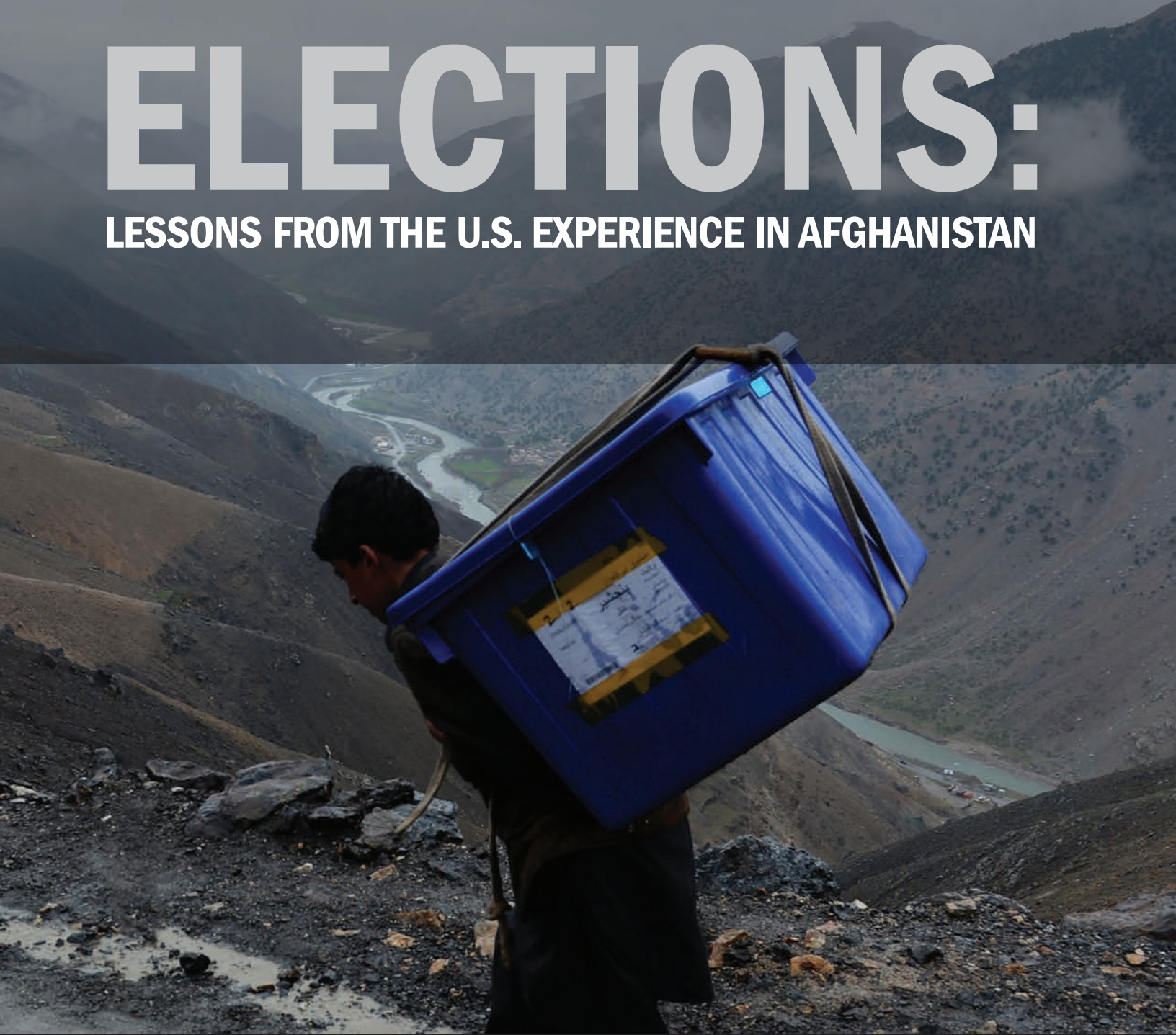




ELECTIONS:

LESSONS FROM THE U.S. EXPERIENCE IN AFGHANISTAN



Executive Summary

The full report can be found on the SIGAR website at www.sigar.mil.



Cover photo credit:

An Afghan man carries a box of election materials to a remote polling station in Panjshir Province before the 2014 presidential election. AFP photo by Shah Marai.



