LOCAL WOMEN'S SHURAS/JURGAS	29%	36%	16%	12%	<0.5%	7%

## CORRUPTION

**Q-37.** Next I am going to list several different organizations or situations where people have said they experienced corruption in the past. Thinking back to your interactions in the past 12 months, please tell me how often you had to give money or a gift or perform a favor for these organizations or in these situations? Was it in all cases, in most cases, in some cases, or in no case? If you had no contact with the organization, please tell me so.

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS (13,943)	IN ALL CASES	IN MOST CASES	IN SOME CASES	IN NO CASE	HAD NO CONTACT	REFUSED
A) OFFICIALS IN THE MUNICIPALITY/DISTRICT OFFICE	4%	9%	11%	25%	51%	<0.5%
B) PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR'S OFFICE	3%	7%	10%	24%	55%	<0.5%
C) CUSTOMS OFFICE	4%	6%	8%	18%	62%	<0.5%
D) AFGHAN NATIONAL POLICE	3%	7%	13%	35%	41%	<0.5%

E) AFGHAN NATIONAL ARMY	2%	5%	8%	35%	49%	<0.5%
F) JUDICIARY/COURTS	4%	9%	13%	22%	52%	<0.5%
G) DA AFGHANISTAN BRESHNA SHERKAT (STATE ELECTRIC COMPANY)	2%	7%	12%	30%	49%	<0.5%
H) HOSPITAL/CLINIC	3%	9%	16%	48%	24%	<0.5%
I) WHEN APPLYING FOR A JOB	4%	8%	12%	29%	47%	<0.5%
J) ADMISSION TO SCHOOL/UNIVERSITY	2%	5%	10%	37%	46%	<0.5%
K) WHEN RECEIVING OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS FROM SCHOOL/ UNIVERSITY	2%	5%	10%	30%	52%	<0.5%

**Q-38.** Please tell me whether you think corruption is a major problem, a minor problem, or no problem at all in the following areas.

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS (13,943)	MAJOR PROBLEM	MINOR PROBLEM	NO PROBLEM	REFUSED	DON'T KNOW
A) IN YOUR DAILY LIFE	71%	22%	7%	<0.5%	1%
B) IN AFGHANISTAN AS A WHOLE	82%	15%	3%	<0.5%	1%

## POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

**Q-39.** Some people say that politics and religion should be mixed. Other people say politics and religion should not mix. For example, some say religious scholars should only manage religion and should not take part in politics. Which is closer to your view?

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS	13,943
RELIGIOUS LEADERS SHOULD NOT BE INVOLVED IN POLITICS	38%
RELIGIOUS LEADERS SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN POLITICS	60%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	2%

**Q-40.** On the whole, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way democracy works in Afghanistan? By democracy, we mean choosing the president and parliament by voting rather than appointment or selection by some leaders. Are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS	13,943
VERY SATISFIED	16%
SOMEWHAT SATISFIED	45%
SOMEWHAT DISSATISFIED	25%
VERY DISSATISFIED	13%



REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	1%

**Q-41.** *Please tell me how you would respond to the following activities or groups. Would you respond with no fear, some fear, or a lot of fear?*

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS (13,943)	NO FEAR	SOME FEAR	A LOT OF FEAR	REFUSED	DON'T KNOW
A) VOTING IN A NATIONAL/PROVINCIAL ELECTION	37%	43%	19%	<0.5%	<0.5%
B) PARTICIPATING IN A PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATION	25%	41%	32%	<0.5%	2%
C) RUNNING FOR PUBLIC OFFICE	22%	42%	31%	<0.5%	3%
D) ENCOUNTERING THE ANP	58%	27%	15%	<0.5%	1%
E) ENCOUNTERING THE ANA	61%	26%	13%	<0.5%	1%
F) TRAVELING FROM ONE PART OF AFGHANISTAN TO ANOTHER PART OF THE COUNTRY	20%	44%	36%	<0.5%	<0.5%
G) ENCOUNTERING INTERNATIONAL FORCES (WESTERN MILITARY ONLY)	21%	41%	37%	<0.5%	1%
H) ENCOUNTERING THE TALIBAN	6%	18%	75%	<0.5%	1%
I) ENCOUNTERING ISIS/DAESH	3%	12%	83%	<0.5%	1%

**Q-42.** *In some countries people do not feel able to publicly criticize their government, while in other countries they feel quite free to do so. Thinking back to a year ago, how safe did you feel expressing your opinions about the government in public?*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
VERY SAFE	12%
SOMEWHAT SAFE	43%
SOMEWHAT UNSAFE	31%
VERY UNSAFE	12%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	1%

**Q-43.** *How much influence do you think someone like you can have over local (district/provincial) government decisions—a lot, some, very little, or none at all?*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
A LOT	10%
SOME	43%
VERY LITTLE	25%

NONE AT ALL	21%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	1%

**Q-44a.** *Are you aware of the elections in Afghanistan upcoming in the next few months?*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
YES	80%
NO	20%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	<0.5%

**Q-44b.** *(Ask if answer to Q-44a is code 1, yes.) What type of election is the upcoming election? Is it a presidential election, a parliamentary election, a provincial council election, or something else?*

<b>BASE: THOSE WHO ARE AWARE OF THE ELECTION</b>	<b>10,936</b>
PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION	5%
PARLIAMETARY ELECTION	75%
PROVINCIAL COUNCIL ELECTION	11%
DISTRICT COUNCIL ELECTION	7%
DON'T KNOW	2%

**Q-45.** *(Ask if answer to Q-44a is code 1, yes.) What was your main source of information about the elections?*

<b>BASE: THOSE WHO ARE AWARE OF THE ELECTION</b>	<b>10,936</b>
TELEVISION	44%
RADIO	25%
FRIENDS, FAMILY, AND NEIGHBORS	15%
DON'T KNOW	4%
VILLAGERS	4%
VILLAGE CHIEF / COMMUNITY LEADERS	2%
NEWSPAPER	1%
RELIGIOUS LEADER	1%
GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES	1%
FACEBOOK	1%
SCHOOLTEACHER	1%
PAMPHLETS	1%
REFUSED	<0.5%

**Q-46a.** (Ask if answer to Q-44a is code 1, yes.) When people talk about elections, they often use the term “free and fair.” By “free,” they generally mean that all people have the chance to vote as they wish. By “fair,” they generally mean that all candidates/parties follow the rules and are given equal access to the public, and votes were counted correctly and not manipulated. Thinking about what is meant by “free” and “fair,” do you think that in general the next election in Afghanistan will be free and fair, or not?

