

1. Executive Summary

1.1 Key Findings

Nearly half of the respondents (46%) in 2011 say that things in the country are moving in the right direction. Thirty-five percent say things are moving in the wrong direction – an increase of 8% compared to 2010.

The main reason for people's optimism is reconstruction/rebuilding (40%). Of those who are optimistic, more than a third of respondents in 2011 say it's because of good security (39%) and 16% cite improvement in the education system.

At the same time, insecurity is the top reason for pessimism, cited by 45% of the respondents who say the country is moving in the wrong direction. This is followed by corruption (16%), bad government (15%) and unemployment (13%).

Insecurity (including attacks, violence and terrorism) is identified as the biggest problem in Afghanistan by over a third of respondents (38%), particularly in the South East (56%), East (53%) and South West (52%). Unemployment remains the second biggest problem, cited by 23% of respondents. Corruption is identified by 21% of respondents making it the third biggest problem in 2011. Poverty (12%), poor economy (10%), lack of education (10%), presence of the Taliban (8%), suicide attacks (8%) and interference of foreign countries (7%) also continue to be identified amongst Afghanistan's biggest problems.

Unemployment continues to feature amongst the most important problems at both national and local levels with 23% of respondents identifying unemployment as a problem at the national level and 28% at the local level. Other major problems at the local level include basic infrastructure and services such as electricity (23%), drinking water (20%), roads (15%), education (14%), insecurity (14%) and lack of healthcare/clinics/hospitals (12%), similar to previous years.

More than half of respondents (56%) say they fear for their personal safety in their local area. The highest proportions of respondents who report fearing for their safety are in the South East (68%), West (62%) and East (61%). There have also been significant increases in the incidence of crime and violence experienced by respondents in these same regions since 2010, with 4%, 3% and 8%, respective increases. There has been a 9% increase in the incidence of crime in the North West.

Twenty-two percent of respondents report that they or someone in their family have been victims of violence or crime in the past year, which is the highest level recorded to date. The most common form of crime experienced remains physical attack or beating (36%) followed by burglary/looting (12%) and racketeering and extortion (10%). Violence resulting from the actions of foreign forces (8%) is most commonly reported in the South West (27%), followed by the South East (9%), Central/Hazarajat (6%) and East (5%). Violence due to militant/insurgent actions (4%) is cited most often in the East (8%), Central/Kabul (6%), North East (5%) and South East (5%).

The majority of respondents say they would have some level of fear voting in a national election (57%), participating in a peaceful demonstration (66%), running for a public office (63%), traveling from one part of Afghanistan to another part of the country (75%) and encountering international forces (76%). However, more than half of respondents say they would have no fear participating in resolving problems in their communities (59%) or encountering officers of the Afghan National Army (ANA) (55%) or Afghan National Police (ANP) (51%).

In 2011, support for the government's approach toward negotiation and reintegration of armed opposition groups remains high. Eighty-two percent of respondents support the government's attempts to address the security situation through negotiation and reconciliation with armed opposition. Support for the government's peace and reconciliation efforts and negotiations with the armed opposition is high in all regions and highest in the East (89%), South West (87%), North West (85%) and South East (83%). Eighty-one percent of respondents also agree with the government providing assistance, jobs and housing to those who lay down arms and want to reintegrate into society.

The proportion of respondents who say they have some level of sympathy with the motivations of armed opposition groups reaches its lowest level in 2011. Support has fallen from 56% in 2009 and 40% in 2010 to 29% in 2011. However, more than a third of respondents in the East (41%), South East (41%), and South West (37%) say they have some level of sympathy with armed opposition groups.

In 2011, the majority of respondents report satisfaction with the availability of most basic services, including education for children (73%), water for drinking (70%), the ability to move safely in local areas (70%) and the availability of clinics and hospitals (57%). Nearly half of respondents are satisfied with the availability of water for irrigation (45%). Respondents are least satisfied with the availability of jobs and electricity supply. At the same time, 70% say the availability of jobs in their local area is bad and 65% say the same about the supply of electricity.

In 2011, more people report an annual improvement across all areas of economic wellbeing than in previous years, except in relation to electricity supply. Forty-three percent of respondents report improvement of the financial wellbeing of their household (compared to 42% in 2010 and 31% in 2009), 35% report improvement in the quality of their food diet (compared to 33% in 2010 and 23% in 2009), and 30% say the same about the availability of products in the market (compared to 27% in 2010 and 19% in 2009). Twenty-two percent of respondents report an improvement in electricity supply but this is reported by more urban (40%) than rural (17%) respondents.

