Good Governance in Afghanistan
The Key to Democracy

Implemented by: giz Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH KfW
Dear readers,

Decades of armed conflict in Afghanistan have largely destroyed its people’s livelihoods. One of the world’s poorest nations, Afghanistan is a priority country for German development cooperation. The international community has been supporting civil reconstruction here since the fall of the Taliban in 2001. The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan has adopted the new development strategy *Towards Self-Reliance: Strategic Vision for the Transformation Decade to 2025* which was ratified more than a year ago. Good governance is a core component of this strategy. The German government is assisting Afghanistan to institutionalise the strategy so that it can offer its citizens prospects of a life free of poverty and extremism.

Germany’s work in the field of good governance focuses on the rule of law, political participation and public administration. The goal of German cooperation with Afghanistan is to improve public services, increase the government’s legitimacy and build the Afghan people’s confidence in the state's institutions.

This brochure offers you some insights into Germany’s engagement in Afghanistan. You can find out about efforts to build transparency and the rule of law, learn how women are playing an increasingly significant role in working life, and discover how corruption is being tackled at all levels and how principles of good governance are being applied day-to-day in the policies implemented by the Afghan authorities.

We have researched development cooperation projects, introducing you to some of the people, teams and methods being deployed jointly by the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, KfW Development Bank* and its partners to help the Afghan people enjoying more social justice.

We hope you find reading this brochure both interesting and enjoyable.

**Robert Kressirer**
GIZ Country Director
Afghanistan stands as an example of how financial cooperation projects can be implemented in an extremely fragile context within a crisis-hit country. The support provided in the area of good governance aims to give the people in Northern and North Eastern Afghanistan urgently needed access to local infrastructure and social services and to facilitate project implementation in a way that makes a targeted contribution to good governance.

After more than 30 years of civil war, Afghanistan’s government structures and public infrastructure are very weak. In order to strengthen provincial administrations outside the capital Kabul and improve local public services, KfW Development Bank is working on behalf of the German government to provide funding for small to medium-sized infrastructure initiatives. As a result, new schools, roads, bridges and flood defences, etc. are being constructed in six North Eastern Afghan provinces. Individual project decisions are taken by local development councils, with the relevant authorities then taking the lead on project implementation. This is designed to boost citizens’ confidence in their government’s performance and, above all, improve local people’s lives.

These efforts are supplemented at central government level by the Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF), financed by Germany and other donors. Germany’s bilateral contribution, amounting to EUR 583 million to date, contributes to securing the Afghan state budget. This budget is used to fund national priority programmes and to regulate the policy dialogue on necessary reforms.

You can find out more reading this brochure. I wish you an enjoyable read.

Dr Andreas Schneider
KfW Office Director in Kabul
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Public hearing in Baghlan, Afghanistan
Good Governance – the Key to Democracy

Decades of armed conflict in Afghanistan have largely destroyed its people’s livelihoods. One of the world’s poorest nations, Afghanistan is a priority country for German development cooperation. The international community has been supporting civil reconstruction here since the fall of the Taliban in 2001.

Since then, Afghanistan has been faced with the task of building a new state from the ground up. Democracy, the rule of law and the social market economy were to provide the foundation for this new beginning after ‘zero hour’ in 2001. Economic, social and political structures had to be restored and, in some cases, re-established from scratch. From the outset, the main objective is the sustainable development of the country at all levels. But what exactly does this mean? A country can be said to be engaged in sustainable development when its structures are based on properly functioning state institutions, respect for human rights, the rule of law, the participation and equality of all social and ethnic groups and both genders, and on social justice and peace. After years of conflict and destruction, this is no easy task.

2001 marked the beginning of a long journey, gradually creating conditions for good governance and, by extension, a stable, peaceful and secure state. Since then, Afghanistan has established key democratic institutions. The new Afghan constitution entered into force in January 2004. Adopted by the Grand Assembly (Loya Jirga), it grants equal rights to all Afghans, men and women alike.

The German government has been assisting Afghanistan since 2002 to master the ensuing challenges. The Afghan state continues to work on establishing properly functioning local and national administrations and a professional and independent judiciary, and to promote the involvement of men and women in political and social decision-making processes in order to afford its citizens a future beyond poverty and extremism.

Initiating extensive changes in state and society requires great patience. Nonetheless, joint efforts of German development organisations and their Afghan partners are already bearing fruit. The Afghan-German Cooperation’s examples explored on the following pages show changes in the administration, justice system, in terms of transparency and participation of women.
The Right of the Individual – the Rule of Law for All Citizens

Democracy and the rule of law play a key role in ensuring that people can live in freedom and dignity. This includes free elections, a multi-party system, the acceptance of political opposition, the protection of minorities, and the respect of human rights and gender equality. Democratic state structures allow people to develop autonomously. For that, a reliable and independent judiciary is a basis. It also values a constitutional state and provides legitimacy. However, courts and judges in Afghanistan often depend on political decisions, operating within an inefficient judicial system. They also lack expert knowledge required to take decisions transparently. Moreover, corruption is a major problem for the Afghan judiciary.

The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) is therefore working with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and the German Federal Foreign Office to support judicial reform in Afghanistan in order to guarantee legal certainty to Afghanistan’s citizens in rural and urban areas alike. The focus is on combating corruption in the long term and enabling administrative staff to deliver services for citizens properly, thus increasing trust in governmental bodies.
Govern4Afghanistan

The platform Govern4Afg facilitates a political dialogue between Afghan and German researchers and policy-makers in order to draft good governance recommendations. Expert teams define priority topics each year, such as the involvement of civil society organisations in political processes, civil service reform, budget planning and management, mining sector reform and the promotion of sub-national governance.