<b>BASE: THOSE WHO ARE AWARE OF THE ELECTION</b>	<b>10,936</b>
YES	52%
NO	40%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	7%

**Q-46b.** (Ask if answer to Q-46a is code 2, no.) What makes you think this election will not be free and fair?

<b>BASE: THOSE WHO SAY THE ELECTION WILL NOT BE FREE AND FAIR</b>	<b>4,173</b>
FRAUD	50%
CORRUPTION	15%
BAD SECURITY	9%
INTERFERENCE BY WARLORDS	5%
DON'T KNOW	4%
BAD LEADERSHIP	4%
INTERFERENCE BY AMERICA	3%
INTERFERENCE BY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS	3%
LACK OF INTELLIGENT AND PROFESSIONAL PEOPLE ON THE ELECTION COMMISSION	2%
EXISTENCE OF BIAS	1%
LACK OF ATTENTION DURING VOTE COUNTING	1%
LACK OF JUSTICE	1%
PEOPLE VOTE FOR THEIR PRIVATE BENEFIT	1%
REFUSED	<0.5%

**Q-47.** (Ask if answer to Q-44a is code 1, yes.) Have you registered yourself for the elections?

<b>BASE: THOSE WHO ARE AWARE OF THE ELECTION</b>	<b>10,936</b>
YES	68%
NO	27%
HAVE NOT YET REGISTERED, BUT PLAN TO	3%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	3%

**Q-48a.** (Ask if answer to Q-44a is code 1, yes.) Do you plan to vote in this election?

<b>BASE: THOSE WHO ARE AWARE OF ELECTION</b>	<b>10,936</b>
YES	70%
NO	25%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	5%

**Q-48b.** (Ask if answer to Q-48a is code 2, no.) Why don't you plan to vote in this election? (Record first mention.)

<b>BASE: THOSE WHO DON'T PLAN TO VOTE</b>	<b>2,557</b>
BECAUSE OF FRAUD	21%
IT IS NOT BENEFICIAL	19%
DON'T HAVE PERMISSION	14%
BECAUSE OF INSECURITY	12%
BECAUSE OF FEAR OF THE TALIBAN	7%
DON'T HAVE A TAZKIRA / NATIONAL ID CARD	6%
NOT INTERESTED	4%
BECAUSE OF BAD LEADERSHIP	4%
NO FAITH IN JUSTICE OR DEMOCRACY	3%
DON'T HAVE A VOTING CARD	3%
BECAUSE OF CORRUPTION	3%
DON'T KNOW	3%
DON'T HAVE TIME	1%
LACK OF POLLING STATIONS	1%
REFUSED	<0.5%

**Q-49.** (Ask all.) In your opinion, what are the most important criteria for an ideal MP? Anything else?

**Q-49a.** First mention: \_\_\_\_\_

**Q-49b.** Second mention: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
SHOULD BE AN HONEST, FAIR, AND JUST PERSON	54%
SHOULD BE A GOOD SERVANT	27%
SHOULD HAVE HIGH EDUCATION	24%
SHOULD BE A MUSLIM	14%
SHOULD FULFILL THEIR PROMISES	7%
SHOULD BE A PATRIOTIC PERSON	6%
SHOULD BE INTELLIGENT AND EXPERIENCED	6%

SHOULD NOT BE CORRUPT	5%
SHOULD BEHAVE WELL TOWARDS PEOPLE	5%
SHOULD BE AN AFGHAN	4%
DON'T KNOW	4%
SHOULD NOT BE A TRAITOR	3%
CAN DEFEND PEOPLE'S RIGHTS	3%
SHOULD NOT FAVOR ONE ETHNIC GROUP	3%
SHOULD BE AN INFLUENTIAL PERSON	2%
CAN IMPLEMENT THE LAW	2%
CAN BRING SECURITY	1%
SHOULD BE YOUNG	1%
SHOULD BE AWARE OF GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS	1%
SHOULD NOT BE A MURDERER	1%
SHOULD BE CAPABLE OF KEEPING ORDER IN THE COUNTRY	1%
REFUSED	<0.5%

**Q-50.** *In your opinion, which of the following does your member of parliament care about most? Is it about...*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
NATIONAL ISSUES	20%
PROVINCIAL ISSUES	21%
DISTRICT OR MUNICIPALITY ISSUES	9%
ETHNIC ISSUES	19%
PERSONAL INTERESTS	28%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	2%

## GOVERNANCE

**Q-51.** *I would like to ask you about some officials, institutions, and organizations. As I read out each, please tell me how much confidence you have in them to do their jobs. Do you have a lot, some, not much, or no confidence at all? If you don't know, it's ok, just say you have no opinion. (Interviewer: use code 99, "don't know," if they have no opinion.)*

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS (13,943)	A LOT OF CONFIDENCE	SOME CONFIDENCE	NOT MUCH CONFIDENCE	NO CONFIDENCE AT ALL	REFUSED	DON'T KNOW
C) INDEPENDENT ELECTION COMMISSION	9%	34%	32%	23%	<0.5%	1%
D) COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS	18%	40%	27%	13%	<0.5%	2%
E) COMMUNITY SHURAS/ JIRGAS	25%	40%	22%	11%	<0.5%	2%
F) GOVERNMENT MINISTERS	8%	30%	38%	21%	<0.5%	2%
G) INTERNATIONAL NGOS	10%	33%	33%	21%	<0.5%	3%
H) MEDIA SUCH AS NEWSPAPERS, RADIO, TELEVISION	29%	38%	21%	11%	<0.5%	1%
I) NATIONAL NGOS	11%	38%	32%	16%	<0.5%	2%
J) PARLIAMENT AS A WHOLE	8%	32%	33%	25%	<0.5%	2%
K) PROVINCIAL COUNCILS	13%	38%	30%	18%	<0.5%	1%
L) RELIGIOUS LEADERS	34%	35%	18%	11%	<0.5%	1%
M) YOUR MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT	9%	33%	32%	25%	<0.5%	1%