More than half of respondents say they are aware of development projects relating to reconstruction/building of roads and bridges (59%) and education (57%) in their local area. Forty-eight percent report awareness of projects related to drinking water supply, 44% report awareness of healthcare programs, 33% are aware of programs related to agriculture and 18% of programs to support industry.

Slightly more than a quarter of respondents (27%) say the United States has provided the most aid for projects implemented in their local area, which is a significant drop from previous years (48% in 2006, 44% in 2007, 46% in 2008 and 41% in 2009). Respondents also identify Germany (7%) – particularly in the North East (22%), Japan (6%) – particularly in the East (12%) and South West (10%), India (4%) – also in the East (8%) and South West (10%), and the United Kingdom (Britain) (2%) – especially in the South West (8%) as major donors supporting development projects in their local area.

Overall satisfaction with the performance of the national government has remained the same as in 2010 with 73% of respondents saying the government is doing a good job. The government's performance is judged most positively with regard to the provision of basic public services such as education (85% say the government is doing a good job), healthcare (68%) and security (62%). Although less than half of respondents say the government is doing a good job in reviving/developing the economy (46%), creating job opportunities (36%) and fighting corruption (35%), levels of satisfaction with the national government's performance in all these areas have risen slightly since 2010.

Satisfaction with the performance of other levels of government has also risen in 2011. Respondents are most positive about the performance of their provincial government (80%) which is equal to the highest figure recorded in 2007. Sixty-eight percent of rural respondents say that their local authority is doing a good job, which is also just short of the highest figure recorded in 2009 (69%). Respondents are least satisfied with the performance of municipalities (63%). However, this figure has risen significantly since 2010 (54%) to its highest recorded level in 2011.

The 2011 survey records the highest levels of confidence recorded to date in a range of public institutions including provincial governments (67%), parliament (62%), the public administration (62%) and community development councils (CDC) (68%). This year for the first time, a majority of respondents express confidence in municipal authorities (55%) and the state justice system (55%).

The survey shows that the majority of Afghans think that corruption is a major problem in all facets of life and at all levels of government. A little more than half of respondents say corruption is a major problem in their daily life (56%) and their local authorities (56%); these figures have been rising since 2007. Around two thirds say that corruption is a major problem in their provincial government (64%), and around three quarters think that corruption is a major problem for Afghanistan as a whole (76%).

Representative bodies continue to enjoy the confidence of the majority of respondents, including community shura and jirga (70%), community development councils (CDC) (68%), provincial councils (67%) and parliament (62%). This year the level of confidence in all these bodies has increased compared to 2010. In 2011, for the first time the majority of respondents are aware of a CDC in their area, particularly in rural areas. Levels of satisfaction with the performance of CDCs also increased slightly in 2011 (81%) compared to 2009 (78%).

Overall, 26% of respondents say they feel safer to express their opinions this year than last year, while 20% say they feel less safe. Respondents who say they feel less safe are predominantly in the South East (27%), North East (21%) and Central/Kabul (21%) regions. The major barriers to freedom of expression are identified as poor local security conditions (37%), fear for personal safety (32%), presence of the Taliban (26%) and government restrictions on freedom of political opinion (18%).

More than two thirds of respondents (69%) say they are satisfied with the way democracy works in Afghanistan. Satisfaction is highest in the Central/Hazarajat (78%), West (76%) and North West (75%). However, 40% of respondents in the South East, 34% in Central/Kabul and 31% in the North East say they are dissatisfied with the way democracy is working. Fifty-three percent of respondents say they can have some level of influence over government decisions, which is the lowest figure recorded to date (declining from 66% in 2008 to 56% in 2009 and 54% in 2010). In 2011, the proportion of respondents who agree that it is unacceptable to talk negatively about the government (68%) has risen significantly since 2010 (62%), and support for the government allowing peaceful opposition (81%) has fallen slightly since 2010 (83%) although it remains higher than in 2008 (78%) or 2009 (77%).

Just under half of respondents (49%) say that the 2010 parliamentary elections were free and fair, while an almost equal proportion (46%) say they were not. The majority of respondents in the Central/Hazarajat (65%), North West (61%), North East (54%) and West (52%) say the 2010 parliamentary elections were free and fair. But, the majority in the East (52%), South East (54%) and Central/Kabul (55%) regions say they were not free and fair.