Special Inspector General
for Afghanistan Reconstruction

Elections: Lessons from the U.S. Experience in Afghanistan is the eighth lessons learned report to be issued by the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction. This report examines the challenges the United States and international community face in supporting Afghan elections. The U.S. government has allocated more than \$620 million for this purpose. Further, it examines challenges faced by Afghans—including government officials, civil society organizations, and candidates—as they have tried to prepare for, observe, administer, and adjudicate elections.

The report is unique in that it identifies lessons to inform U.S. policies and actions regarding electoral support. These lessons are relevant for Afghanistan, where the United States will likely remain engaged in the coming years, and for electoral support efforts in other conflict-affected countries. The report provides recommendations to executive branch agencies for improving such efforts, as well as matters for consideration for the Afghan government.

Despite significant challenges, Afghanistan has held several elections. This has been no small achievement—to the credit of Afghans and the U.S. and international partners who have supported them. Our findings highlight the difficulty of building a credible electoral process in a challenging environment. We found that U.S. and international electoral assistance has yielded several improvements. However, because donor support often recedes after an election, many of those improvements have yet to last beyond the end of each electoral cycle. As it is currently structured, donor support is focused on achieving the short-term and important goal of simply ensuring that elections are held. However, if the long-term goal is ensuring Afghanistan has a sustainable democratic process, U.S. and international partners may want to focus more attention on building the capacity of Afghanistan's electoral institutions.

This report also discusses the sensitive topic of election fraud. In addition to experts and staff from international organizations, foreign governments, and U.S. government agencies, SIGAR spoke with current and former Afghan election officials, members of parliament, unsuccessful parliamentary candidates, and leaders of domestic observation groups. Some of the people we spoke to were successfully elected to public office, others were not, and some have been accused of fraud themselves. While SIGAR cannot prove or disprove statements made by these individuals—as noted in the report—they are included to help policymakers understand the competing narratives that shape Afghanistan's electoral landscape.

This report was written at the request of then-U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan John R. Bass, who asked SIGAR to look at elections in Afghanistan and, specifically, the use

of election technology. To make the report relevant for U.S. Embassy Kabul and those currently working to build Afghanistan's electoral capacity, this report examines select topics through the lens of Afghanistan's current elections environment.

SIGAR began its Lessons Learned Program in late 2014 at the urging of General John Allen, U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan Ryan Crocker, and other senior officials who had served in Afghanistan. These lessons learned reports comply with SIGAR's legislative mandate to provide recommendations to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of U.S.-funded reconstruction programs and operations; prevent and detect waste, fraud, and abuse; and inform the Congress and the Secretaries of State and Defense about reconstruction-related problems and the need for corrective action.

The Congress created SIGAR as an independent agency focused solely on the Afghanistan mission and its reconstruction issues. Unlike most inspectors general offices, which have jurisdiction only over the programs and operations of their respective departments or agencies, SIGAR has jurisdiction over all programs and operations supported with U.S. reconstruction dollars, regardless of the agency involved. Because SIGAR has the authority to look across the entire reconstruction effort, it is uniquely positioned to identify and address whole-of-government lessons.

Our lessons learned reports synthesize not only the body of work and expertise of SIGAR, but also that of other oversight agencies, government entities, current and former officials with on-the-ground experience, academic institutions, and independent scholars. The reports document what the U.S. government sought to accomplish, assess what it achieved, and evaluate the degree to which these efforts helped the United States reach its reconstruction goals in Afghanistan. They also provide recommendations to address the challenges stakeholders face in ensuring effective and sustainable reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan, as well as in future contingency operations.

SIGAR's Lessons Learned Program comprises subject matter experts with considerable experience working and living in Afghanistan, aided by a team of seasoned research analysts. I want to express my deepest appreciation to the team members who produced this report: David Young, project lead; Jordan Kane and Paul Kane, senior analysts; and Will Clifft, Patrick O'Malley, and Jordan Schurter, student trainees. I also thank Nikolai Condee-Padunov, program manager; Tracy Content, editor; Vong Lim, senior visual information specialist; Jason Davis, visual information specialist; and Joseph Windrem, Lessons Learned Program Director. In producing its reports, the program also uses the significant skills and experience found in SIGAR's Audits, Investigations, and Research and Analysis directorates, and the Office of Special Projects. I thank all of the individuals who contributed their time and effort to this report.