The resulting recommendations are discussed with policy-makers in comprehensive dialogue processes: forums, workshops and lecture series help to familiarise decision-makers with the topics.

The intensive dialogue initiated by Govern4Afg between reform-minded stakeholders, researchers and government representatives aims to give decision-makers a better understanding of good governance issues at all levels of state activities. This enables policy-makers in Afghanistan to make well-informed and focused key decisions.

Nader Yama, former Director of the Independent Directorate of Local Governance and current Minister Counsellor at the Embassy of Afghanistan in Canada, is convinced of the dialogue platform’s success and its practical approach: ‘Although it remains a challenge to bring all key decision-makers on board on any given point, it has proved its worth. We have worked with Govern4Afg to create a support unit to deal with the issue of sub-national governance, thereby ensuring that Govern4Afg’s expertise makes a tangible contribution to shaping policy.’

More information is available at [www.gc-afg.de](http://www.gc-afg.de) and [www.govern4afg.org](http://www.govern4afg.org)
THE RIGHT OF THE INDIVIDUAL

A Long Road to Legal Certainty

Monday morning at the city court in Mazar-e Sharif: Mobarak Shah and Teahor Abdullah enter the Huquq (arbitration office). Huquq official Sayed Abbas Musavi is diligently stamping documents to set the seal on a change of ownership. Huquqs complement official courts by serving as contact points at district level for the resolution of civil disputes.

Today marks the end of a 12-year conflict over the seizure of land. Shah explains: ‘Our land was taken during the Taliban era. We went to court to get it back. When the court referred us to the Huquq, a solution began to emerge.’ His determination has paid off and he now has the confirmation in his hands: the land is officially his once more.

Project description

- **Project:** Promotion of the Rule of Law
- **Objective:** Create legal certainty for citizens by advising Afghan institutions and establishing conflict transformation bodies which operate under the rule of law
- **Implementing organisation:** Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
- **Partners:** Ministry of Justice and its agencies at provincial level

Legal advice and mediation: employees at Huquq bureaus are mentored and provided with trainings, legal texts and specialist literature
Shah and the other party Abdullah took their case to Musavi. ‘I explained the legal framework to both parties, advised them on a lawful solution and sent them to their village elders with this recommendation.’ The village elders followed the Huquq’s recommendation and returned the land to its original owner. Abdullah can live with this decision: ‘The land was seized by my father. I accept the elders’ decision, which the Huquq has officially confirmed.’

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH is working on behalf of the German government to provide wide-ranging support to Huquq mediation offices in the six Northern Afghan provinces of Badakhshan, Takhar, Kunduz, Baghlan, Balkh and Samangan. As well as setting up and organising the offices, the work involves the provision of training to ensure that the Huquqs operate in accordance with the law. The Huquqs are part of the Afghan Ministry of Justice and are the face of the Afghan state in rural communities. Mentors support the officials and train them in current legal issues and mediation techniques. Mentor Zubair Zhair stops by twice a month to see Musavi. They discuss legal frameworks and potential solutions. Mentor Zhair describes the situation: ‘The Huquqs are increasingly identifying ways of reaching legally sound decisions. They are becoming more professional in their work, and local people are taking note.’

An expanded legal advice service is enabling Afghans to learn about their rights. Since 2013, the mediators have dealt with more than 61,000 cases in the project provinces. Due to the Huquqs’ increased presence, professionalism and impartiality, their acceptance by the general public has greatly increased.

61,000* cases have been handled by mediators

* since 2013

‘The Huquqs are increasingly identifying ways of reaching legally sound decisions.’
Religious Scholars Promote Women’s Rights

‘Unfortunately, some of the social and cultural behaviour in our country doesn’t accord with the tenets of our religion or with Sharia law. Sharia clearly stipulates that men must respect the rights of their wives, sisters, mothers and daughters. However, this isn’t always the case in our society,’ says Ghulam Jelani, Head of the Balkh Province Directorate of Hajj and Religious Affairs, describing the situation in Afghanistan. Parents often marry off their daughters while they are still young children, female rape victims are shunned, and men leave their wives and pay no maintenance, or retain their wife’s dowry. Domestic violence is considered a trivial offence, with affected women being given no assistance or refuge.

This situation also troubles many religious scholars: ‘The Quran specifies people’s rights and duties towards other society members – men and women alike,’ Jelani explains. He consults colleagues on the content of sermons and works with the mullahs. The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH produces publications and delivers training events for mullahs to support calls for men to change their behaviour. The mullahs have held several joint study meetings, focusing on the Quran and its teachings on women’s rights. They looked at topics such as a husband’s obligations after marriage, financial rights of women, condemnation of rape in the Quran and the entitlement of the woman’s dowry. In early 2016, 2,000 copies of a book on traditions with non-Islamic roots were provided to the Afghan Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs, which distributed these to mullahs throughout the country. The aim is to ensure that the information is widely available.

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Since then, the mullahs have been addressing these topics to a greater extent in their sermons, thus helping to promote human and women’s rights. Haji Shafi is a successful businessman and lives in Aybak in Samangan province. He is glad to have learned about the issue from his mullah, as it is now clear to him that he treated his wife unfairly: ‘I went to China on a six-month business trip. During this time, my wife borrowed EUR 1,000 from her relatives, which made me really angry. But the mullah explained in his Friday sermon that a wife has the right to borrow money from relatives if her husband is away for a long period of time. Then, I felt really bad about how I’d treated my wife.’