Two thirds (66%) of respondents say that elections are run by the Independent Election Commission. Twenty-three percent say elections are run by the government, 7% say elections are run by the international community and 2% say they are run by a special court.

A quarter (25%) of respondents say political parties serve the interest of the country as a whole, and 19% say they represent broad layers of society. Eighteen percent say political parties serve regional interest, 14% say group/personal interests, 13% say ethnic interests, 5% say corporate interests (like those of farmers, workers, businessmen, etc.) and 4% say political parties serve local interests.

A majority of respondents agree that the constitution should limit the president to serving a maximum of two terms (73%) and that the president should not be bound by laws or court decisions that he thinks are wrong (61%). A majority also agree that members of parliament should make laws for this country, even if the president does not agree (70%). Thirty-three percent of respondents say the most important job of a member of parliament is to make laws for the good of the country, 29% say it is to listen to constituents and represent their needs and 26% say it is to deliver jobs or development.

Seventy percent of respondents say religious leaders should be consulted on the problems facing an area, which is the highest figure recorded to date (up from 61% in 2006, 60% in 2007 to 69% in 2008 and 67% in

2009). Religious leaders (45%) and government employees (44%) are the only groups for which more respondents say they consider the Afghan public's interests rather than their own interests, when making decisions and policies. By contrast, more respondents say that members of parliament consider their own interests (40%) rather than the interests of the Afghan public (33%). The same is true for ministers in the government, where almost half of respondents (47%) say they consider their own interests and close to a third (32%) say they consider the public's interest when making decisions.

A quarter of respondents (25%) report having approached some authority to help resolve a community problem. The largest proportion of respondents (66%) stated that the problem was taken to a local shura or jirga for resolution. Twenty percent of respondents report having taken a personal dispute to an external body for resolution. Slightly more respondents took their case to a shura or jirga (43%), than to a state court (41%). Satisfaction with shura/jirga (83%) continues to be higher than with state courts (78%).

Education and illiteracy (25%) remain the major problems facing women in Afghanistan, followed by lack of rights, including women's rights (15%), domestic violence (9%), forced marriage/dowry (8%), healthcare (8%), poverty (8%), women not being able to leave their home (6%) and women under the control of men (6%). Only 19% of respondents say there is an organization or institution in their local area where women can go to solve their problems. The institutions identified include the Directorate of Women's Affairs (23%), women's shura (18%), Human Rights Office (13%), District Office (12%), village shura/elders shura (12%) and the courts (5%).

In 2011, support for the principles of gender equality remains high, including equal rights under the law regardless of gender, ethnicity or religion (82%), equal educational opportunities for women (85%) and women being allowed to stand up for their individual rights (79%). However, support for women being allowed to work outside the home continues to fall – from 71% in 2006 to 62% in 2011. About one third of respondents (35%) say that women should not be allowed to work outside the home.

Radio remains the most accessible media for Afghan households. More than four fifths (81%) of respondents say they possess a functioning radio in their household, but there is a difference in access between rural (83%) and urban (73%) areas. Other communications technologies such as television, mobile phones and computers are significantly more accessible in urban areas. Just under half (45%) of respondents use radio most often to get news and information, while just over a quarter (28%) use television. One in five respondents (20%) depend on friends and family to receive news and information.

Ownership of mobile telephones continues to increase in 2011 compared to previous years. This has meant that two thirds of respondents (66%) now have access to this technology, although there is a large divide between urban (88%) and rural (60%) areas.

1.2 Summary

The proportion of respondents saying that the country is moving in the right direction declined slightly in 2011, but it is still higher than in previous years. Security issues continue to play a predominant role in shaping Afghans' perceptions about the situation in the country and the prospects for the future. Like in 2010, good security is one of the principle reasons for optimism cited by respondents, however in 2011 for the first time it is cited less often than reconstruction and rebuilding. Good security is cited most often in the Central/Hazarajat, North East and North West, which also record the highest levels of optimism overall that the country is moving in the right direction.

The proportion of respondents who believe that the country is moving in the wrong direction, however, has increased in 2011. Insecurity is again the most commonly cited reason for pessimism, and again identified as the most important problem facing Afghanistan, particularly by respondents in the South East, East and South West, and in rural areas.