In addition, I am grateful to the many U.S. government officials at the Department of Defense, the Department of State, and the U.S. Agency for International Development who provided valuable insights and feedback. This report is truly a collaborative effort meant to not only identify problems, but also to learn from them and propose reasonable solutions to improve future reconstruction efforts.

I believe lessons learned reports such as this will be a key legacy of SIGAR. Through these reports, we hope to reach a diverse audience in the legislative and executive branches, at the strategic and programmatic levels, both in Washington and in the field. Using our unique interagency mandate, we intend to do everything we can to make sure the lessons from the most ambitious reconstruction effort in U.S. history are identified and applied—not just in Afghanistan, but in future conflicts and reconstruction efforts elsewhere in the world.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John F. Sopko', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John F. Sopko,

Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The U.S. government has faced serious challenges in helping Afghanistan build its capacity to prepare for, observe, administer, and adjudicate elections. As the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) put it:

Afghanistan is among the most challenging environments in the world [in which] to hold elections. It is a nascent democracy with an ongoing violent insurgency, an unverifiable number of eligible voters, many of whom are illiterate, and a country spread over harsh terrain. Corruption is pervasive, rule of law is tenuous where it has any hold at all, and impunity for election-related violence and fraud is the norm.¹

Since 2001, the international community has spent at least \$1.2 billion—including at least \$620 million contributed by the U.S. government—supporting Afghanistan’s electoral process, including seven separate elections.² This report was written to help policymakers and program implementers understand the challenges Afghanistan faces in holding its elections. The report covers more than 15 years of electoral assistance in Afghanistan. Its lessons and recommendations are intended to help U.S. government departments and agencies as they plan and implement electoral support to Afghanistan and other countries around the world. While peace talks between the Taliban and the Afghan government take shape, this report can inform U.S. electoral assistance during those talks (if they are prolonged) and any U.S. electoral assistance that may come after a possible peace settlement. Given the demand for reform since the 2014 presidential elections, much of this report’s analysis revolves around key events and processes of the last six years.

Each chapter of this report focuses on a specific topic related to Afghan elections. The conclusion includes overall findings, lessons, and recommendations.

- The **Introduction** provides an overview of the Afghan and international stakeholders involved in administering elections, their various roles and responsibilities, and how U.S. and other donors have supported efforts to hold elections and build sustainable election institutions.
- **Chapter 2** describes the challenge of administering elections in an insecure environment, and how election officials and security forces struggle to make the country secure enough for credible elections to take place.
- **Chapter 3** examines the capacity of Afghanistan’s Independent Election Commission (IEC) and raises concerns about its ability to manage and administer elections with transparency and accountability.
- **Chapter 4** details Afghanistan’s history with voter registration that has made it vulnerable to fraud, as well as challenges to the country’s recent attempt to create a national voter registry.
- **Chapter 5** describes the prevalence of fraud in the months and years leading up to an election, particularly how staff at Afghanistan’s two election commissions can be both perpetrators and victims of fraud.
- **Chapter 6** examines the effect of fraud on the dispute resolution process after an

election, and how fraud can be enabled and compounded by a lack of capacity and transparency at the Electoral Complaints Commission (ECC).

- **Chapter 7** details the Afghan government’s adoption of technology at polling centers to increase the credibility of elections, and how delays and other challenges have reduced the intended benefit of the election technology.
- **Chapter 8** explores the challenges faced by election observers to serve as a check on electoral fraud and malpractice as they struggle to hire, train, deploy, and oversee qualified observers who can access polling centers in an insecure environment.
- **Chapter 9** describes how the U.S. government’s sporadic support of Afghan elections, in which donor engagement and funding ramps up shortly before an election but drops off immediately afterward, has undermined efforts to help the Afghan government build sustainable election institutions and implement critical reforms to avoid repeating past mistakes.
- **Chapter 10** concludes the report with SIGAR’s findings, lessons, and recommendations.