Behavioural changes such as this example are setting a precedent. First, mullahs had to change their consciousness. Through their sermons, they are slowly changing many men’s views and attitudes. Shafi explains: ‘I had never heard of a mullah explaining to men in a sermon that the dowry belongs solely to the woman. But the last time I was at the mosque, our mullah made it clear that the dowry does not belong to the groom or his family, but to the bride. It seems remarkable to me that mullahs are addressing these issues.’

Religious scholars support women’s rights; the Koran specifies rights and obligations.
Fair Justice – for and by Women

After studying law for four years, culminating in a Bachelor’s degree, Sumaia and Lida have acquired in-depth knowledge of Afghanistan’s legal framework. But neither of them had a clear idea of how the extensive legal system would be put into practice and how they would be required to apply it.

Both graduates saw an advertisement on the Afghan job fair’s website ACBAR: a six-month internship at the Ministry of Justice offices in Mazar-e Sharif, funded by the German government. Working with experienced colleagues, the two women dealt with daily business: studying the new case files, assessing their legal merit, discussing them with the public prosecutor and arranging for public defenders to represent the accused if they were unable to afford their own lawyers. Lida explains: ‘This work is completely different from what we did at university. It is far more interesting to work on real cases, to get to know the people behind them and to play a part in the judicial process.’

The challenges that the young women faced differed from department to department. ‘I learned mediation techniques in the Huquq department which arbitrates between conflict parties in order to find a solution acceptable to both sides. This was a fascinating experience,’ says Lida. Before beginning her internship, Sumaia had already applied for and received her lawyer’s licence from the Bar association. Once she had settled in her job, the Director of the judicial authority allowed her to work on civil cases in the legal aid department as a legal advisor to women and children. For Sumaia, this was a unique opportunity to gain experience: ‘I got to work on real cases, dealing with a total of 25 disputes during my internship period. I acquired an incredible amount of experience and got to work in my dream job, helping women who want to change their situation.’

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Sumaia’s ambition is to become a judge – but she still has a long way to go to achieve this. The young woman is currently working for Da Qanoon Ghushtonky, an NGO offering legal advice and free legal representation in court. Sumaia is lucky: ‘My parents encourage me to continue my legal education and support me wherever they can. The whole family’s behind me and that is quite unusual in Afghanistan.’

Following her internship, Lida found a job with the legal programme of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH. Here, she maintains close relationships to the Ministry of Justice’s office and organises internships for the next generation of female law students. She currently lacks the funds for a Master’s degree. Her position at GIZ enables her to continue professional activities while saving up for her postgraduate studies.

Sumaia has wanted to be a lawyer since she was a little girl: ‘I became a lawyer to help Afghan women finding a way out of their situation.’ Lida agrees: ‘The situation of women in Afghanistan is really bad. We face discrimination on all fronts. I want to end this discrimination and defend the rights of women in our society.’
Youth for Dialogue and Peace

Today, Madina considers education to be her opportunity for a better future. Therefore, she attends school regularly these days. This was not always the case. Growing up in poverty, she was forced into marriage at an early age. Madina decided to run away though – with another man. But this proved disastrous for the young woman: she was raped and subsequently sentenced for extramarital sex and elopement. However, Madina speaks positively of her time in the youth detention centre. There, she received psychological support and was educated about her rights. A social worker helped Madina to return to her family. She is still living with them today.

Many children and young people in Afghanistan grow up in difficult political, economic and social circumstances. Whether at home or at school, they do not learn to deal with conflicts peacefully and constructively. Like Madina, other young people fall victim to violence. Some of them become perpetrators themselves or are exploited by armed groups. In order to change this situation, the Civil Peace

Project description

- **Projects:** Civil Peace Service & Promotion of the Rule of Law
- **Objectives:** Assist civil society stakeholders to deal with conflict. Teach methods of non-violent conflict resolution to initiate peace processes and the creation of democratic structures. Create legal certainty for all citizens.
- **Implementing organisation:** Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
- **Partners:** ASCHIANA (Juvenile Rehabilitation Center – JRC); other Afghan non-governmental organisations and government agencies
Service and the Promotion of the Rule of Law Programme (RoL) are working together to promote the reintegration of young offenders. These initiatives are collaborating with the Afghan non-governmental organisation ASCHIANA to support social workers at the Juvenile Rehabilitation Center (JRC) in Balkh province, Northern Afghanistan. They use education and vocational training, psychosocial support, and courses in sport, painting, drama and other subjects to boost the young offenders’ self-confidence and their ability to empathise and to find non-violent solutions to conflicts as an alternative to crime and extremism.

14-year-old Navid ended up in the JRC after abusing another child. He also received help during his time in prison. A social worker taught him how to deal with his anger and to resolve conflict peacefully. Navid talks with particular pride about a technical course he attended at the JRC. He now lives with his family again and attends school regularly. He repairs mobile phones in a workshop as a part-time job, giving him a sense of achievement and boosting his self-confidence. Once again, he can look forward to his future.

‘Only when peace returns to our country, everything will be possible.’

The Civil Peace Service and Rule of Law programmes involve a wide range of activities. For example, on the last Universal Children’s Day, the projects organised events at which Afghan children demanded the right to have a say, too, and called for education for all, including Afghanistan’s many street children and orphans. Enabling children’s voices to be heard is also part of democracy. During Nowruz (Persian New Year), more than 200 children painted their ideas for peace on a 27-metre sheet. One of the participants, Razma, concluded: ‘Only when peace returns to our country, everything will be possible.’