Increasing concern about the security situation is also reflected in the proportion of respondents who say that they often fear for their safety and that of their families, which has been rising steadily since 2006. Levels of fear for personal safety are also highest in the South East, East, West and South West, which are the same regions that identify insecurity as the main reason for pessimism about the direction of the country. The sense of insecurity also pervades other domains of social and public life. The proportion of people who say they fear to participate in a range of public activities is rising over time and is highest in the same regions that highlight poor security as a reason for pessimism, although there has been a fall since 2010 when the highest levels of fear to participate were recorded.

There has been a significant increase in the proportion of respondents who say that they feel less safe in 2011 to express their political opinions than in 2010. Bad security conditions and fear for safety have consistently been the two most important reasons why people feel they have less freedom to express their political opinion than they did a year ago. The proportion of respondents who specifically cite the presence of the Taliban as the reason for this has been rising steadily since 2008 to its highest recorded figure in 2011, again especially in the South East, East, West and South West regions.

The 2011 survey shows a marked rise since 2010 in the proportion of respondents reporting direct experience of violence or crime in all regions except Central/Kabul, reaching the highest levels recorded in most regions, except Central/Hazarajat and West, since 2008. Respondents identify unemployment and corruption as the biggest causes of crime although insecurity and weak government are also seen to play a role. While the incidence of victimization from militants/insurgents actions has declined significantly in 2011 in almost all regions except the East and the South East, the incidence of victimization from foreign forces and police action has risen in almost all regions compared to 2010 except the East, and the Central/Kabul region. In the East, the fall in reported cases of violence by foreign forces experienced by respondents appears to have been replaced by an increase in the direct experience of violence from insurgent actions, suggesting that the im-

part of the ongoing conflict remains significant in this region. Victimization by the actions of foreign forces remains highest in the South West.

Support for the government's peace, reconciliation and negotiation efforts with armed opposition groups remains very high, suggesting that a substantial proportion of the Afghan public is in favor of a political solution to the ongoing conflict in the country, rather than a purely military one. Indeed, support for reconciliation is highest in the East, South West and South East where insecurity is most often identified as a major local problem. However, women continue to report lower levels of support for reconciliation with armed opposition groups suggesting ongoing concern regarding the possible impact on women's lives that may arise through a negotiated settlement with the Taliban, whose regime imposed major restrictions on women's participation in Afghan society at all levels. Support for the efforts to reintegrate armed combatants into Afghan society is also highest in the East, South West and South East where the population is largely Pashtun, and in the North West where the population is predominantly Uzbek. These are also the regions and ethnic groups that record the highest levels of sympathy for armed opposition groups. However, sympathy for armed opposition groups has fallen significantly since 2009 and the proportion of respondents who say they have no sympathy with armed opposition groups has reached its highest recorded level in 2011.

The majority of respondents in all regions, except Central/Kabul and the South East, report overall confidence in government law enforcement agencies. The Afghan National Army (ANA) and the Afghan National Police (ANP) continue to enjoy the highest levels of public confidence of any institution, and public perceptions of the operational capacity of both the ANP and the ANA continue to rise over time. However, the fact that the majority – yet declining percentage of respondents still say the ANP is unprofessional and poorly trained and needs the support of foreign troops to operate again highlights ongoing concerns about insecurity.

In 2011, for the first time reconstruction and rebuilding are cited as the main reason for optimism, particularly in the West, Central/Kabul, South East, South West and East regions, and in urban, rather than rural, areas. Improvements in the education system are also cited by more respondents in 2011, particularly in the South East, North East and Central/Kabul regions. The major reasons for optimism identified in the different regions generally correspond to high levels of satisfaction with the performance of related government services (security in the Central/Hazarajat, North East and North West, reconstruction and rebuilding in the West and East, and improvements in the education system in the South East and Central/Kabul regions), highlighting the link that respondents make between progress in the country and the ability of government to provide essential services and support development.

Satisfaction with the availability of most basic facilities and public service has been increasing over time, reaching its highest levels in 2011 for a range of services including the availability of education for children, clinics, hospitals and medicines, clean drinking water and security. The majority of respondents expect to see further improvements in their local area in these amenities and services. Respondents are least satisfied with

the availability of jobs and the electricity supply, but satisfaction with these services is higher in 2011 than in previous years. The only amenity for which satisfaction continues to fall in 2011 is water for irrigation.

The majority of respondents say they are aware of development projects in their local area relating to reconstruction/building of roads and bridges and improvements to education including reconstruction/opening of schools, training of teachers etc. However, comparatively few are aware of projects related to improving the electricity supply. Awareness of electricity-related projects is lowest in the West, East and South East, which are also the regions that report the lowest levels of satisfaction with the availability of electricity supply in their local area. There does not seem to be a strong correlation between awareness of different development projects and satisfaction with the related services.