To prevent Afghanistan from once more becoming a terrorist safe haven, the U.S. government has tried for years to help the country hold credible elections that result in legitimate government officials. However, the return on the U.S. government’s \$620 million investment in supporting Afghan elections has been poor. Afghan electoral stakeholders do not appear closer to credibly preparing for, administering, and resolving disputes for elections than they were in 2004, despite the hard work of many in the international community. While assistance has sometimes yielded improvements, they have yet to last beyond the end of each electoral cycle, when most donor support recedes. As a result, Afghanistan’s electoral institutions remain weak, which undermines the confidence of the Afghan public in its government. As USAID in Afghanistan observed in 2018, “Elections are not yet perceived by the public as an effective way to influence public policy.”³

Expectations among donors seem lower than ever. Given unprecedented insecurity, political gridlock, and uncertainty around the prospect of peace, donors seem relieved that elections are happening at all. As one U.S. embassy official told SIGAR, some of the U.S. government’s greatest election successes are simply preventing worse outcomes, such as a cancelled election or a collapsed government.⁴ Several international officials working on Afghan elections have referred to their role as little more than “firefighting.”⁵ While the electoral process could eventually improve, the current course—marked by timeline-based, sporadic cycles of support—will force donors to continue reacting to crises rather than address systemic deficiencies. As it is currently structured, donor support is focused on achieving short-term goals, such as simply ensuring that elections are held, rather than achieving the long-term goal of creating a sustainable democratic process.

A key finding of this report is that building the electoral institutions, civil society organizations, political parties, and democratic traditions necessary for credible elections will require continuous engagement. However, moving donors away from intermittent support focused on short-term goals and toward a steady effort focused on

long-term goals will require a significant shift in how electoral support is provided. If election assistance in Afghanistan continues to be important to U.S. policymakers, the coming 2020–2025 electoral cycle—particularly the next three years—will be a critical time to stay engaged, politically and technically.

Nationwide provincial council and district council elections—as well as parliamentary elections in Ghazni—were supposed to take place alongside the 2019 presidential election, but were delayed to keep the presidential election on track. Mayoral elections are also expected in the near future. If all these elections take place before the constitutionally mandated 2023 parliamentary and 2024 presidential elections, donors may again be preoccupied with just making sure elections take place. In that case, there will not be an “election cycle” for the next five years; instead, electoral stakeholders will be continuously responsible for disparate but critical stages of six different elections throughout the next five years. This would constitute the most overwhelming electoral schedule in Afghanistan’s history. However, it is possible that there will be further delays. If so, the next three years may be relatively quiet for election stakeholders and well suited to the kind of steady electoral support recommended in this report.

While peace talks are ongoing, any intra-Afghan peace agreement that would necessitate an overhaul of the electoral or even constitutional framework could still be a long way off. Afghanistan will continue to need electoral assistance before, during, and after those talks are complete, assuming a deal is reached.

The findings, lessons, and recommendations below are intended to help the Congress and the executive branch as they consider how best to support the electoral process in Afghanistan and, more generally, in unstable environments elsewhere.

FINDINGS

1. Electoral security is inextricably tied to overall security, both of which are steadily deteriorating.

Insecurity alone is a major hurdle to widespread political participation. Since 2004, the number of planned and unexpected polling center closures on election day due to insecurity has steadily increased, reflecting a worsening security environment; effective Taliban attacks continue to increase; insurgent activity is closely correlated with lower registration and turnout rates; and fear for personal safety and fear while voting are at record highs. On the current course, insecurity alone will increasingly undermine the legitimacy of Afghan elections.

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- 2. Afghanistan's Independent Election Commission has always suffered and continues to suffer from weak leadership, unqualified staff, minimal accountability for fraud and malpractice, and a structure poorly suited to decision making.**

To effectively prepare for and administer elections, the IEC must have certain qualities, both as an institution and at a staff level, that are in short supply. First, at the institutional level, the IEC must have the necessary structure to adequately address contentious issues. As it is, the laws, regulations, and conventions governing the IEC's roles, responsibilities, and internal communication hinder decision making. Second, at the leadership level, the IEC needs individuals with the vision and discipline to plan for long-term success and quickly react to short-term developments. Instead, the IEC's leadership is often paralyzed by indecision and appears unwilling to take action today in preparation for tomorrow. Third, IEC staff must have the knowledge and skills to carry out their duties. However, post-election staff purges, inexperienced leadership, corrupt hiring practices, inadequate training, and a shortage of qualified job candidates have contributed to a poorly trained and poorly motivated workforce. Fourth, even for the leaders and staff who do have the knowledge and ability to do their jobs, the IEC must have the will and ability to hold them accountable. Yet with a few notable exceptions, IEC personnel have seldom faced consequences for incompetence or fraud, despite the existence of basic legal foundations for accountability.