The Civil Peace Service facilitates the Afghan society’s peaceful development and helps to break spirals of violence.
Political Participation – for the Public Benefit

Public confidence in a government increases if the state respects citizens’ human rights, enforces these and safeguards peace and prosperity. The better the provision of public services, the greater is the legitimacy enjoyed by institutions and administrations. Consequently, it is important that public officials know and understand the public’s needs and concerns so that they can respond and take appropriate action. Citizens must therefore have the opportunity to make their voices heard at municipal, district, provincial and governmental level in Kabul. The Afghan people can only help to shape their country’s political, economic and social development if they have a greater say. Thus, there is a need for citizens representation bodies, open and responsive authorities and well established channels of communication between the public and officials.

In addition to the lack of institutionalised communication channels that enable municipal and national government to take sufficient account of the public’s wishes and interests, Afghan state officials often lack sufficient training.

German development organisations are therefore working on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the German Federal Foreign Office (AA) to actively encourage dialogue between Afghan government agencies and citizens. In the long term, this will increase mutual trust and therefore significantly contribute to safeguarding stability in the country.

*Public hearings strengthen a dialogue between the government and the population. This way, the Afghan government needs to publicly justify its actions and to implement public feedback mechanisms*
Emancipation through Knowledge

Some 30 women of varying ages are listening intensely to what Halima Sarwari is telling them. Halima is one of the leaders of the Women’s Council in Balkh. Enthusiastically, she teaches her group for 20 hours a week at the women’s training centre. ‘Many women aren’t aware of their rights. Women are keen to know their place in society and the rights they have recognised by the constitution and Islam.’ This week, the focus is on political structures. Halima is explaining how women can participate in political processes at local level, how elections work, what a secret ballot is and, most importantly of all, that women have a right to vote and should use it.

The courses cover a wide range of subjects, based on the women’s actual needs. In Afghanistan, the general level of women’s education is often very low, as are their literacy levels and self-confidence. The courses therefore focus on women’s rights, inheritance law and violence against women. Very practical training is also offered, including literacy, computers, mathematics and English courses. The training centre is one of three established by Balkh Province’s Department of Women’s Affairs, supported by the German government. Women can come here to get answers to many of their questions or problems and to use training opportunities.

‘Many women aren’t aware of their rights. Women are keen to know their place in society and the rights they have recognised by the constitution and Islam.’

Project description

- **Project:** Promotion of Good Governance in Afghanistan (RCD)
- **Objective:**
  Boost confidence in the legitimacy and performance of government agencies and improve public service provision
- **Implementing organisation:** Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
- **Partners:**
  Department of Women’s Affairs; Balkh provincial government
Recurring themes that preoccupy participants include violence against women and child marriage. During the lessons, many women learn for the first time about legal channels to defend themselves, provided by the state. Nasima Khwajazada is a municipal employee who attended the courses in Balkh. Afterwards, she set up her own women’s group in her village, which now meets twice a week. ‘These courses have given us a wake-up call. We now know our rights and we speak up when our husbands or families treat us unfairly. We’ve become more self-confident!’
Provincial Offices on Hand to Answer Questions

The meeting room in Firoznakhcher community centre in Samangan province is crammed with people. Chairs are close to one another and all seats are taken. Full of expectation, the 330 men and women look to the platform. For the first time, the residents of Firoznakhcher are meeting representatives of the provincial and district government for a public consultation.

One of the audience members is 36-year-old teacher Farid, who has come with numerous questions and concerns. He is delighted to finally express them: ‘Transparent governance means that we as citizens need to know and understand what exactly the government is planning here. Until now, we had no idea what projects were being planned, how a district or province allocates funding or what future developments we might expect.’
Today’s event allows Farid to ask all of these questions. Mohammad Kabir Mukaramzadha, Head of the Technical and Services Department of the Provincial Governor’s Office, opens the public consultation. Along with representatives from the departments of business, health, women’s affairs and education, he is on hand to take questions from the audience. The panel outlines current and planned development projects and provides information on costs, timeframes and benefits for residents. Once the audience has overcome its initial timidity, the questions come thick and fast.

Farid wants to know when the district’s main roads are finally going to be properly surfaced: ‘Vehicles get stuck for four to five days at a time in winter and no food or other goods get through to the villagers. In one case I’m aware of, a woman died because we couldn’t get to the medical centre by car.’ The government representatives are diligent in noting down the audience’s suggestions, which will be considered in forthcoming project planning.

At the end of the event, the people leave the room with a smile on their faces. After being left out of their local government’s activities for so many years, they are now fully involved. Mulawi Abdul Majid, one of the shura elders, is delighted: ‘Since the end of the Taliban regime, we hadn’t had a single public consultation in which the government spoke about its plans and activities. Today, we were asked for our opinion. This gives our government a great deal of credibility. The Afghan people are beginning to trust the state.’

The German government has provided financial support to the Office of the Provincial Governor of Samangan to enable it to prepare public consultations as well as relevant content and informational documentation. Public consultations have already taken place in a total of seven districts in Samangan province. In total, almost 4,000 people have taken part in the events to date, and the consultations have awakened great interest from the public. In the future, the Office of the Provincial Governor plans to conduct this dialogue with citizens at least once a year.
Easing Bureaucratic Procedures

The Population Registration Department in Kunduz is responsible for around 900,000 citizens in the province. Unlike the situation in Germany, it is not necessary to register or de-register. Neither do all Afghans have identity documents. Obtaining an identity card in Kunduz used to be a nearly impossible challenge: in many cases, information about citizens was either nonexistent or difficult to locate.