The majority of respondents say the Afghan Government is the primary agency responsible for most development although foreign donors are identified as significant in supporting de-mining and humanitarian programs. The United States remains the most frequently identified donor supporting local development projects in all regions, although the figure has dropped dramatically in 2011 compared to previous years.

Geographically the overall pattern that emerges suggests a heavy concentration of donor assisted development projects focusing on basic infrastructure and public services in certain areas of the country, particularly the East and South West, and to some extent the North West. Indeed, the East and South West also record the highest levels of awareness of security-related projects such as de-mining and demilitarization/disarmament.

Despite clear differences between regions, the proportion of respondents who identify a lack of reconstruction as a reason for pessimism is at its lowest level since 2006. The same is true for respondents who cite a bad economy and unemployment as the biggest problem facing Afghanistan, which also record their lowest levels in 2011, suggesting that Afghans view the country's economic situation more favorably than in previous years. The most significant improvements concern the financial wellbeing of households, quality of the food diet, availability of products in the market and the physical conditions of housing, suggesting that the level of material prosperity is improving for a significant proportion of the Afghan population. However, responses vary greatly by region: improvements are most commonly reported in the East, South East, North East and Central/Hazarajat but comparatively rarely in the Central/Kabul and North West regions. The proportion of respondents who give a positive assessment of the availability of jobs in their local area has been rising steadily since 2008, which is consistent with the fall in those that identify unemployment as a major national problem. However, respondents continue to report the least improvement in employment opportunities of all services and amenities particularly in the South East, North East and North West.

The 2011 survey demonstrates a clear correlation between perceptions of government performance and public trust in government institutions. This year, levels of confidence in most public institutions have risen, as have positive assessments of the performance of these institutions. 2011 records the highest levels of public confidence since 2008 in a wide range of representative bodies including government ministers, provincial councils, municipalities and community development councils. Although respondents remain least satisfied

with the performance of municipalities, for the first time, a small majority of respondents say they have confidence in these institutions and there is an increase in satisfaction amongst urban respondents with the performance of their municipal authorities.

The 2011 survey also records the highest levels of positive assessments of national government performance since 2008 in all regions except the South East, North West and Central/Kabul. Confidence in the government justice system also reaches its highest level since 2006. For the first time a majority of respondents say they have some level of confidence in the system. This finding corroborates the increase in positive assessments of the quality and performance of state courts in regards to their accessibility, being fair and trusted, following local norms and being effective at delivering justice and resolving cases in a timely and prompt manner.

Corruption remains a major issue for all public institutions. The proportion of respondents who identify corruption as a reason for pessimism significantly decreased in 2011 to a figure more in line with previous years. However, this drop is not reflected in a fall in concern about corruption as a whole. On the contrary, the survey shows that the majority of Afghans continue to think that corruption is a major problem in all facets of life and at all levels of government. In 2011, for the first time the majority of respondents also say corruption is a major problem in their daily life. The proportion of respondents who say that corruption has increased since last year remains more or less stable; however, reports of corruption directly experienced by respondents are the highest for any year to date for all surveyed institutions. The survey shows that in 2011 the majority of respondents who accessed basic public services such as healthcare, applying for jobs, receiving official documents and dealing with the police or the courts encountered some level of corruption. The majority of respondents say that the government is doing a bad job in fighting corruption.

Although satisfaction with government performance in delivering services is increasing, this is not the case for the performance of democratic institutions. Since 2008 there has been a steady rise in those who say they are dissatisfied with the way democracy works in the country. In 2011, there is a significant increase in the proportion of respondents who agree that it is unacceptable to talk negatively about the government, and more respondents mention government censorship as a reason for feeling less safe to express their opinions than in any previous year since 2008. The proportion of respondents who say they can have some level of influence over government decisions has also been declining steadily over this period. Support for allowing peaceful opposition also fell slightly in 2011 after a significant increase in 2010, which may be a reflection of the increased number of demonstrations held across the country, which in some cases, turned violent.

It is significant that the proportion of respondents who identify peace as a potential benefit of democracy has been rising steadily since 2007, reaching its highest recorded level in 2011. This finding suggests that the ability of the democratic system to ensure security is increasingly important to respondents. On the other hand, the proportion of respondents who say that democracy will bring less corruption has been falling over the same period, suggesting that democracy has so far failed to deliver a reduction in corruption.