- 3. The national voter registry and the voter registration process are exceptionally vulnerable to manipulation and mismanagement that undermine the voter registry's purpose of ensuring credible elections.**

The creation of Afghanistan's first national voter registry in 2018 was a major accomplishment and helped reduce ballot stuffing by tying voters to specific polling stations for the first time. However, problems with the registry's implementation hindered its ability to mitigate fraud. Registering requires a voter to have a national identification card, which is easy to counterfeit, and there is no effective way to prevent or detect efforts to register with fraudulent documents. The number of registered voters is improbably high, given the population size and low turnout shortly after registering, which likely indicates registration fraud.

Malpractice and lack of transparency also undermine the credibility of the voter registry. On multiple occasions, hundreds of thousands of voters were removed from the registry under opaque circumstances. On election days in 2018 and 2019, large numbers of voters arrived at their polling station only to find themselves unable to vote because their names did not appear on the voter lists. To avoid disenfranchising a large number of voters, the IEC allowed some voters not on the lists to vote anyway.

- 4. Afghan elections are regularly subject to fraud and manipulation through bribes, threats, or both.**

Election fraud in Afghanistan is rampant and takes many forms: Political leaders exert influence over senior election officials and, through them, lower-level staff, and election commissioners and their senior staff sell their services for financial gain. Senior election officials thus play an ambiguous role, serving variously as protectors of the process, perpetrators of fraud, illicit collaborators with senior government officials, and victims of their abuses. Fraud is also perpetrated by local powerbrokers trying to curry favor with candidates in the anticipation of a reward, in the form of government contracts, jobs, or payoffs. It is difficult to detect and prove fraud, and even harder to reduce it. Anti-fraud measures are often co-opted to perpetrate more fraud, and even successful fraud mitigation can end up suppressing legitimate votes, sometimes in ways that favor one group over another.

5. Afghanistan’s electoral dispute resolution process consistently suffers from political manipulation, incompetence, and a lack of transparency.

The transparent resolution of disputes is a critical safeguard for ensuring an election’s credibility. However, Afghanistan does not have a credible dispute resolution process. The ECC—which is responsible for adjudicating election complaints—is overwhelmed. Its provincial offices are weak, vulnerable to political influence, and operate with little oversight. ECC officials are unable to make decisions quickly and rarely justify or share them with the public, and referrals for and prosecution of electoral crimes is minimal. Similarly, upon receiving ECC rulings, the IEC rarely justifies or publicizes its own decisions on which votes to ultimately exclude.

These problems are both a cause and an effect of a worrying trend: Election fraud is increasingly centralized in the dispute resolution process at the provincial and central headquarters, where fraudsters can have the biggest impact for the least effort, as well as the fewest witnesses and the thickest smokescreen. Chaos and malpractice in the central and provincial electoral bodies in the resolution of disputes creates ideal conditions for both election commissions to make changes to the results, and since there is no expectation of transparency, perpetrators can commit fraud with impunity. As a result, the process that is supposed to rout out fraud is, instead, when some of its most potent forms occur.

6. Technology has not improved the credibility of Afghan elections, but has merely added another means of contesting them.

The 2018 and 2019 elections showed the Afghan government was unable to use technology to improve the credibility of its elections. Despite this, both the government and political parties have sought to continue and even expand the use of technology. Though it did reduce ballot box stuffing, election technology created new vulnerabilities to the transparency and credibility of Afghan elections. In 2018, the Independent Election Commission adopted election technology less than a

month before election day, leading to several failures. In 2019, it failed to follow its own procedures for determining how data collected by biometric devices would be used to invalidate ballots, creating opportunities to contest the election. The use of technology in Afghan elections is not inherently problematic, but political and technical challenges are likely to recur if each election continues to feature new, poorly understood, and untested technology.

7. In their efforts to identify electoral fraud and malpractice, election observation organizations face significant obstacles, particularly insecurity, inadequate funding and training, and insufficient oversight to address corruption among their own observers.