As Shamsurrahman Akbari, who heads the Population Registration Department in Kunduz, explains: ‘Our departmental archive was in a very poor state. It wasn’t organised by locality or year. Finding people’s documents was almost impossible or very time-consuming.’ This situation was untenable, and not only for applicants. Staff also wasted a lot of time. ‘Applications were delayed and there were more opportunities for corruption to sneak in,’ explains Akbari. Consequently, citizens felt there was very little point in contacting the Population Registration Department in the first place.

Since the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH provided support to the Population Registration Department in Kunduz on the German government’s behalf, assisting with training office staff, clearly defining individual areas of work and reporting lines, distributing tasks and developing a structured archive, there have been major improvements in efficiency and quality in all task areas.

‘The judicial authorities now receive the necessary information about offenders and identity documents can be issued promptly. This eases the burden on the authority’s staff and also leaves applicants more satisfied with the services,’ says Akbari.

In the past, Professor Parwaiz Saify from Kunduz University testifies that it was almost impossible to renew his identity document within a reasonable period of time or even to apply for a new one. ‘This time, the authority staff located all necessary information about my family and myself in the archives very quickly,’ says Saify.

**Project description**

- **Project:** Promotion of Good Governance in Afghanistan (RCD)
- **Objective:** Strengthening confidence in the legitimacy and performance of government agencies and improve public services
- **Implementing organisation:** Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
- **Partners:** Population Registration Department, Kunduz; Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission (IARCSC); Kunduz Municipality
Demand-oriented trainings help civil servants to efficiently provide high-quality services for the population.
Integrating Women in Working Life

The employment of women continues to be a challenge in Afghanistan. Dr Manan Zahed, who works for the Afghan-German Cooperation, explains: ‘For a long time, women have been denied the opportunity to participate in public life in our country. In some cases due to certain traditions or religious views. Even women with top-class education sometimes have difficulties finding work.’ This shows that education alone is not enough to integrate women in working life. Ayisha, a graduate of the Faculty of Science in Feyzabad, underlines: ‘I spent almost a whole year at home after graduating, out of work.’

In order to help female graduates to find work, an internship programme for 50 young women has been launched in Feyzabad, by the Afghan-German Cooperation. During the nine-month programme, participants accomplished six months of training in financial planning, HR management, procurement and leadership while at the same time working part-time in provincial authorities. They subsequently completed a three-month full-time internship in the same government office. ‘I learned more during the nine-month programme than I did during all my previous years of study,’ says Ayisha.

Project description

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- **Objective**: Strengthening confidence in the legitimacy and performance of government agencies and improve public services: female internship programme for 50 university graduates in Feyzabad
- **Implementing organisation**: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
- **Partner**: Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission (IARSCC)
The programme is already paying off: ‘34 of the 50 participants have now found a permanent job, primarily in the education sector,’ says Dr Zahed.

The skills women develop in their jobs also affect their behaviour at home: ‘I can use my management skills outside the office too. As the oldest girl of five children who still live at home and are growing up without a father, I also need to manage my family,’ says Ayisha. The programme gives young women the self-confidence to take control of their own lives, including a financial sense: ‘My salary now enables me to support my family. Now that my father is dead, my siblings and my mother depend on it,’ explains Ayisha.

Dr Zahed hopes that ‘a greater presence of women in the work place may also lead to their acceptance in social, economic and political spheres.’ Due to its success, this programme has also been launched in other Afghan provinces and is running for the third time in Badakhshan.
Administration –
the Foundation of a State

An efficient and accountable public administration at local, provincial and national level is the foundation of a well-functioning state. No country can provide effective public services unless administrative structures and processes are transparent, accepted and properly functioning. An efficient service sector is fundamental to sustainable economic development. However, Afghanistan’s public administrative structures and procedures are often poorly defined and sometimes over-regulated or incomplete. Many ministry and administrative staff lack the expertise and experience needed to fully perform duties. Some departments are understaffed.

Additionally, corruption, patronage and a lack of integrity occur in Afghan institutions. Transparency is not fully guaranteed across all areas. State regulatory bodies require continuous support to carry out their tasks correctly. Moreover, civil society actors are not always heard.

Therefore, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and KfW both support their Afghan partners in reforming the local administration on behalf of the German government. They aim for the Afghan state to handle governance, authority and public resources responsibly.

In order to increase public authorities’ effectiveness in the long-term and to prevent corruption, the German government supports certain reforms in Afghanistan.
Preventing Corruption at National and Provincial Level

The Afghan government has repeatedly underscored its commitment to fighting the pervasive problem of corruption. While some progress has been made over the last decade thanks to international support, Afghanistan’s public administration is still riddled with corrupt officials in almost all areas. This is hindering the country’s economic development and also undermining public trust in the state. ‘For most citizens, corrupt behaviour within the public authorities has become an accepted part of everyday life. This is damaging public confidence in government ministries,’ says Naseem Akbar, Executive Director of the Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (MEC).

To address the issue, the Open Policy Advisory Fund (OPAF) is assisting the MEC to conduct so-called Vulnerability to Corruption Assessments, which include detailed recommendations. ‘Initiatives based on sound analyses can restore confidence in the long term,’ states Akbar. He hopes for full transparency and greater effectiveness. In order to ensure their achievement, the MEC checks whether the recommendations are indeed being implemented.