The survey also reveals significant ambivalence about electoral processes. Opinion is almost equally divided between respondents who say that the 2010 parliamentary elections were free and fair and those who say they were not. Respondents identify a range of problems with the most recent elections including buying of votes, cheating in the vote count, men voting on behalf of women, husbands not letting their wives vote, and intimidation against voters or party activists. Despite the doubts about the freeness and fairness of the parliamentary elections, this year sees an increase in confidence in the Independent Electoral Commission. However, this remains well below the confidence level recorded in 2009. The fall in references to democracy and elections as a cause for optimism in 2011 may also reflect the controversy surrounding the 2010 parliamentary elections. A similar drop was recorded in 2009 when the survey was held during the run up to the presidential and provincial elections amidst accusations of fraud in electoral registration. Nonetheless, in 2011 the majority of respondents say they agree that Afghanistan should choose its leaders through regular, open and honest elections, even though the majority of respondents continue to say people should vote the way the community votes, not how they feel individually, although this percentage has been falling since 2008. In 2011, more people than in any previous year say voting should be a question of individual preference.

Views on the performance of political representative institutions also reveal some ambivalence. There is clear agreement for the need for constitutional limitations as to the length of the president's mandate and clarification of the presidential role in law making related to the role of parliament. However, within these parameters, the majority of respondents feel that the president should be free to act without constraints from the legal and judicial system.

Opinions regarding the roles of members of parliament are almost equally divided between those who say an MP's job is to make laws for the good of the country, those who say it is to listen to constituents and represent their needs and those who say delivering jobs or development is their most important responsibility. Although the majority of respondents still give a positive assessment, levels of satisfaction with the performance of MPs in addressing the major problems of their constituencies have fallen steadily since 2006, suggesting increasing disenchantment with the ability of MPs to address local problems through the parliamentary system. However, contact by constituents with elected representative to help resolve local issues continues to increase. The proportion of respondents who report contacting their MP for help in solving problems has doubled since 2006. A similar rise has been recorded in the proportion of respondents who report contacting a provincial council representative for assistance.

The proportion of respondents who say religious leaders should be consulted in public decision-making processes has increased over time to its highest level in 2011, suggesting that an increasing number of people in Afghanistan see the involvement of religious leaders as one of the ways to strengthen governance in the country.

Respondents continue to report crime and violence to a wide range of formal and informal institutions especially the Afghan National Police (ANP) in urban areas and shura/elders and mullahs in rural areas. This largely reflects the accessibility of these institutions and the fact that local shura and jirga remain the most trusted and accessible conflict resolution mechanisms for Afghans, particularly in rural areas.

Disputes also continue to be taken to a broad range of formal and informal institutions for resolution, including mullahs, malik/khan, shura/jirga, government agencies, the ANP, district authorities and provincial governors. The survey findings suggest that respondents more frequently address common problems such as land disputes to the institutions that are the closest to their local community. Dispute resolution mechanisms that are strongly anchored in local communities, such as mullahs, malik/khan and local shura/jirga are also amongst the most effective in resolving disputes.

There has been little variation in the proportions of respondents taking their disputes to formal state courts or to informal shura/jirga for resolution since 2008, although fewer respondents report using both mechanisms in 2011. Most respondents living in urban areas report that they took their case to formal state courts, while most in rural areas say they approached informal local shura or jirga suggesting again that formal institutions are more accessible to urban residents. Satisfaction with the performance of state courts shows a small improvement in 2011 reaching again the highest levels which were recorded in 2007. A similar rise is also seen in satisfaction with the performance of local jirga/shura. The traditional justice system continues to be seen to perform better than the modern state justice system on all counts.

In 2011, lack of education and/or illiteracy and the lack of rights, including women's rights, are again identified as the biggest problems facing women in Afghanistan. The proportion of respondents who identify lack of education has fallen significantly since 2009. In 2011, a higher proportion of respondents identify the lack of women's rights as the major problem facing women than in 2010, but this remains lower than in previous years. This seems consistent with a general fall in support for women's rights since the survey began. Although support for equal opportunities in education and women standing up for their rights is high, there has been a steady decline since 2006 in the proportion of people who say that women should be able to work outside the home and just under half of the male respondents disagree with this idea.