**Q-52.** *Thinking of the different levels of government in Afghanistan, do you think that overall the [insert item] is doing a very good job, a somewhat good job, a somewhat bad job, or a very bad job?*

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS (13,943)	VERY GOOD	SOMEWHAT GOOD	SOMEWHAT BAD	VERY BAD	REFUSED	DON'T KNOW
A) NATIONAL UNITY GOVERNMENT	16%	43%	21%	18%	<0.5%	1%
B) PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT	16%	45%	26%	11%	<0.5%	2%
C) MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES (BASE: 2,890 URBAN RESIDENTS)	13%	40%	23%	19%	<0.5%	6%
D) DISTRICT GOVERNMENT (BASE: 11,053 RURAL RESIDENTS)	13%	41%	25%	9%	<0.5%	11%

## RECONCILIATION

**Q-53.** *Do you think reconciliation between the Afghan government and the Taliban is possible, or impossible?*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
POSSIBLE	53%
IMPOSSIBLE	42%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	5%

**Q-54.** *In your opinion, what is the main reason why the Taliban are fighting against the Afghan government?*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
TO GAIN POWER	24%
PRESENCE OF FOREIGN TROOPS / INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY	15%
THEY ARE SUPPORTED BY PAKISTAN	11%
DON'T KNOW	8%
THEY ARE SUPPORTED/MOTIVATED BY FOREIGN COUNTRIES	5%
TOO MUCH CORRUPTION IN THE GOVERNMENT	4%
FOR THEIR PERSONAL BENEFIT	4%
TO FORCE FOREIGN FORCES TO WITHDRAW	2%
THEY ARE DISSATISFIED WITH THE GOVERNMENT	2%
UNEMPLOYMENT/POVERTY	2%
FOR MONEY	2%
TO SUPPORT ISLAM	2%
TO CREATE INSECURITY	1%
TO KILL INNOCENT PEOPLE	1%
TO DESTROY OUR COUNTRY	1%
THEY WANT TO OCCUPY AFGHANISTAN	1%
THEY ARE AGAINST DEMOCRACY	1%
THEY ARE BRUTAL/CRUEL	1%
TO ESTABLISH SECURITY	1%
THEY ARE AGAINST ISLAM	1%
MORAL CORRUPTION	1%
ETHNIC PROBLEMS	1%
THEY ARE SLAVES OF OTHER COUNTRIES	1%
ILLITERACY	1%
THEY HAVE BEEN DECEIVED	1%

INJUSTICE	1%
REFUSED	<0.5%

**Q-55.** *Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree that antigovernment elements who lay down their arms and express willingness to reintegrate into society should be provided with government assistance, jobs, and housing?*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
STRONGLY AGREE	26%
SOMEWHAT AGREE	43%
SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	19%
STRONGLY DISAGREE	11%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	1%

**Q-56a.** *Thinking about the reasons why the Taliban have been fighting during the past year, in general would you say that you have a lot of sympathy, a little sympathy, or no sympathy at all for the Taliban?*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
A LOT OF SYMPATHY	5%
A LITTLE SYMPATHY	11%
NO SYMPATHY AT ALL	82%
REFUSED	1%
DON'T KNOW	1%

**Q-56b.** *(Ask if answer to Q-56a is code 1, "a lot," or code 2, "a little.") You said that you have sympathy. Why do you say that?*

<b>BASE: HAVE A LITTLE OR A LOT OF SYMPATHY FOR THE TALIBAN</b>	<b>1960</b>
THEY ARE AFGHANS	47%
THEY ARE MUSLIM	20%
PEOPLE WANT PEACE	7%
DON'T KNOW	6%
THEY FIGHT AGAINST FOREIGN FORCES	3%
THEY ARE ELIMINATING WAR	2%
THEY HAVE BEEN DECEIVED	2%
THEY WANT TO FIGHT A HOLY WAR (JIHAD)	1%
THEY ARE ILLITERATE	1%
THEY ARE GOOD PEOPLE	1%



THE GOVERNMENT MISTREATS THE PEOPLE	1%
THEY ARE AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT	1%
THEY EARN MONEY THROUGH ISLAMIC WAYS	1%
I AM AFRAID OF THEM	1%
I JUST HAVE A LOT OF SYMPATHY	1%
BECAUSE TALIBAN HELP THE COUNTRY'S DEVELOPMENT	1%
TALIBAN IMPLEMENT ISLAMIC LAW	1%
I VALUE MY COUNTRYMEN	1%
THEY GET THEIR RIGHTS	1%
REFUSED	<0.5%

**Q-57.** *In your opinion, what is the main reason why ISIS/Daesh is fighting against the Afghan government? (Interviewer: open ended; write down first answer.)*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
DON'T KNOW	16%
PRESENCE OF FOREIGN TROOPS / INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY	14%
TO GAIN POWER	13%
THEY ARE SUPPORTED/MOTIVATED BY FOREIGN COUNTRIES	8%
THEY ARE SUPPORTED BY PAKISTAN	6%
THEY ARE AGAINST ISLAM	5%
THEY WANT TO KILL INNOCENT PEOPLE	3%
FOR THEIR PERSONAL BENEFIT	3%
TO DESTROY OUR COUNTRY	2%
TO CREATE INSECURITY	2%
TO SUPPORT ISLAM	2%
THERE IS TOO MUCH CORRUPTION IN THE GOVERNMENT	2%
FOR MONEY	2%
THEY WANT TO OCCUPY AFGHANISTAN	2%
BECAUSE THAT IS THEIR MANDATE	2%
REFUSED	2%
TO FORCE FOREIGN FORCES TO WITHDRAW	1%
THEY ARE DISSATISFIED WITH THE GOVERNMENT	1%
THEY ARE SLAVES OF OTHER COUNTRIES	1%
TO ESTABLISH SECURITY	1%
ETHNIC PROBLEMS	1%
UNEMPLOYMENT/POVERTY	1%
THEY ARE AGAINST DEMOCRACY	1%
THEY ARE BRUTAL/CRUEL	1%