For example, the MEC and OPAF recommended the reform of procedures for issuing identity documents since some individuals unethically exploiting their access to public resources instead of correctly checking these documents. As a direct result of this reform, savings amounting to a full AFN 155 million (equivalent to almost EUR 2 million) were made in 15 Afghan provinces during the first nine months of 2015.
In response to the MEC and OPAF recommendation for officially registering land property, the Afghan Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs registered some 8,000 hectares of donated (waqfi) land in 20 provinces. This activity aims at preventing illegal expropriations. A lack of official data, military conflicts in the country and different government ideologies have led to property seizure or different usage. Land borders are often poorly defined and difficult to measure, and fraud is not uncommon. Land has been and continues to be seized or appropriated in some cases by high profile and influential people. Officials in Nangarhar province in the east of the country testify: ‘People simply occupied land behind the Governor’s office - we heard them very clearly. But the Governor could not do anything.’

Advising Afghan institutions and constitutional organisations helps increasing effectivity and efficiency, fighting corruption, and thus ensuring the good practice of political and administrative obligations.
Sustainable Mining in Afghanistan – Examples from Turkey

For Abdul Sami Skindaray, visiting the Hema coal mine in the Turkish port town of Amasra was a defining event. The experienced mining inspector Skindaray had already visited numerous mines in his home country Afghanistan. But the mine in Amasra on Turkey’s Black Sea coast was different. With its white sandy beaches, rocky coastline and green vegetation, it looked more like a tourist resort.

The Amasra coal mine is the biggest one in Turkey. The Turkish government had only very few concerns about the environmental impact of resource extraction in the area though. Since serious accidents occurred in the past, strict European environmental and health regulations regulate Turkey’s mining sector. These regulations ensure that the mines have a minimal ecological impact. Skindaray is impressed: ‘Compared to the mining sector in Afghanistan, mining in Turkey is much more transparent and clean. Corruption can’t be seen because the incomes are going to the Turkish state.’

Mohammad Abbas, an engineer at the Afghan Ministry of Mines and Petroleum, describes the situation in Afghan mines as particularly critical: ‘Many miners start digging in areas randomly in order to get coal. Coal is being chipped away from many different directions, damaging the mine and its resources – perhaps irrevocably.’ Abbas explains that Afghanistan lacks a structured coal mining system. ‘Private companies make huge profits, but this will end soon. They are not investing; instead, they are damaging the environment in their pursuit of illegal profits. However, mines will only be profitable in the long term if there is actually some investment. And yet the Afghan firms try to make a profit from day one.’

Using its natural resources effectively is key for Afghanistan’s successful reconstruction. Its 1,400-plus untapped mineral deposits are estimated to be worth several trillion dollars. Mining bears the potential to drive Afghanistan’s economic recovery, creating a large number of jobs.

Project description

- **Project:** Promoting good governance in the Afghan extractive industry
- **Objective:** Transparency and inspections within the mining industry help to regulate state revenues, promote investment and combat corruption in the long term. To this end, inspectors receive insights into other countries’ mining systems
- **Implementing organisation:** Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
- **Partners:** Afghan Ministry of Mines and Petroleum; Directorate of Mines Inspection; Freiberg University of Mining and Technology; Istanbul Technical University

21 training courses for 348 employees of MoMP and the provincial inspection authorities

* since 2013
To make this vision a reality, the country needs to reform its mining industry. The existing mining policy hinders investment rather than encouraging it. Large parts of the active industry are barely regulated or controlled. The majority of the generated income never reaches the state. In addition, accidents and explosions caused by poor, inefficient and, in some cases, dangerous work processes, claim hundreds of workers’ lives each year. The costs of the resulting environmental damage are almost impossible to estimate.

On behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH is therefore assisting Afghan stakeholders to make mining innovative and transparent in the long term. This involves advisory services to the Ministry of Mines and Petroleum as well as the provision of funding for various initiatives and training of administrative staff, technical experts, engineers, geologists, inspectors from the Directorate of Mines Inspection, businesses and civil society representatives. In this context, GIZ invited 20 Afghan mining inspectors to attend a two-month training programme in Turkey. In addition to visiting numerous mines, participants discussed technical topics such as construction techniques, mine planning, mine closure, modern extractive and environmental technologies, software, social standards, mining law, mining management and mining business with international experts from Freiberg University of Mining and Technology, Istanbul Technical University and the Turkish mining authority.

The participants are optimistic that they will be able to apply their newly acquired knowledge in Afghanistan and train their colleagues accordingly. They are aware that there is much work still to be done to improve Afghanistan’s mining industry. Significant investment in modern technology and new equipment is required, but this will not take place overnight. Nonetheless, the training programme in Turkey for Afghan geologists and engineers was another important step in the right direction.

The Afghan mining sector has huge potentials that could facilitate the country’s economic growth. In order to fully use this potential, extraction needs to be transparent, sustainable and innovative.
Taking the Future in its own Hands

One key programme funded by the ARTF is the National Solidarity Programme (NSP) of the Afghan Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development. For the past 11 years, the NSP has been working closely with Community Development Councils (CDCs) in all 34 Afghan provinces. During this time, some 30,000 CDCs have supported the programme.