In 2011, a clear majority of respondents say that women should participate in elections and vote themselves. Support for women in representative political roles also rose in 2011 to levels closer to those recorded in 2007 and 2008, after a significant drop in the election years of 2009 and 2010. However, support for equal representation of men and women in political leadership positions continues to decline.

Radio remains the most accessible media for all Afghan households. However, other communications technologies such as television, mobile phones and computers are much more accessible to urban residents than to those living in rural areas, largely thanks to better access to electricity. The most marked increase continues to be in mobile phone ownership, which now reaches two thirds of respondents.

Although radio has remained the most common source of information since 2006, the proportion of respondents who use radio as their main source of information has been falling over this period, whereas those who identify TV as their main source of news and information has been steadily rising. Surprisingly, the proportion of respondents who cite friends and family as their main source of information has also risen over this period. Three times more respondents also say they get their news and information from religious leaders (mosques) in 2010 and 2011 than in previous years.

1.3 Restriction on survey field work and replacement of sampling points for security reasons

In 2011, as in previous years, there were restrictions on the movement of some survey researchers due to logistical challenges, natural disasters and security, which made it impossible for them to reach some of the districts identified through the random sampling process. In 2011, 166 of the 876 sampling points had to be replaced by selecting other sampling points in the same region. Instability and frequent fighting in some provinces caused 95 sampling points to be replaced (57% of the total replacements); however, restrictions on the movement of survey researchers due to security concerns have decreased considerably since last year. In 2011, 11% of sampling points were replaced compared to 16% in 2010.

Replacements of sampling points due to security problems (Appendix 2: Methodology) COMPARISON OF 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011

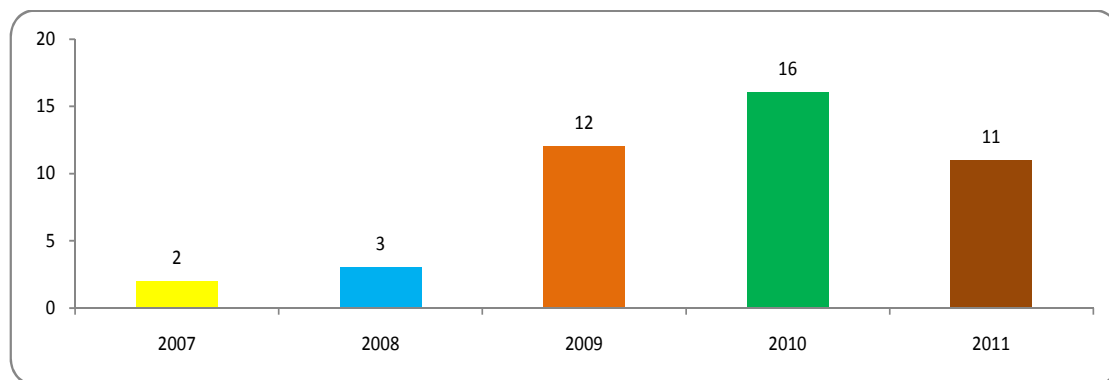


Fig 1.1

Table 1.1: *Replacements of sampling points due to various problems (Appendix 2: Methodology) BY VARIOUS REASONS*

Total Sampling Points 876	Count #	Versus total replacement (%)	Versus all sample points (%)
Security	95	57	11
Village was not found	30	18	3
No transportation way	29	17	3
Surveyors were not allowed	7	4	1
Surveyed before	3	2	0
Not qualified for survey	2	1	0
Total replacement	167		19

The replacement of 95 sampling points for security reasons means that the field survey team could not access many areas with high levels of insecurity. This in turn means that the opinions of those living in highly insecure areas are likely to be underrepresented in survey findings.

The deterioration of the security situation in the country began to have a significant impact on the survey fieldwork in 2009. In 2007, only 11 of the 626 sampling points had to be replaced because areas were inaccessible due to security problems (i.e. 2% of all sampling points). Nine of the eleven replacements were made in just two regions, the South East and South West. The situation was similar in 2008, when 18 of the 659 sampling points were replaced due to security problems (i.e. 3% of all sampling points). These replacements were again mainly concentrated in the South East and South West but the other replacements were distributed amongst seven of the eight regions with the exception of the North West.

However, in 2009 the total number of security-related replacements of survey sampling points increased fourfold, from 3% in 2008 to 12% in 2009. One hundred and two of the 823 random sampling points were inaccessible to survey researchers due to insecurity, and replacements were required in all regions. In addition, the number of insecure areas that could not be accessed at least tripled in the South East and the South West and rose even more dramatically in all other regions.