Election observers can increase the transparency and credibility of Afghan elections by publicizing electoral fraud and malpractice. However, their efforts are hindered in several ways. Observers are often intimidated, co-opted, or are themselves corrupt. Insecurity often makes polling centers inaccessible to observers, and even when observers are present, powerbrokers with a stake in the election often coerce them into falsifying reports and ignoring irregularities. Sometimes observers submit false reports because the observers are for sale or are otherwise unreliable. In addition, election officials rarely share with observers the critical information necessary for them to detect fraud, like which polling stations will be open on election day. Funding for observation organizations and candidate agents is insufficient or comes too late, which leads to poor training. As a result, evidentiary standards in observer reporting are inadequate, often making their reports useless for the electoral dispute resolution process.

8. Donors make their electoral assistance less effective by being too cautious in their engagement with Afghan counterparts, by overemphasizing technical issues, and by focusing assistance around election day rather than throughout Afghanistan's five-year electoral cycle.

Most problems with Afghanistan's electoral process cannot be blamed on poor donor assistance, but donors make their assistance less effective in several ways. First, to avoid the appearance of meddling in an election, donors often err on the side of caution and miss opportunities to provide proactive solutions to problems—such as advising election commissions on how to find and hire professional civil servants. This forces them to intervene reactively (and sometimes controversially) after an election goes poorly—such as helping broker power-sharing agreements between candidates. Second, because donors are so careful about proactively intervening in elections, they wind up devoting excessive attention to technical problems. Third, the reason donors need to address so many technical problems is because they provide financial assistance so late in the electoral process that technical problems proliferate, requiring troubleshooting. Donors tend to wait until the final months before an election to ramp up support. At that point, it is too late to build electoral institutions with the capacity to credibly manage an election. The current donor assistance model is effective enough to ensure that elections happen,

but not enough to address recurring problems that end up calling the credibility of elections into question.

LESSONS

The following lessons, detailed on p. 168, are meant to inform how the U.S. government provides electoral assistance in Afghanistan and in fragile and conflict-affected countries around the world.

1. Election cycles are continuous processes that require constant donor engagement and support.
2. Fraud is an ever-evolving target that cannot be eliminated, only reduced.
3. Without transparency, measures to reduce fraud will be insufficient.
4. The use of election technology can exacerbate rather than reduce fraud or malpractice, especially if it is introduced hastily and without forethought and planning.
5. The capacity and integrity of election officials are critical components of an election's credibility and merit significant donor attention.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The elusive prospect of a peace settlement in Afghanistan complicates U.S. government planning for election assistance. However, any changes to the Afghan government brought by an intra-Afghan peace agreement will likely involve elections of some kind. Thus, the recommendations below (and detailed on p. 170) are meant to serve multiple purposes: first, to improve the credibility of elections in the absence of a peace agreement; second, to inform discussions about a prospective electoral framework during intra-Afghan peace talks; and third, to help address electoral challenges likely to manifest in any post-agreement landscape.

Central to most of the recommendations is the argument that to be effective, election support efforts must start earlier in the electoral cycle. This would be a change in the way donors support nascent democracies globally. If the U.S. government engages earlier in Afghan election cycles, it would be in a stronger position to help Afghan counterparts implement their own electoral reforms. Some of those reforms are highlighted below for the Afghan government's consideration.

Recommendations for the Secretary of State, the Administrator of USAID, and the U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan

1. The Secretary of State or a suitable designee should continue to work with other donor countries through the Electoral Support Group to maintain continuous engagement with the Afghan government. Typically, this group's engagement is significantly reduced after each election cycle, making electoral assistance less effective and efficient. By participating in regular Electoral Support Group meetings, the U.S. government can more effectively support Afghanistan's democratic process

- throughout the country's five-year electoral cycle—not just immediately before and during an election.
2. The Administrator of USAID should direct appropriate staff to provide robust technical assistance to Afghanistan's electoral commissions throughout the entire five-year electoral cycle—not just immediately before and during an election—to help them increase their capacity and become more sustainable.
 3. The Administrator of USAID should direct all bureaus providing election assistance around the world to focus more attention on building electoral institutions over the long term, rather than simply helping those institutions prepare for imminent elections.
 4. The Administrator of USAID should direct appropriate staff to begin planning and designing support for domestic election observers and party and candidate agents for Afghanistan's 2020–2025 electoral cycle as soon as possible to ensure that training and resources are available well in advance.
 5. The Secretary of State and the Administrator of USAID or their designees should support Afghan government efforts to improve its voter registry to better ensure that legitimate voters are allowed to vote and fraudulent voters are removed.
 6. The Secretary of State and the Administrator of USAID or their designees should encourage and help the Afghan government improve the use of existing election technology, rather than explore additional technological approaches to elections. Among the necessary improvements to existing technology, the Afghan government needs help ensuring that election workers are properly trained in its use and that it does not create new opportunities for fraud.
 7. The Administrator of USAID should consider devoting more resources to supporting Afghanistan's Electoral Complaints Commission to help build the confidence of voters in the fairness of the electoral dispute resolution process.