SUPPORT BY IRAN	1%
ISIS AND THE TALIBAN ARE THE SAME	1%
THERE IS NO REASON	1%

**Q-58a.** *Thinking about the reasons why Daesh have been fighting during the past year, in general, would you say that you have a lot of sympathy, a little sympathy, or no sympathy at all for Daesh?*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
NO SYMPATHY AT ALL	96%
A LITTLE SYMPATHY	1%
DON'T KNOW	1%
A LOT OF SYMPATHY	<0.5%
REFUSED	<0.5%

**Q-58b.** *(Ask if answer to Q-58a is code 1, «a lot,» or code 2, «a little.») You said that you have sympathy. Why do you say that?*

<b>BASE: HAVE A LITTLE OR A LOT OF SYMPATHY FOR DAESH</b>	<b>211</b>
THEY ARE MUSLIM	29%
THEY ARE AFGHANS	21%
DON'T KNOW	18%
PEOPLE JUST WANT PEACE	8%
THEY WANT TO FIGHT A HOLY WAR (JIHAD)	4%
DAESH ARE ELIMINATING WAR	3%
I AM AFRAID OF THEM	2%
I JUST HAVE A LOT OF SYMPATHY	2%
THEY EARN MONEY THROUGH ISLAMIC WAYS	2%
DAESH IMPLEMENTS ISLAMIC LAW	2%
THEY FIGHT AGAINST FOREIGN FORCES	1%
THEY ARE BEING KILLED IN WAR WITH THE GOVERNMENT	1%
I DON'T HAVE ANY SYMPATHY	1%
THEY GET THEIR RIGHTS	1%
THEY WORK WITH THE TALIBAN	1%
THEY RESOLVE OUR DISPUTES	1%
REFUSED	1%
THEY HAVE BEEN DECEIVED	1%

## ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND THE MEDIA

**Q-59.** *Do you listen to radio programs?*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
YES	62%
NO	38%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	<0.5%

**Q-60.** *(Ask if answer to Q-59 is code 1, yes.) You said you listen to the radio. On average per day when you listen to the radio how many hours do you listen to it?*

<b>BASE: LISTEN TO RADIO</b>	<b>8,560</b>
31 MINUTES TO 1 HOUR	36%
1 HOUR TO 2 HOURS	30%
LESS THAN 30 MINUTES	19%
MORE THAN 2 HOURS A DAY	14%
DON'T KNOW	<0.5%

**Q-61. (Ask all.)** *Do you watch television programs?*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
YES	69%
NO	31%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	<0.5%

**Q-62.** *(Ask if answer to Q-61 is code 1, yes.) You said that you watch television. On average per day when you watch television how many hours do you watch it?*

<b>BASE: WATCH TELEVISION</b>	<b>9,333</b>
MORE THAN 2 HOURS A DAY	37%
1 HOUR TO 2 HOURS	35%
31 MINUTES TO 1 HOUR	21%
LESS THAN 30 MINUTES	7%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	<0.5%

**Q-63.** (Ask if answer to Q-61 is code 1, yes.) Which Television show/program do you watch most often?

<b>BASE: WATCH TELEVISION</b>	<b>9,333</b>
NEWS AT 6	40%
SERIALS	11%
COMEDY SHOWS	5%
DON'T KNOW	5%
SPORTS	4%
SHABAKA-E-KHANDA	4%
RELIGIOUS PROGRAMS	3%
POLITICAL SHOWS	3%
RO DAR RO	2%
TAWDE KHABARE	2%
SHAB MOSIQI	2%
QAB GOFTOGO	1%
QEYAM DRAMA	1%
SONGS ON DEMAND	1%
BAMDAD KHOSH	1%
SHABKHAND	1%
HEALTH PROGRAMS	1%
COOKING SHOW	1%
LEMAR MAKHAM	1%
SANDARIZ AMEL	1%
FARHANG WA TAMADOM	1%
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS	1%
REFUSED	<0.5%

**Q-64.** (Ask all.) Do people in this area have access to the internet through either a cable connection, a wireless/wifi connection, or cellular data (e.g., 2G or 3G)?

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
NO	57%
YES	40%
DON'T KNOW	3%
REFUSED	<0.5%

**Q-65.** (Ask if answer to Q-64 is code 1, yes.) Do you personally have access to the internet?

<b>BASE: HAVE ACCESS TO INTERNET PERSONALLY</b>	<b>5,458</b>
YES	38%

NO	62%
DON'T KNOW	1%

**Q-66.** (Ask all.) Do you use any of the following to obtain news and information?

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS (13,943)	YES	NO	REFUSED	DON'T KNOW
A) RADIO	63%	37%	<0.5%	1%
B) TELEVISION SET	69%	31%	<0.5%	<0.5%
D) THE INTERNET	17%	82%	<0.5%	1%
E) MOSQUE	48%	51%	<0.5%	1%
F) COMMUNITY SHURAS	40%	59%	<0.5%	1%
G) FRIENDS AND FAMILY	84%	16%	<0.5%	1%

## WOMEN'S ISSUES

**Q-67.** In your area, is there an organization, institution, or authority where women can go to have their problem(s) resolved?