In 2010, the situation deteriorated further. One hundred and thirty eight of the 825 random sampling points were inaccessible to survey researchers due to security problems (17% of all sampling points). Again, the number of replacements rose significantly in most regions. The region's most affected continued to be the South East, South West and the East. Central/Hazarajat was the only region in which no replacements were made due to security problems.

In 2011, the situation has improved somewhat. Ninety-five of the 876 sampling points had to be replaced due to security reasons (11% of all sampling points). The regions most severely affected by these restrictions are the South East (23 replacements), East (20 replacements), Central/Kabul (17 replacements) and North West (16 replacements). Eight replacements were made in the South West, seven in the North East, and four in the West. Again, in 2011 no replacements were made for security reasons in the Central/Hazarajat region. In the regions where significant numbers of sampling points had to be changed for security reasons, individual provinces with the maximum changes included Kunarha (15 replacements) in the East, Ghazni (12 replacements) in the South East and Baghlan (11 replacements) in the North West. Samangan, Farah, Zabul, Panjshir and Uruzgan were the only provinces where sampling points did not have to be replaced.

Table 1.2: Actual number of replacements of sampling points due to security problems (See Appendix 2: Methodology) ALL AND BY REGION COMPARISON OF 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 AND 2011

Year	Number of Sample Points Replaced for Security Reasons	No. of total sample points	Central/Kabul	East	South East	South West	West	North East	Central/Hazarajat	North West
2007	11	-	1	0	6	3	1	0	0	0
2008	18	-	1	2	6	5	2	1	1	0
2009	102	882	13	14	18	17	14	11	2	13
2010	138	885	10	21	28	24	12	23	0	20
2011	95	876	17	20	20	8	4	7	0	16

Table 1.3: Actual number of replacements of sampling points due to various problems (See Appendix 2: Methodology) BY REGION

Number of Sampling Points replaced for various reasons	Security #	No transportation way #	Village was not found #	Surveyors were not allowed #	Surveyed before #	Not qualified for survey #
Central/Kabul	17	2	4	6	3	1
East	20	0	2	0	0	0
South East	23	0	0	0	0	0
South West	8	0	2	0	0	0
West	4	2	3	0	0	0
North East	7	16	11	1	0	0
Central/Hazarajat	0	7	8	0	0	1
North West	16	2	0	0	0	0
Total	95	29	30	7	3	2

In 2011, in two provinces, Paktika and Zabul, the deterioration of the security situation restricted the freedom of movement, making it unsafe to employ female interviewers. This meant that no women were included in the sample in these provinces. It should also be noted that there has been a steady decline in the number of women respondents since 2006 and 2007, when half of the respondents were women. In 2011, only 43% of the respondents are women, while 57% of the respondents are men. This is a 14% difference in the gender split, and a 7% decrease in female representation from 2007, which may be reflected in the survey results.

Percentage of men and women respondents of 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011

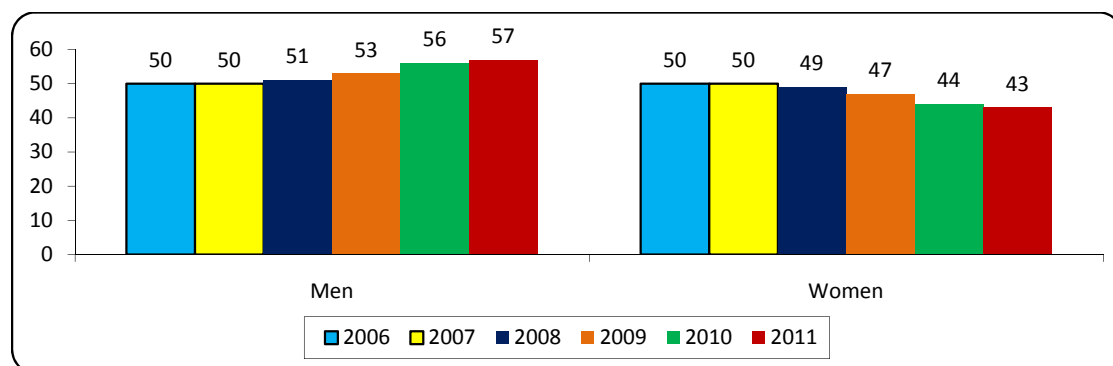


Fig. 1.2