Matters for Consideration for the Afghan Government

After most Afghan election cycles, the leadership teams of both election commissions are usually fired for fraud and malpractice. The commissions are then unproductive for a year or more as the government scrambles to rebuild them. After the latest election cycle, however, the leaders of the two election commissions have survived for the first time and remain in their jobs. This puts them in the unique position of being able to engage early in the coming election cycle and implement electoral reforms before ramping up for the next parliamentary election in 2023. Even if this benefit is offset by government-wide challenges imposed by COVID-19, this opportunity should not be wasted. To improve their ability to prepare for, administer, and adjudicate elections, Afghanistan's election commissions should consider:

1. Identifying the specific reforms to be undertaken in the coming election cycle, how they will be prioritized and implemented, and contingencies for when compromises must be made on the number and quality of those reforms;
2. Strictly abiding by the civil service commission testing criteria when recruiting new election commission staff to prevent corrupt hiring practices;

3. Drawing on the experiences of other developing countries that have recently undergone democratic transitions and held credible elections in the face of considerable constraints, including Tunisia, Nepal, and Bangladesh;
4. Building a database of the country's 22 million *tazkeras* (identification cards) that can be automatically cross-verified with the voter registry to weed out fraudulent registrations;
5. Improving the quality of the voter registry by ensuring voters have enough time to confirm their information at polling centers, ideally both before and after each voter registration drive;
6. Committing to full transparency in the dispute resolution process by publishing every decision of the election commissions—the IEC, ECC, and their provincial offices—including legal justifications, on a publicly available government website;
7. Establishing provincial electoral complaints commissions one month before candidate and voter registration, in accordance with the 2019 Election Law;
8. Improving its use of existing electoral technology, including biometric voter verification and the new voter registry, rather than adopting any new technology which requires significant resources and attention to implement;
9. Making public the list of polling centers that are planned to open at least a week before every election day;
10. Sharing election data with observers immediately following an election, including a breakdown of the number of voters at each open polling station, spoiled ballots, biometrically verified votes, and votes excluded or invalidated by the IEC or ECC. (A full list of these information requirements is available on p. 142.)

And finally, the Afghan government at large should consider:

11. Refraining from actions that could influence the decision making of electoral commissions, as is required by every electoral law and decree since 2004;
12. Prosecuting government officials and others involved in election and *tazkera* fraud, and publicly releasing details about convictions and sentences for all recent and future prosecutions related to elections;
13. Retaining the role of political parties and civil society organizations in the selection of leaders of election commissions, as well as input into the selection of provincial commissions, for all future elections.




The National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008 (P.L. 110-181) established the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR).

SIGAR's oversight mission, as defined by the legislation, is to provide for the independent and objective

- conduct and supervision of audits and investigations relating to the programs and operations funded with amounts appropriated or otherwise made available for the reconstruction of Afghanistan.
- leadership and coordination of, and recommendations on, policies designed to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in the administration of the programs and operations, and to prevent and detect waste, fraud, and abuse in such programs and operations.
- means of keeping the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense fully and currently informed about problems and deficiencies relating to the administration of such programs and operation and the necessity for and progress on corrective action.

Afghanistan reconstruction includes any major contract, grant, agreement, or other funding mechanism entered into by any department or agency of the U.S. government that involves the use of amounts appropriated or otherwise made available for the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

Source: P.L. 110-181, "National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008," 1/28/2008.



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By phone: United States

Toll-free: 866-329-8893

DSN: 312-664-0378

All voicemail is in English and answered during business hours.

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By email: sigar.hotline@mail.mil

By web submission: www.sigar.mil/investigations/hotline/report-fraud.aspx

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