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS	13,943
YES	19%
NO	78%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	3%

**Q-68.** (Ask if answer to Q-67 is code 1, yes.) What organization, institution, or authority is that?

BASE: KNOWS AN ORGANIZATION, INSTITUTION, OR AUTHORITY	2,778
DIRECTORATE OF WOMEN AFFAIRS	44%
DISTRICT OFFICE	10%
HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL	9%
WOMEN'S SHURA	6%
LOCAL COUNCIL	5%
POLICE	4%
QAWM ELDERS	4%
DON'T KNOW	3%
THE COURT	2%
CHIEF OF POLICE	2%
VILLAGE SHURA / ELDERS SHURA	2%
LOCAL JIRGAS	1%
GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS IN GENERAL	1%

PROVINCIAL OFFICE	1%
NATIONAL SOLIDARITY PROGRAM	1%
ATTORNEY GENERAL	1%
MASJID/MADRASSA	1%
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (CDC)	1%
SAFE HOUSE	1%
REFUSED	<0.5%

**Q-69.** *(Ask all.) Tell me, do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements?*

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS (13,943)	STRONGLY AGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	REFUSED	DON'T KNOW
A) THE PRACTICE OF BAAD IS ACCEPTABLE	2%	7%	16%	74%	<0.5%	<0.5%
B) THE PRACTICE OF BADDAL IS ACCEPTABLE	6%	19%	22%	52%	<0.5%	<0.5%
C) A DAUGHTER IS ENTITLED TO PART OF HER DECEASED FATHER'S INHERITANCE (MIRAS)	68%	23%	4%	5%	<0.5%	<0.5%

**Q-70.** *(Ask all.) Some people say that women should have the same opportunities as men in education. Do you agree or disagree with this opinion? (Wait for response and then ask) strongly or somewhat?*

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS	13,943
STRONGLY AGREE	45%
SOMEWHAT AGREE	39%
SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	11%
STRONGLY DISAGREE	5%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	<0.5%

**Q-71.** *And for each of the following levels of education, do you agree or disagree with the opinion that men and women should have equal opportunities for education? Is that strongly or somewhat?*

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS (13,943)	STRONGLY AGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
A) ISLAMIC MADRASA EDUCATION	74%	21%	3%	2%	<0.5%	<0.5%
B) PRIMARY SCHOOL	66%	24%	7%	3%	<0.5%	<0.5%
C) HIGH SCHOOL	62%	23%	8%	6%	<0.5%	<0.5%
D) UNIVERSITY IN YOUR PROVINCE	47%	26%	15%	13%	<0.5%	<0.5%

E) STUDYING IN ANOTHER PROVINCE	21%	25%	25%	29%	1%	<0.5%
F) STUDYING ABROAD ON SCHOLARSHIP	17%	19%	21%	42%	1%	<0.5%

**Q-72.** *Some people say that women should be allowed to work outside the home, while others say that women should not be allowed to work outside the home. What is your opinion on this?*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
WOMEN SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO WORK OUTSIDE THE HOME	70%
WOMEN SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO WORK OUTSIDE THE HOME	28%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	1%

**Q-73.** *(Ask if answer to Q-72 is code 2, "Women should not be allowed to work outside the home.") Why do you say that women should not be allowed to work outside the home?*

<b>BASE: WOMEN SHOULD NOT TO BE ALLOWED TO WORK</b>	<b>3,606</b>
UNCERTAIN CONDITIONS	24%
IT'S AGAINST ISLAMIC LAW	18%
BAD SECURITY	14%
THEY ARE NOT NEEDED OUTSIDE THE HOME	13%
THE FAMILY DOESN'T ALLOW IT	6%
IT PREVENTS MORAL CORRUPTION	5%
DON'T KNOW	5%
WOMEN SHOULD NOT WORK ALONGSIDE MEN	5%
ITS CONSIDERED A SHAME	3%
CRIMINALS WILL CREATE PROBLEMS FOR THEM	2%
FEAR OF TALIBAN/ISIS	2%
THEY NEED TO HELP WITH KIDS	1%
THEY DON'T RESPECT HIJAB	1%
THEY DON'T HAVE THE RIGHT	1%
LACK OF EXPERIENCE	1%
THE GOVERNMENT NEVER SUPPORTS THEM	1%
REFUSED	<0.5%

**Q-74.** *Thinking about where women can work, for each of these places, do you agree or disagree that it is acceptable for women to work there? Strongly or somewhat?*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS (13,943)</b>	<b>STRONGLY AGREE</b>	<b>SOMEWHAT AGREE</b>	<b>SOMEWHAT DISAGREE</b>	<b>STRONGLY DISAGREE</b>	<b>REFUSED</b>	<b>DON'T KNOW</b>
A) GOVERNMENT OFFICES	38%	30%	16%	16%	<0.5%	<0.5%

B) NONGOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS (NGO)	20%	27%	26%	27%	<0.5%	1%
C) HOSPITALS OR CLINICS	62%	22%	9%	7%	<0.5%	<0.5%
D) FEMALE-ONLY SCHOOLS	67%	19%	7%	6%	<0.5%	<0.5%
E) CO-ED SCHOOLS	36%	28%	19%	16%	<0.5%	<0.5%
F) ARMY/POLICE	13%	21%	27%	38%	<0.5%	1%
G) A PRIVATE COMPANY OUTSIDE THE HOME (FACTORY, SHOP, BUSINESS) WITH FEMALE EMPLOYEES ONLY	21%	24%	24%	31%	<0.5%	1%
H) A PRIVATE COMPANY OUTSIDE THE HOME (FACTORY, SHOP, BUSINESS) WHERE MALE AND FEMALE EMPLOYEES WORK IN THE SAME ROOM	12%	22%	27%	38%	<0.5%	1%

**Q-75.** *Thinking about women in leadership positions, please tell me, do you agree or disagree that it is acceptable for women to have access to these leadership roles? Strongly or somewhat?*

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS (13,943)	STRONGLY AGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	REFUSED	DON'T KNOW
A) MEMBER OF A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL	32%	35%	17%	15%	<0.5%	<0.5%
B) GOVERNOR OF A PROVINCE	25%	28%	24%	22%	<0.5%	1%
C) CEO OF A LARGE COMPANY	25%	27%	23%	24%	<0.5%	1%
D) MINISTER OR CABINET MEMBER	25%	29%	22%	24%	<0.5%	1%
E) RUNNING FOR PRESIDENT OF AFGHANISTAN	22%	24%	23%	30%	<0.5%	1%

**Q-76.** *Would you prefer to be represented by a man or a woman in the national parliament?*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
A MAN	44%
A WOMAN	20%
NO DIFFERENCE	36%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	1%