The CDCs’ job is to ensure that villagers’ needs and concerns are considered in municipal decision-making. CDC representatives come from the villages and communities. They are familiar with local conditions and know which projects have the highest priority for each community. The CDCs fund many change processes from their own budgets, as well as feeding other requests into the local policy-making process.

The NSP funds the CDCs, advises on the establishment of new CDCs and trains members in how to plan projects, to secure funding and to promote their interests at district and provincial level. Since 2003, the programme has funded more than 90,000 projects in communities and villages throughout the country. In total, more than EUR 1 billion was invested in the NSP. By contributing materials and equipment, working hours and cash, the local communities themselves covered over 13 per cent of the costs for schools, clinics, women’s training centres, drinking water systems, new roads, drains, dykes and even small power stations in Kabul, Nangarhar, Parwan and Panjshir provinces. The CDCs are taking ownership of the process of developing their villages. They are initiating their own projects, confidently presenting their requests to the district and provincial governments and assuming responsibility for decision-making that focuses on the future.

For example, the women on the CDC in Mir-bacha-kot District, Kabul province, identified an urgent need to build a hospital for women and children. 37 of the district’s CDCs pooled their budgets within the NSP to establish a 20-bed hospital with a gynaecology department in the heart of the district. Residents of the 37 villages contributed 10 per cent of the building costs, while the ARTF covered the remaining costs. The hospital has been fully equipped and operational since 2012. Since then, healthcare for women and children in the district has significantly improved. ‘In the past, many families lost children and women often died during childbirth,’ recalls Ghulam Jilani, Head of the CDC in Mir-bacha-kot.
Reconstruction thanks to the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF)

Over 30 international donors, including the German government, have been contributing financially to the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) since 2002. In so doing, they are assisting Afghanistan to finance its own development and to stand on its own feet in the long term. To date, more than EUR 8 billion has been paid into the fund. At least EUR 510 million have been provided by Germany, making the German government one of the principal donors. The ARTF is the most important funding instrument for the Afghan civil sector.

The ARTF is designed to assist Afghanistan to fund ongoing costs such as teachers’ salaries and development projects. The overarching development policy objective of the ARTF is to help stabilise the Afghan state and to contribute to reducing poverty. The fund also ensures the proper functioning of the civil service and thus guarantees the provision of basic social services while supporting the implementation of the Afghan government’s development priorities.

Currently, more than 8.1 million people benefit from ARTF-funded measures. Now, many Afghans have access to energy, water, educational institutions, and they benefit from job-creation measures.
Rapid Local Assistance – Finding a Way

Taloqan, the capital of Takhar province, lies along the Khanabad River, which bursts its banks after each spring thaw. Ghullam Abbas knows a thing or two about floods: ‘We live 100 metres from the river and have had to rebuild our house countless times when it was badly damaged in the floods. When the water starts rising, you can’t sleep. My wife, my children and I are simply too frightened.’ And it was not only houses that were affected; roads and bridges were hit by the flooding year after year. The agricultural sector took a tremendous economic hit. Abbas explains: ‘The floods wiped out local farmers’ yields from 1,000 hectares in 2013.’

The local residents contacted Mahmoud Salem Akbar, director of the irrigation department, and requested the construction of a flood defence wall. With 120,000 residents regularly affected by flooding, Akbar’s department responded immediately to the request, releasing EUR 4.75 million of financial assistance provided by the German government: ‘We built or repaired a total of 5.5 kilometres of flood defence walls. This year, we witnessed one of the worst floods in decades and the wall is still standing.’ Department staff dealt with tenders, monitored the progress of the construction work and conducted the final inspection themselves, thanks to training and advisory services provided by the Regional Infrastructure Development Fund, which is financed by Germany.

Thanks to the flood defence wall, Ghullam Abbas and his family can rest again: ‘We can finally start investing in refurbishing our house as we don’t have to worry about being made homeless every year. And the prices of riverside properties have also increased tenfold since the wall was built. I’m proud of our town’s administration for securing the funds and building the wall so quickly!’

Project description

- **Project:** Regional Infrastructure Development Fund
- **Ziel:** Create infrastructure to improve the socio-economic foundations of Afghan society and planning mechanisms for local administrative and state bodies
- **Implementing organisation:** KfW Development Bank
- **Partner:** Afghan Ministry of Finance

Besides developing infrastructure, the project supports further training of ministry staff and business representatives – via management seminars, coachings, and on-the-job training.
In order to drive socio-economic development for the benefit of the people in Northern Afghanistan, KfW and its partners are assisting Afghan provincial administrations to plan and to implement the necessary infrastructure measures.

A 27-kilometre gravel road has also been built, linking the town of Darayem to the provincial capital Feyzabad. ‘Before the road was built, we had nothing. A local market is now slowly developing and we can get to university and hospital in Feyzabad,’ explains Abdul Raoof, District Governor of Darayem. Suwaya, a local resident, agrees: ‘Whenever one of us was ill, we relied on horses and donkeys to get to the nearest hospital. Many women died as a result. I was recently ill myself while I was pregnant. But we made it to the hospital within an hour. I had an operation and now I’m back to full health.’ Even small-scale infrastructure initiatives change lives and offer new prospects for local residents.

* since 2010
Putting Words into Action to Create Fresh Prospects

‘My old school had five classrooms, one office and a storeroom – for 2,200 students,’ says Nafisa, a young seventh-grade student, describing her time at school. ‘Lessons took place outside because the school was far too small.’ Only a limited number of tents were available. ‘During the rainy season, many students didn’t make it to lessons at all,’ explains Nafisa.