**Q-77.** *In your view, which one of these women is dressed most appropriately for public places? Just point to one picture. (Interviewer: Show respondent the card and circle the number that corresponds to the picture the respondent points to.)*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
WOMAN 1	31%
WOMAN 2	31%



WOMAN 3	15%
WOMAN 4	15%
WOMAN 5	6%
WOMAN 6	1%
DON'T KNOW	2%

**Q-78.** *Do you think that political leadership positions should be mostly for men or mostly for women, that men and women should have equal representation in the political leadership, or that leadership positions should be open to anyone, based on merit?*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
MOSTLY FOR MEN	40%
MOSTLY FOR WOMEN	9%
EQUAL FOR BOTH MEN AND WOMEN	31%
ANYONE, BASED ON MERIT	19%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	<0.5%

**Q-79.** *Do you think women should be allowed to vote in elections?*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
YES	88%
NO	11%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	1%

**Q-80.** *(Ask all.) If women vote, do you think that women should decide for themselves whom to vote for, or should men decide for women whom they should vote for?*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
WOMEN SHOULD DECIDE FOR THEMSELVES	57%
MEN SHOULD DECIDE FOR WOMEN	20%
WOMEN SHOULD DECIDE FOR THEMSELVES, BUT IN CONSULTATION WITH MEN	23%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	1%

**Q-81. What do you think is the best age for a woman to get married?**

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
12	<0.5%
13	<0.5%
14	1%
15	3%
16	8%
17	5%
18	33%
19	8%
20	25%
21	3%
22	6%
23	2%
24	1%
25	4%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	<0.5%

**Q-82. What do you think is the best age for a man to get married?**

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
16	1%
17	1%
18	12%
19	3%
20	23%
21	4%
22	11%
23	5%
24	6%
25	20%
26	4%
27	2%
28	3%
30	4%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	<0.5%

## MIGRATION

**Q-83a.** *Tell me, if given the opportunity, would you leave Afghanistan and live somewhere else, or not?*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
YES	37%
NO	58%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	4%

**Q-83b.** *(Ask if answer to Q-83a is code 2, no.) Why would you stay in Afghanistan?*

**Q-83b\_1.** *First mention:* \_\_\_\_\_

**Q-83b\_2.** *Second mention:* \_\_\_\_\_

<b>BASE: WOULD STAY IN AFGHANISTAN</b>	<b>8,746</b>
IT IS MY COUNTRY	54%
I LOVE MY COUNTRY	44%
MY FAMILY WOULD NOT ALLOW ME	9%
I DO NOT HAVE THE ABILITY TO LEAVE	9%
I FEEL COMFORTABLE HERE	7%
FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE COUNTRY	7%
THERE ARE NO EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES	6%
TO SERVE PEOPLE	5%
OTHER COUNTRIES DO NOT ACCEPT REFUGEES	4%
FOR THE FREEDOM OF THE COUNTRY	4%
THIS IS AN ISLAMIC COUNTRY	3%
DON'T KNOW	3%
GOING THERE IS A RISK	2%
BECAUSE OF DIFFERENCES IN TRADITION	1%
I WILL STAY DUE TO MY LANDS	1%
TO DEVELOP EDUCATION	1%
REFUSED	1%

**Q-83c.** *(Ask if answer to Q-83a is code 1, yes.) Why would you leave Afghanistan?*

**Q-83c\_1.** *First mention:* \_\_\_\_\_

**Q-83c\_2.** *Second mention:* \_\_\_\_\_

<b>BASE: WOULD LEAVE AFGHANISTAN</b>	<b>5,130</b>
INSECURITY	75%
UNEMPLOYMENT	52%

BAD ECONOMY	18%
TALIBAN ARE KILLING PEOPLE	5%
CORRUPTION	5%
SUICIDE ATTACKS	4%
FOR EDUCATION	3%
WEAK GOVERNMENT	3%
UNCERTAIN FUTURE	3%
INJUSTICE	2%
FEAR OF ISIS	1%
HIGH PRICES	1%
NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES' INTERFERENCE	1%
EXISTENCE OF CRIMINALS	1%
FOR MY CHILDREN'S BETTER FUTURE	1%
ETHNIC PROBLEMS	1%
VACATION	1%
LACK OF FREEDOM FOR WOMEN	1%
MY FAMILY WOULD PREFER IT	1%
LACK OF CLINICS/HOSPITALS	1%
MORE FACILITIES	1%
DON'T KNOW	1%
REFUSED	<0.5%
ILLITERACY	0%

**Q-83d.** (Ask if answer to Q-83a is code 1, yes.) Where would you want to live?

**Q-83d\_1.** First mention: \_\_\_\_\_

**Q-83d\_2.** Second mention: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>BASE: WOULD LEAVE AFGHANISTAN</b>	<b>5,130</b>
TURKEY	36%
IRAN	36%
GERMANY	22%
USA	11%
SAUDI ARABIA	8%
PAKISTAN	8%
CANADA	6%
FRANCE	5%
INDIA	5%
DUBAI	4%
ANY EUROPEAN COUNTRY	4%

AUSTRALIA	4%
UK	3%
SWEDEN	3%
TAJIKISTAN	3%
DON'T KNOW	3%
AUSTRIA	2%
RUSSIA	1%
JAPAN	1%
BELGIUM	1%
UZBEKISTAN	1%
ANY ISLAMIC COUNTRY	1%
SWITZERLAND	1%
ANY SECURE COUNTRY	1%
DENMARK	1%
NORWAY	1%

**Q-84.** (Ask if answer to Q-83a is code 1, yes.) What, if anything, could the government do to make you want to stay in Afghanistan? (Interviewer: write response.)

**Q-84a.** First mention: \_\_\_\_\_

**Q-84b.** Second mention: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>BASE: WOULD LEAVE AFGHANISTAN</b>	<b>5,130</b>
MAINTAIN SECURITY	74%
CREATE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES	59%
CREATE GOOD ECONOMY	11%
REMOVE CORRUPTION	6%
IMPROVE EDUCATION	5%
REMOVE THE TALIBAN AND ISIS	4%
NOTHING	3%
CREATE JUSTICE	3%
ASSIST PEOPLE	3%
RECONSTRUCTION	2%
DON'T KNOW	2%
BUILD FACTORIES	1%
PREVENT SUICIDE ATTACKS	1%
ARREST THE CRIMINALS	1%
REMOVE NATIONALISM	1%
PAY ATTENTION TO WOMEN'S RIGHTS	1%
PROVIDE NEW FACILITIES	1%

REMOVE FOREIGN INTERFERENCE	1%
REFUSED	<0.5%

**Q-85.** (Ask all.) Do you know any person who has left Afghanistan in the past three years and then subsequently returned to Afghanistan?

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
YES	25%
NO	75%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	1%

**Q-86.** (Ask if answer to Q-85 is code 1, yes.) Why did this person return to Afghanistan?

<b>BASE: KNOWS A RETURNEE</b>	<b>3,522</b>
DEPORTED	40%
UNEMPLOYMENT	14%
TO VISIT HIS/HER FAMILY	12%
HOST COUNTRY DID NOT ACCEPT MIGRANTS	6%
DON'T KNOW	6%
UNFAIR BEHAVIOR OF THAT COUNTRY'S PEOPLE	5%
ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION	5%
PATRIOTISM	3%
SECURITY IS GOOD	2%
CONTROLLING ONE'S FAMILY ABROAD IS VERY DIFFICULT	2%
IT WAS AN INFIDEL COUNTRY	2%
CAME BACK AFTER SCHOLARSHIP	1%
BECAUSE HE PAID BACK HIS DEBT	1%
SIGHTSEEING/TOURISM	1%
REFUSED	<0.5%

**Q-87.** (Ask if answer to Q-85 is code 1, yes.) Which country did this person return from?

<b>BASE: KNOWS A RETURNEE</b>	<b>3,522</b>
IRAN	40%
TURKEY	18%
GERMANY	14%
PAKISTAN	7%
DON'T KNOW	3%
SAUDI ARABIA	2%
SWEDEN	2%

USA	2%
AUSTRIA	1%
NORWAY	1%
AUSTRALIA	1%
CANADA	1%
GREECE	1%
DUBAI (UAE)	1%
INDIA	1%
BELGIUM	1%
ITALY	1%
FRANCE	1%
RUSSIA	1%
UK	1%
EUROPE	1%
REFUSED	<0.5%

**Q-88.** (Ask if answer to Q-85 is code 1, yes.) What level of difficulty, if any, do you think that this person faced after they returned to Afghanistan?

<b>BASE: KNOWS A RETURNEE</b>	<b>3,522</b>
SOME DIFFICULTY	42%
A LOT OF DIFFICULTY	33%
NO DIFFICULTY	23%
DON'T KNOW	2%
REFUSED	<0.5%

**Q-89.** Do you have a family member or close relative who lives abroad?

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
NO	58%
YES	42%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	<0.5%

**Q-90a.** (Ask if answer to Q-89 is code 1, yes.) In what country do they live? (List up to 2 countries)

**Q-90a\_1.** First mention: \_\_\_\_\_

**Q-90a\_2.** Second mention: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>BASE: HAS A FAMILY MEMBER ABROAD</b>	<b>5,846</b>
IRAN	44%

TURKEY	24%
GERMANY	22%
USA	11%
PAKISTAN	9%
SAUDI ARABIA	6%
UK	5%
FRANCE	4%
CANADA	4%
DUBAI (UAE)	4%
SWEDEN	4%
AUSTRALIA	4%
AUSTRIA	3%
RUSSIA	2%
INDIA	2%
NETHERLANDS	2%
BELGIUM	1%
DENMARK	1%
EUROPEAN COUNTRIES	1%
TAJIKISTAN	1%
NORWAY	1%
KUWAIT	1%
GREECE	1%
ITALY	1%
JAPAN	1%
CHINA	1%
SWITZERLAND	1%
DON'T KNOW	1%

**Q-90b.** *(Ask if answer to Q-89 is code 1, yes.) Have these relatives helped you financially, such as by sending money?*

<b>BASE: HAS A FAMILY MEMBER ABROAD</b>	<b>5,846</b>
NO	64%
YES	34%
DON'T KNOW	1%
REFUSED	<0.5%



**Q-91.** *How successful do you think the government has been in improving the living conditions of people living in your area: a lot, a little, or not at all?*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
A LITTLE	52%
NOT AT ALL	34%
A LOT	13%
DON'T KNOW	1%
REFUSED	<0.5%

**D-3.** *Do you yourself do any activity that generates money?*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
NO	54%
YES	46%
REFUSED	<0.5%

**D-4.** *(Ask if answer to D-3 is code 1, yes.) And what type of activity is that?*

<b>BASE: HAS AN ACTIVITY THAT GENERATES MONEY</b>	<b>6,192</b>
FARMER (FREEHOLDER / TENANT FARMER)	28%

**D-5.** *How many of the following does your household have?*

ITEM	BASE	MEAN	STD.DEV.	MIN	MAX
B) MOTORCYCLE	13,914	0.50	0.61	0	5
C) CAR	13,914	0.28	0.51	0	8
D) TELEVISION	13,914	0.89	0.80	0	9
H) JERIBS OF LAND	13,914	4.49	12.09	0	200
I) LIVESTOCK (NOT POULTRY)	13,914	4.65	11.78	0	200

**D-6.** *For statistical purposes only, can you estimate your average monthly household income?*

	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
LESS THAN AFS 2000	6%
AFS 2,001–3,000	7%
AFS 3,001–5,000	17%
AFS 5,001–10,000	34%

AFS 10,001–15,000	18%
AFS 15,001–20,000	10%
AFS 20,001–25,000	3%
AFS 25,001–40,000	3%
MORE THAN AFS 40,000	1%
REFUSED	0%
DON'T KNOW	2%

**D-8.** *Do female members of the family contribute to this household's income, or not?*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
NO	80%
YES	19%
DON'T KNOW	1%
REFUSED	<0.5%