Starting to build a hospital in Afghanistan

Project description

- **Project:** Stabilisation Programme for Northern Afghanistan
- **Objective:** Stabilise fragile regions by improving socio-economic infrastructure and strengthening local development councils
- **Implementing organisation:** KfW Development Bank
- **Partner:** Aga Khan Foundation Afghanistan
Unfortunately, this situation is not uncommon. Lessons in tents provided by poorly trained teaching staff are an everyday reality in many areas of Northern Afghanistan. In Balkh province, for example, around two thirds of the 550 schools were destroyed or damaged by war and armed conflict. Almost half of the 440 schools in Kunduz province had no buildings at all.

After members of the local District Development Assembly (DDA) visited Nafisa’s old school and made the construction of a new school for the district a priority, the new school was built with support from the Stabilisation Programme for Northern Afghanistan (SPNA). The new school building offers space to 2,200 students and is fitted with appropriate equipment and facilities. ‘The new school even has computers and a research laboratory,’ adds Nafisa enthusiastically.

The programme assists members of the DDAs identifying the most urgent problems in their districts, developing solutions and implementing these – walking the talk. More than 200 schools have already been built within the programme SPNA, as well as numerous bridges, roads and other infrastructure.

As a result, local residents discover new opportunities. ‘I’m working as hard as I can, so I can become a doctor and help others,’ explains Nafisa.
Knowledge and Action for Afghanistan

Infrastructural damage is not the only consequence of armed conflict in Afghanistan. Many well-educated Afghans migrated abroad, taking their knowledge and skills with them. In order to drive civil reconstruction in Afghanistan, the German government is supporting the placement of highly qualified managers and specialists as integrated and returning experts at Afghan institutions. Currently, there are 15 integrated experts and 19 returning experts working in Afghanistan to support the development of government ministries and administrative systems.

‘We face many challenges,’ says Khojesta Ebrahimkhel, an experienced political scientist. She returned to Afghanistan from Germany in 2006 in order to assist with rebuilding her home country. As an integrated expert, she has since been heading the Office of Human Rights and Women’s International Affairs within the Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In this role, Ebrahimkhel works to promote equality: ‘It’s especially important to work across ethnic divides. I’m neither Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara nor Uzbek – I’m Afghan.’ She also coordinates the human rights agenda between the government, civil society and the international community. Through her specialist input, she supports the joint implementation of international human rights conventions.

Project description

- **Project:** Programme to Support the Development of Afghan Ministries and Administrative Systems at National and Sub-National Level – Integrated and Returning Experts

- **Objective:** Placement of managers and specialists as integrated and returning experts in Afghanistan. With support from these experts, institutions and administrations are able to strengthen their management capacities.

- **Implementing organisation:** Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

- **Partners:** Afghan ministries and institutions
Because the selection process is closely coordinated with Afghan employers, integrated and returning experts enjoy trust of the Afghan partners. Consequently, these experts often play a key role in political change processes.

As part of the special programme funded by the German Federal Foreign Office, an advisor has been assigned to Kabul University’s Faculty of Economics: a professor of marketing and advertising in Germany with substantial business experience in the fields of IT and communication. He promotes entrepreneurial thinking within the faculty and among students. Determined to close the gap between European and Afghan education standards, the professor introduced some innovative ideas: specialist journals, partnerships with overseas universities, international exchange and research programmes, and a greater focus on the labour market.

There is a clear advantage to being an integrated expert: ‘Because I have a local employment contract, I’m also an official employee of Kabul University, representing our faculty within and outside the university. As a result, I enjoy the good will and respect of my colleagues.’

In order to improve management capacities in Afghan line ministries, important institutions and administrative organisations, the German government supports the placement of integrated experts in the Afghan labour market.
German Cooperation with Afghanistan

Decades of armed conflict in Afghanistan have largely destroyed its people’s livelihoods. One of the world’s poorest nations, Afghanistan is a priority country for German development cooperation. The international community supports civil reconstruction in Afghanistan since the Taliban regime fell in 2001. German activities particularly focus on the provinces Badakhshan, Baghlan, Balkh, Kunduz, Samangan and Takhar and the capital Kabul.

The German Cooperation supports the Afghan state in respecting, protecting and guaranteeing human rights, providing security, and being recognised by its citizens as their legitimate representative and service provider, meeting their basic needs. The future Afghan state will afford its citizens legal security and give them prospects for the future, and provide opportunities for them to engage in political life and to play a part in shaping the country’s economic life and politics.

Germany supports Afghanistan to fight poverty and to improve governance as well as the economic situation, to build a basis for sustainable stability and safety.

Commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the German Cooperation with Afghanistan is committed to five core topics: good governance (rule of law, political participation and public administration), sustainable economic development, energy, drinking water supply and sewage disposal, as well as education and vocational training. Furthermore, the German Federal Foreign Office (AA) supervises projects focussing on crisis prevention and stability as well as humanitarian aid in Afghanistan.

Around a total of 1,720 employees, including almost 120 German and international experts, are working in Afghanistan (as of March 2017) for the implementing organisations KfW Development Bank as well as the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, commissioned by the German Federal Government.

Information about the various projects, financial expenditure and results is available on the website for the German cooperation with Afghanistan: [www.germancooperation-afghanistan.de](http://www.germancooperation-afghanistan.de).
The Afghan-German Cooperation prioritises its activities in the Afghan provinces Badakhshan, Baghlan, Balkh, Kunduz, Samangan, Takhar and the country’s capital Kabul.
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