**D-9.** *How many years, if any, have you studied at an Islamic madrasa?*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
0 YEAR	50%
1 YEAR	9%
2 YEARS	16%
3 YEARS	11%
4 YEARS	5%
5 YEARS	3%
6 YEARS	2%
7 YEARS	1%
8 YEARS	1%
10 YEARS	1%
12 YEARS	1%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	<0.5%

**D-10.** *What is the highest level (grade) of school you have completed, not including schooling in an Islamic madrasa? (Calculate the highest level into years.)*

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
0 YEAR	48%

1 YEAR	2%
2 YEARS	2%
3 YEARS	3%
4 YEARS	2%
5 YEARS	2%
6 YEARS	4%
7 YEARS	2%
8 YEARS	3%
9 YEARS	2%
10 YEARS	3%
11 YEARS	2%
12 YEARS	13%
13 YEARS	1%
14 YEARS	5%
16 YEARS	3%
INFORMAL SCHOOL	2%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	<0.5%

**D-11. Which languages do you speak?**

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
DARI	77%
PASHTO	48%
UZBEKI	11%
ENGLISH	6%
TURKMENI	3%
URDU	3%
ARABIC	1%
PASHAYEE	1%
NURISTANI	1%
BALOCHI	1%
DON'T KNOW	1%

**D12. Are you married, or single?**

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
SINGLE	18%

MARRIED	80%
WIDOWED	2%

**D13.** (Ask if answer to D-12 is code 2, "married," or code 3, "widowed") How many children do you have?

<b>BASE: MARRIED OR WIDOWED</b>	<b>11,641</b>
0	5%
1	9%
2	19%
3	22%
4	16%
5	11%
6	9%
7	5%
8	3%
9	1%
10	1%

**D-15a.** Do you personally use a mobile phone or not?

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
YES	64%
NO	36%

**D-15b.** How many people live here in this household?

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
1-5 PEOPLE	12%
6-10 PEOPLE	54%
11-15 PEOPLE	27%
MORE THAN 15 PEOPLE	7%

**D-15c.** How many members of this household who live here have their own mobile phone?

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
0 PEOPLE	10%
1 PEOPLE	20%
2 PEOPLE	30%
3 PEOPLE	19%
4 PEOPLE	10%
5 PEOPLE	5%
6 PEOPLE OR MORE	6%

REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	<0.5%

**D-15d.** (Ask if answer to D-15c is 1 or more people.) And how many members of your household own mobile phones that can access the internet, such as the ability to access email, websites, or Facebook?

<b>BASE: 1 OR MORE HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS HAVE MOBILE PHONE</b>	<b>12,487</b>
0 PEOPLE	57%
1 PEOPLE	24%
2 PEOPLE	13%
3 PEOPLE	4%
4 PEOPLE	1%
5 PEOPLE	1%
6 PEOPLE OR MORE	1%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	<0.5%

**D-16.** (Ask all.) In general in your life, would you say you are very happy, somewhat happy, not very happy, or not at all happy?

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
SOMEWHAT HAPPY	45%
VERY HAPPY	36%
NOT VERY HAPPY	15%
NOT AT ALL HAPPY	4%
REFUSED	<0.5%
DON'T KNOW	<0.5%

**D-17.** (Interviewer code.) Record the number of people present for the interview (excluding the interviewer). Please record the number of people present from each of the three generational categories listed below. If nobody was present from a particular category, enter 0.

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS (13,943)</b>	<b>NONE PRESENT</b>	<b>AT LEAST ONE PRESENT</b>
A) JUNIOR (CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE)	29%	71%
B) ADULTS (PEERS, FRIENDS)	33%	67%
C) ELDERS	41%	59%

**D-18.** (Interviewer code.) Which of the following statements do you think best describes the level of comprehension of the survey questionnaire by the respondent?

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
THE RESPONDENT UNDERSTOOD ALL OF THE QUESTIONS	67%
THE RESPONDENT UNDERSTOOD MOST OF THE QUESTIONS	29%
THE RESPONDENT UNDERSTOOD MOST OF THE QUESTIONS, BUT WITH SOME HELP.	3%
THE RESPONDENT HAD DIFFICULTY UNDERSTANDING MOST OF THE QUESTIONS, EVEN WITH HELP FROM ME	<0.5%

**D-18.** (Interviewer code.) Which of the following statements do you think best describes the level of comprehension of the survey questionnaire by the respondent?

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
THE RESPONDENT UNDERSTOOD ALL OF THE QUESTIONS	67%
THE RESPONDENT UNDERSTOOD MOST OF THE QUESTIONS	29%
THE RESPONDENT UNDERSTOOD MOST OF THE QUESTIONS, BUT WITH SOME HELP.	3%
THE RESPONDENT HAD DIFFICULTY UNDERSTANDING MOST OF THE QUESTIONS, EVEN WITH HELP FROM ME	<0.5%

**D-19.** (Interviewer code.) Which of the following statements best describes the level of comfort or unease that the respondent had with the survey questionnaire?

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
THE RESPONDENT WAS COMFORTABLE (AT EASE) WITH THE ENTIRE QUESTIONNAIRE	70%
THE RESPONDENT WAS COMFORTABLE WITH MOST OF THE QUESTIONS	27%
THE RESPONDENT WAS COMFORTABLE WITH ONLY SOME OF THE QUESTIONS	3%
THE RESPONDENT WAS GENERALLY UNCOMFORTABLE WITH THE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE	1%

**D-20.** Was the interview subject to quality control / back-check?

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
NO	62%
YES	38%

**D-21.** Method of quality control / back-check

<b>BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>13,943</b>
NOT APPLICABLE	62%
BACK-CHECK IN PERSON BY SUPERVISOR	23%
QUALITY CONTROLLED BY NON-ACSOR MONITOR	11%
DIRECT SUPERVISION DURING INTERVIEW	4%
BACK-CHECK FROM THE CENTRAL OFFICE	<0.5%



The Asia Foundation

[www.asiafoundation.org](http://www.asiafoundation.org)

